

BOARD OF EDUCATION
(Official)

December 7, 2017
Elizabeth, New Jersey

The regular agenda meeting of the Board of Education was called on December 7, 2017 at 6:30 p.m., at Donald Stewart Center for Early Childhood Education School No. 51, located at 544 Pennsylvania Avenue, Elizabeth, New Jersey.

Board President Stanley Neron presented the following statement at 6:45 p.m.

“Ladies and Gentlemen, good evening. This is a regular agenda 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 December 4, 2017. In addition, this notice is posted on the Bulletin Board in the lobby of 500 North Broad Street, and pursuant to this act, a copy has been filed with the City Clerk of Elizabeth, New Jersey.

“We want to welcome everyone present and our television viewers to this December 7, 2017 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. We also 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. We are pleased that you have taken time this evening to join us here for our Board of Education meeting. Thank you for your interest in the Elizabeth Public Schools.”

“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 public speaking 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: Mmes. Amin, Barbosa (arr. 7:52 p.m.), Ms. Bathelus, Mrs. Carvalho, Miss Goncalves, Messrs. Rodriguez, Neron – 7

Absent: Messrs. Nina, Perreira – 2

Superintendent of Schools Olga Hugelmeyer, School Business Administrator/Board Secretary Harold E. Kennedy, Jr., Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning Jennifer Cedeno, Assistant Superintendent for Schools Rafael Cortes, Interim Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources Francisco Cuesta, Acting Assistant Superintendent for Schools Judy Finch-Johnson, Comptroller Rajeev Malhotra, Co-General Counsel Jonathan Williams, Esq. of DeCotiis, Fitzpatrick & Cole, LLP, and members of the public were in attendance.

Pledge of Allegiance

Board President Neron 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.”

Mr. Neron called upon the first public participant, Christina Moreira, to address the Board.

Christina Moreira, 805 Gebhardt Avenue, spoke about nurses for the after school program. Mrs. Moreira spoke about the free lunch program and stated that at the October Board meeting she asked about the school lunch menu prices and amounts of food being served and asked for an update.

Mr. Neron thanked her for her comments and called upon the next public participant, Maria Lorenz, to address the Board.

Maria Lorenz, 103 Murray Street, spoke about SEPAC and Board policies not being followed. Mrs. Lorenz stated that nothing has happened with the Buddy Program that she proposed and Board members should do what they say they are going to do.

Mr. Neron thanked her for her comments. Since there were no other public participants signed in to address the Board, Mr. Neron closed this portion of the meeting.

Ms. Bathelus stated that she is responding to the question regarding the Food Service lunch menu. Ms. Bathelus stated that she met with Mrs. Hugelmeyer to discuss the prices of the food items.

Mr. Neron stated that before we finalize it we have to come to a resolve. Mr. Neron stated that the point was taken and we have looked at it, worked on it, and analyzed the numbers and the type of food being served. Mr. Neron stated that it will be discussed later.

Board President Stanley Neron stated that this is an agenda setting meeting. Mr. Neron stated that we will go tab by tab and each Board member may ask questions. Present for the meeting were Director of Plant, Property & Equipment Luis Couto, Director of Security Matthew Glackin, Director of Research, Evaluation and Assessment Amy Gil, Director of Curriculum and Instruction Aaron Goldblatt, Acting Director of Athletics Bartolomeo Candelino, Director of Food and Nutrition Services Jamie Leavitt, Chief Information Officer (Technology) Alberto Marsal, and Purchasing Agent Mario Rodrigues. The Board reviewed the agenda for the December 14, 2017 regular meeting.

Minutes of the Agenda and Business Meetings of November 20, 2017
Secretary/Treasurer's Report for the Month of October 2017

Mr. Neron asked if there were any questions.

Mr. Neron added the Minutes of the Meetings of November 20, 2017 and the Secretary/Treasurer's Report for the Month of October 2017 to the agenda.

Personnel Report
Supplemental Personnel Report

Mr. Neron asked if there were any questions.

Mrs. Barbosa asked about the lunchtime tutoring/interventions program.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer explained that this is funded through Title I and the principals have the option of setting up additional support for the children.

Mrs. Barbosa asked how the children are selected for the Saturday Special Needs Recreational/Instructional Program.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer explained the children are recommended for the program by the teachers and also the staff in Special Services.

Mr. Neron added the Personnel Report and Supplemental Personnel Report to the agenda.

Tuition Report

Mr. Neron asked if there were any questions.

Mrs. Barbosa asked if the tuitions are paid yearly or when the child starts.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer explained the process and stated that we work with our providers to issue a contract in advance of the student starting their services. Mrs. Hugelmeyer explained that if there is a change of placement, then there is a rescission of tuition which indicates that the contract has ended.

Mr. Kennedy explained that the report shows the contract amount but that it is a monthly billing process based on their attendance each month.

Mrs. Carvalho asked about the state aid for tuition and if we receive the state aid before the tuition is paid.

Mr. Kennedy explained that Katzenbach School for the Deaf is a state school and the aid is provided by the state. Mr. Kennedy stated that we get our monthly state aid from the State of New Jersey and then they deduct from our state aid the payment to that school. Mr. Kennedy stated that it is different because we don't issue them a check and the amount due to the school is deducted from our state aid.

Mrs. Carvalho asked what the tuition is for that school. Mrs. Carvalho asked about the 5 IEP hours and if we get charged automatically 5 hours and is that the minimum number of hours.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer responded that the Director of Special Services is not here tonight and she will find out.

Mr. Neron added the Tuition Report to the agenda.

Superintendent's Report – Considerations

Mr. Neron asked if there were any questions.

Mrs. Barbosa asked if there is a guideline that we use for the number of children per chaperone.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that Assistant Superintendent for Schools Rafael Cortes makes sure that we have the appropriate number of chaperones for elementary, middle, and high school trips.

Assistant Superintendent for Schools Rafael Cortes explained the ratio of students to chaperones and stated that it varies by venue.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer requested Chief Information Officer (Technology) Alberto Marsal to present the requests for the Student One-to-One Mobile and Laptop training programs.

Chief Information Officer (Technology) Alberto Marsal stated that the IT Team was invited by three different organizations to present to other K-12 districts our implementation plan for the deployment of the One-to-One Program and student laptops.

Mr. Neron congratulated Mr. Marsal and his team.

Mr. Neron added Superintendent's Report – Considerations to the agenda.

Superintendent's Report – Use of Facilities

Supplemental Superintendent's Report – Use of Facilities

Mr. Neron asked if there were any questions.

Mr. Neron added the Superintendent's Report – Use of Facilities and Supplemental Superintendent's Report – Use of Facilities to the agenda.

Superintendent's Report – Field Trips

Mr. Neron asked if there were any questions.

Assistant Superintendent for Schools Rafael Cortes stated that there are a total of 39 field trips proposed and approximately 25% are field trips to colleges and universities for both elementary and high schools. Mr. Cortes stated that to date we have a total of 114 field trips. Mr. Cortes stated that we received a generous donation from Liberty Hall Museum for field trips to Snyder Academy of Elizabethtown, Boxwood Hall, and Liberty Hall Museum for 4th grade Elizabeth Public School students.

Mr. Neron added the Superintendent's Report – Field Trips to the agenda.

Superintendent's Report – Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying Investigative Results

Mr. Neron added the Superintendent's Report – Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying Investigative Results to the agenda.

Authorizations Report

Supplemental Authorizations Report

Mr. Neron asked if there were any questions on the reports.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer requested Director of Research, Evaluation and Assessment Amy Gil to report on the authorization to participate in Special Olympics event.

Director of Research, Evaluation and Assessment Amy Gil stated that through a collaborative effort between Special Olympics of New Jersey, the Elizabeth Public Schools, and the Elizabeth Community fifty special education students and thirty-four staff volunteers will be participating the Area 5 Special Olympics Bowling Event.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer requested Director of Curriculum and Instruction Aaron Goldblatt to report on the authorization to establish the HOSA Club.

Director of Curriculum and Instruction Aaron Goldblatt stated that the establishment of the Health Occupations Students of America (HOSA) Club is an opportunity for nursing students at Admiral William F. Halsey, Jr. Health and Public Safety Academy under the guidance of a school nurse and guidance counselor for participation in workshops and competitions with other districts in medical math, medical terminology, CPR, personal care, nursing assistance, and other topics.

Mr. Neron added the Authorizations Report and the Supplemental Authorizations Report to the agenda.

Finance and Accounting Report – Authorization to Pay Vouchers, etc.

Finance and Accounting Report – Transfer of Funds

Mr. Neron asked if there were any questions on the reports.

Mr. Neron added Finance and Accounting Reports for Authorization to Pay Vouchers, etc. and Transfer of Funds to the agenda.

Award of Contracts Report

Supplemental Award of Contract Report

Second Supplemental Award of Contracts Report

Third Supplemental Award of Contracts

Mr. Neron asked if there were any questions on the reports.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that on behalf of Director of Early Childhood Education Tracy Crosby there is a contract with Catapult Learning to provide childcare to preschoolers in the form of a wraparound program at thirteen sites before and after school during the 2017-2018 academic year beginning September 1, 2017 from as early as 7:30 a.m. through 5:30 p.m. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the sites in the summer include School Nos. 29, 50, 51, and 52.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer requested Director of Security Matthew Glackin to report on the contract with The TBL Group.

Director of Security Matthew Glackin stated the December training for security guards includes training in Critical Incident Analysis for every guard to analyze and react better to every situation that happens day to day. Mr. Glackin stated that time is of the essence in how we react and respond to an incident and could be the difference in it spiraling out of control or getting it under control. Mr. Glackin stated that the security guards will be able to better address and communicate what is going on, what is happening, and obtain the proper resources.

Mr. Rodriguez asked, in the next couple of months, if Mr. Glackin could report to the Board in private or a committee meeting to see how many security guards the district is lacking and what can be done to increase the force to make it safer. Mr. Rodriguez stated that, especially since budget season is coming up, Mr. Glackin could provide any type of needs that he may have in terms of manpower so we can plan ahead for next year. Mr. Rodriguez stated that it is not to block the information from the public but it could be a safety concern.

Mrs. Carvalho stated that the training is done during the Winter break and Spring break and asked what the last training was on.

Mr. Glackin stated that the Spring training was on backpack searches, entry into the buildings, and defense. Mr. Glackin stated that we also had training for special needs and a representative came from the State on how to better address autism and recognize the signs of autism.

Mrs. Carvalho asked how do we handle new security guards coming in who were not able to benefit from this training.

Mr. Glackin explained that when they come in they get a full week of training, going over their responsibilities and rules and regulations. Mr. Glackin stated that they have two head guards who work with the new guards for a full week before going into a school on how to work the metal detectors, how to do searches, verbal judo, and everything that we have gone over the last year they get in a brief synopsis.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer requested Director of Curriculum and Instruction Aaron Goldblatt to speak about the contract with Future City.

Director of Curriculum and Instruction Aaron Goldblatt stated that the program, Leading Towards the Future, highlights our partnership with Future City, Inc. Mr. Goldblatt stated that the program is a series of three presentations held at Thomas A. Edison Academy for Career and Technical Education for about 50 to 70 students who get to interact with some business and professional people from the area whose story is characterized by struggle and perseverance. Mr. Goldblatt stated that last year the students interacted with a former municipal court judge who came to this country as a very young boy, did not speak English, and had very little money and told the story of how he became a lawyer and eventually a judge. Mr. Goldblatt invited the Board members to come to one of the presentations and the first is being held on January 19. Mr. Goldblatt stated that it is a wonderful opportunity for our students to hear there are people who became very successful from the most humble of upbringings.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer requested Director of Elementary and Secondary Education Daphne Marchetti to speak about the Apex Learning contract.

Director of Elementary and Secondary Education Daphne Marchetti stated that the online course will be using the Apex Learning program and will be an expansion for our students to complete the financial literacy courses. Mrs. Marchetti stated that we are currently using Apex for Credit Recovery.

Mr. Rodriguez asked if the financial literacy is one of our students' graduation requirements and if they are taking the online course after school hours.

Mrs. Marchetti responded it is. Mrs. Marchetti stated that they have the opportunity to complete the class during school hours, during the after school program, during the Saturday program or at home.

Mr. Neron added the above Award of Contracts Reports to the agenda.

Miscellaneous Communication (none)

Claims List

Mr. Neron asked if there were any questions.

Mr. Neron added Miscellaneous Communication and Claims List to the agenda.

Resolution – School Board Recognition Month

Resolution – Payment for Medical Health Insurance Waiver

Resolution – Requisition for Taxes

Mr. Neron asked if there were any questions.

Mr. Rodriguez asked if an employee waives their medical health insurance do we still receive Chapter 78 money from their paycheck.

Mr. Kennedy responded no. Mr. Kennedy stated that they receive \$2,000. and they would not be covered with insurance.

Mr. Rodriguez asked if they would get that without having to contribute Chapter 78 money as well.

Mr. Kennedy explained that they would only be contributing if it was toward the cost of their health insurance. Mr. Kennedy stated that if they waive their health insurance then there is no premium on the health insurance. Mr. Kennedy stated that it is an incentive that the State set up to get people to consider waiving their health insurance.

Mr. Neron added the above resolutions to the agenda.

Superintendent of Schools Olga Hugelmeyer stated that tonight there is a three-part presentation including the data on the Class of 2017 as it relates to the EPS Promise Goals, additional opportunities we are providing our students as it relates to instructional programs as well as an athletic program.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer introduced Director of Research, Evaluation and Assessment Amy Gil to co-present the data on the progress our students are making.

Director of Research, Evaluation and Assessment Amy Gil stated that one of our promise goals is to attend programs after they graduate high school. Mrs. Gil stated that we have students who attend college, go to trade school, join the military, and others who go directly to work. Mrs. Gil explained a PowerPoint slide showing the breakout for the Class of 2017 where our students were deciding to go after high school. Mrs. Gil stated that our second promise goal is that by 2020 90% of graduates will enroll in at least one Advanced Placement course in their high school career. Mrs. Gil presented a PowerPoint slide showing the percentage of students at each high school that completed the promise goal. Mrs. Gil stated that all of our promise goals have an end date of 2020. Mrs. Gil stated that the second part of the second promise goal is that 90% of our graduates will maintain at least a 3.0 GPA and presented a PowerPoint slide showing the percentages at each high school. Mrs. Gil stated that the third promise goal is 90% of EPS students will graduate on time and presented a PowerPoint slide showing the graduation rate for the Class of 2017.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer thanked Mrs. Gil. Mrs. Hugelmeyer explained that at this time there are technical issues with the last two parts of the presentation.

Mr. Neron welcomed everyone to the Public Hearing on the proposed Lease Purchase Transaction of Capital Improvements. Mr. Neron stated that pursuant to New Jersey statutes and the rules adopted by the Board of Education, notice of this hearing was advertised in the Star Ledger on November 18, 2017. Mr. Neron stated that in addition, this notice is also posted on the bulletin board in the lobby of 500 North Broad Street and a copy has been filed with the City Clerk of Elizabeth.

Mr. Neron stated that in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:26-10.3, the Board is required to conduct a public hearing on proposed Lease Purchase Transactions. Mr. Neron stated that the District has determined to undertake a capital improvement project consisting of various improvements with an estimated cost not to exceed \$6,925,000. Mr. Neron stated that at this time the Superintendent will lead the public hearing on the proposed Capital Improvement Project and related Lease Purchase Transaction.

Superintendent of Schools Olga Hugelmeyer stated that the Elizabeth Public Schools is steadfast and resolved in its ongoing efforts to realize its vision of becoming one of the highest performing urban school districts in the nation and to fulfill its promise of ensuring that every child achieves excellence and to meet its goals of preparedness, career readiness, and on time graduation for every child. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that one of the pillars on which these ideals rests is creating and maintaining safe environments. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the pillar is built upon the foundation of equity, expectation, and excellence. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that our foundation of equity is based on America's promise that every child regardless of race, ethnicity, or social class should receive a high quality, academically rich, and rigorous public education. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that not only does providing our students a high quality education, academically rich, and rigorous public education include excellent instruction in the classroom but it also includes providing them with a learning environment in which they can focus entirely on developing their mind in pursuing knowledge. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the capital project that is outlined in this presentation helps the Elizabeth Public Schools to increase equity throughout our district and to enhance the teaching and learning experience for all of our students. Mrs. Hugelmeyer introduced Matthew Karrenberg, Esq., DeCotiis, FitzPatrick and Cole, LLP, Deter Lerch, Lerch Vinci and Higgins, LLP, and Director of Plant, Property and Equipment Luis Couto to present the capital projects to provide further details on the necessary capital improvements that will have a significant and lasting impact on student performance in our schools.

Deter Lerch, Lerch Vinci and Higgins, LLP, stated that he is presenting the financial aspects regarding the capital projects plan for the Elizabeth School District. Mr. Lerch stated that the district has several options on how to finance the capital improvements. Mr. Lerch stated that capital improvements are those improvements that have a useful life of greater than five years, typically buildings, building improvements, and major equipment purchases and are differentiated from maintenance type items. Mr. Lerch stated that the very large capital assets of the district namely schools, brand new buildings, are financed from the Schools Development Authority (SDA) and that is 100% financed through the State. Mr. Lerch stated that when you have capital assets, capital acquisitions not of that magnitude, the district had the option and has historically provided for that in the past as part of its operating budget on an annual basis. Mr. Lerch stated that there is a third option available and that is the purpose of this meeting and that is to finance capital assets through a capital lease program. Mr. Lerch stated that it is very similar to when you lease a car except that at the end of the five-year period the school district actually owns the asset and equipment. Mr. Lerch presented a PowerPoint slide showing the current capital projects totaling \$2.6 million that are being funded through the budget. Mr. Lerch stated that the district has budgeted a capital reserve account and that money has been raised for providing for these projects through that program. Mr. Lerch presented a PowerPoint slide of the proposed projects totaling \$1,680,000. Mr. Lerch stated that the Elizabeth School District was the fortunate recipient of some additional state aid as a result of a change in the funding law. Mr. Lerch stated that a portion of that state aid is going to be utilized for these improvements in the amount of \$1.6 million.

Director of Plant, Property and Equipment Luis Couto stated that you can see the wear and tear of our buildings and the infrastructure and equipment is showing their age. Mr. Couto stated that some of the building improvements will bring them up to par with other typical buildings in our district. Mr. Couto stated that the capital projects that we had in our budget which has been under pressure the last few years and has not allowed us to do many of these projects. Mr. Couto stated that they applied to the State for emergent projects but because of lack of funding on the State side, these projects were not approved either. Mr. Couto stated that through this process that we are suggesting tonight we will be able to do these projects ahead of time instead of waiting for the next five or six years. Mr. Couto stated that this process will allow us to go ahead and start them right away so we can start enjoying the benefits of these projects. Mr. Couto stated that these projects are needed to keep our buildings safe but are also the requests of parents to bring these buildings up to par with other buildings. Mr. Couto stated that we are

proposing to do new air conditioning systems at Winfield Scott School No. 2, Christopher Columbus School No. 15, and Madison Monroe School No. 16. Mr. Couto stated that we also have eight buildings that we have been patching the roofs but they have come to the point where they need complete replacement or a restoration that would allow ten years of warranty. Mr. Couto stated that the school roofs are needed at Joseph Battin School No. 4, Mabel G. Holmes School No. 5, Toussaint L'Ouverture – Marquis de Lafayette School No. 6, Elmora School No. 12, Christopher Columbus School No. 15, Robert Morris School No. 18, John E. Dwyer Technology Academy Ninth Grade @ Nicholas Murray Butler School No. 23, and Thomas A. Edison Career and Technical Academy. Mr. Couto stated that we have a couple of buildings with chillers, which provide the air conditioning, that are at a point of disrepair and need a total overhaul so that we will not have an event that will cut off the air conditioning.

Mr. Lerch presented a PowerPoint slide of the proposed items that would be financed through a lease purchase that totals about \$6.9 million. Mr. Lerch stated that the point of a lease purchase is to accomplish all those improvements today rather than wait each year over the next five years. Mr. Lerch stated that part of the statute requires that these improvements be paid for without any tax impact to the residents. Mr. Lerch stated that we have done that analysis to see how we are going to fund for those improvements. Mr. Lerch presented a PowerPoint slide showing the funding technique that is the financial plan of the district right now to dedicate a portion, \$2 million each and every year of the additional state aid that it is anticipated to receive. Mr. Lerch stated that will be put into what is commonly known as a capital reserve account. The actual lease payments would come out to \$1.5 million a year based on the current interest rates with a residual amount of \$500,000. that would remain in the capital reserve account. Mr. Lerch stated that money would then be available for the district's use for any unanticipated capital improvement program. Mr. Lerch stated that the financial plan is to dedicate \$10 million over the next five years of the additional state aid of which \$7.5 million will be used to finance all those improvements that were outlined and the remaining \$2.5 be available for any unforeseen capital improvements that come about.

Matthew Karrenberg, Esq., DeCotiis, FitzPatrick and Cole, LLP, explained the process of the capital lease purchase. Mr. Karrenberg explained a PowerPoint slide showing the action items and general timeline for the Public Hearing, Board resolution, receipt of NJDOE approval of eligible costs, formal application to NJDOE, receipt of NJDOE approval for lease purchase agreement, Board resolution authorizing lease purchase agreement with financial institution, and execution of the lease purchase agreement. Mr. Karrenberg stated that there are several oversight actions from the local level, the Department of Education at the state level, and the underwriters to make sure it is a financially responsible plan before they approve it. Mr. Karrenberg stated that this is the first action of several actions for the capital lease purchase agreement and the transactions involved.

Mr. Neron thanked them for their work on this to make it possible. Mr. Neron stated that this has been in the works for three years and the past year and a half we have been working arduously in trying to figure out how to address some of the necessary infrastructure changes and improvements that the district so desperately needs. Mr. Neron stated that initially it was a cost of \$33 million which was so far-fetched and we couldn't possibly achieve this goal in trying to address these needs. Mr. Neron stated that you can do them gradually but as you do them gradually things deteriorate over the years and now you just find yourself in the hole all over again. Mr. Neron stated that we asked how can we get it done immediately and not finding ourselves trying to catch up. Mr. Neron stated that we did this with the help of Division of Plant and Property and all of their assessments and the Board members going in and seeing what was needed. Mr. Neron stated that the principals, teachers, and students also gave us feedback on what was needed. Mr. Neron stated that this is just the beginning and not the grand finale and all of this without even raising taxes or taking any losses. Mr. Neron stated that this is a great accomplishment.

Mr. Neron asked if there is anyone who would like to comment on tonight's report.

Christina Moreira, 805 Gebhardt Avenue, stated that she made an OPRA request to get the agenda for tonight's public hearing and the agenda should have been available for the public hearing. Mrs. Moreira requested that the information be posted online so the public can review it. Mrs. Moreira asked from what account are we paying the 3% interest and where is the interest coming from because it can't come from the state aid.

Mr. Lerch stated that the interest will be budgeted in the general fund of the district.

Mrs. Moreira asked if the money is coming from the state aid that is being provided.

Mr. Lerch responded that is correct that it will be coming from the state aid.

Mrs. Moreira read from the resolution and asked if it means if there is an overage or an increase then they can just do it without approval and that could come out of instructional programs.

Mr. Lerch stated that the amount of the lease will be the maximum amount.

Mr. Karrenberg stated that is what the Board is finding that based upon all of the information analysis it will not increase the taxes in order to go forward and the Department of Education has to agree with that.

Mrs. Moreira asked what the legal fees are associated with this agreement and where are those funds coming from.

Mr. Karrenberg stated that he does not know the set fee and that the soft costs will be part of the financing.

Mr. Kennedy explained that the fees that we have incurred are part of our regular budget.

Mrs. Moreira asked what happens if we default on the loan.

Mr. Karrenberg stated that typically you would not default on the lease purchase agreement and explained the structure of the agreement.

Mr. Lerch stated that this would be a priority item in the budget and the school district, in his knowledge, has never defaulted on any of its obligations.

Mrs. Moreira asked how we get the estimates for the proposed work and how can the public view it.

Mr. Couto explained that we hire engineers to develop the budget estimate and we try to stay within the budgeted amount.

Mr. Williams stated that we have estimates at this point and when you get the lease purchase obtained from the bank then you publicly bid everything. Mr. Williams stated that you control that process and if the bids come in too high, then you don't go forward. Mr. Williams stated that you can rebid under state law as many as three times and if the bids are over the estimates that you already have then you have the right to force bidders to negotiate lower prices.

Mrs. Moreira asked if all of the work will be performed at the same time and what is the projected process for overhauling thirteen schools.

Mr. Couto explained that some of the restorations can be started soon and others will need to be designed. Mr. Couto stated that as soon as we get the approval we will get started. Mr. Couto stated that the work will be done after school hours and with the least obstruction to the operations of the school and will be scheduled accordingly.

Mrs. Moreira asked why are we doing this work all at once instead of waiting for this money to come each year and doing it little by little. Mrs. Moreira stated that we are assuming that we are getting this guaranteed money from the State.

Mr. Couto stated that we could do all of them now and most likely in a year you could be enjoying air conditioning. Mr. Couto stated that if not, then it would take five years.

Mr. Neron stated that when there is an issue you want to address it right now or as soon as possible. Mr. Neron stated that the reality is that if you don't get the approval to say let us get the spending right now, then you would have to go through this process for every individual project which would then take a serious amount of years. Mr. Neron stated that just because we are doing this tonight does not mean that work starts tomorrow. Mr. Neron stated that we still have a process that we have to go through. Mr. Neron stated that we are going to have to go through this process, get the approval, all the legal paperwork, get the estimates, and get the bidding. Mr. Neron stated that when you are in the process of the bidding you can't get the work done. Mr. Neron stated that it is better to get all of that out of the way and have the procedure and schedule of when we can begin. Mr. Neron stated that say you start this summer you may do a few schools but then as Mr. Couto said you will have to do it at night and on the weekend and it will be a gradual process. Mr. Neron stated the reality is that it will get done sooner rather than later in all actuality.

Mrs. Moreira stated that there is supposed to be a committee to oversee the lease agreement and asked who is going to be on that committee and what exactly does that committee do.

Mr. Neron stated that the finance committee is the committee that oversees that.

Mr. Kennedy stated that based on the responses to the proposal the committee decides who they select for the lease financing.

Mr. Neron thanked her and asked if there was anyone else who would like to speak.

Patricia Gallante, 750 Grier Avenue, stated that the proposal assumes a guaranteed amount in additional state aid. Ms. Gallante asked in light of the political climate and new governor coming in do we have alternative plans because we know there is no guarantee ever that you will get the same funding five years from now.

Mr. Williams stated that he agrees that there are never any guarantees about the State. Mr. Williams stated that this particular statutory process requires that we submit this plan to the State for approval. Mr. Williams stated that they are going to recognize just as you did that it is dependent on the state aid. Mr. Williams stated that they have already had preliminary discussions with the State about the continued state aid and we know that there is a commitment from the new governor to not only restructure and improve and increase the amount of aid to the schools but it is one of the primary cornerstones that he has agreed to do. Mr. Williams stated that you can't count on that part and the only part you can count on is that you can't go forward unless you submitted this plan to the State and they have approved it.

Ms. Gallante stated that as a taxpayer she wanted to voice her concern that doing a major improvement you always weigh the pros and the cons. Ms. Gallante stated that just because the

governor promised things doesn't mean they are going to come through. Ms. Gallante asked if the additional money for capital improvements is from the State or the Federal government.

Mr. Williams responded it was from the State.

Ms. Gallante stated that so far we only have estimates and there have been no RFPs yet. Ms. Gallante asked in terms of the contingency fund if 5% is a typical contingency fund for that large of a capital improvement.

Mr. Couto stated that 5% is very achievable and we use the average that the state uses.

Mr. Neron stated that all of the questions that we have heard we have been asking for months. Mr. Neron stated that the reality is that something has to get done and we can't sit here and not do anything about it. Mr. Neron stated that it is good that we are asking all these questions and we are flushing out any possibility of putting ourselves in jeopardy. Mr. Neron stated that we have been crunching numbers for months now and trying to figure out a contingency plan and the necessary precautions we need to take. Mr. Neron stated that this is a process and we are presenting it to the public so we can establish transparency behind it. Mr. Neron stated that the bids may come in lower and that would be great. Mr. Neron stated that we know we can't go higher and we may have to reevaluate the work that is going to be done and maybe some work can't be done.

Mr. Rodriguez stated that in years past the old Board of Education used to not put any money into capital improvements and just put band-aids on everything. Mr. Rodriguez stated that is the way they did it and that was their prerogative. Mr. Rodriguez stated that last year they really started to look into cost savings and after those things were successful we started to look at the situation in our school buildings and how we could fix them. Mr. Rodriguez stated that even before we knew we were getting any money from the state, any windfall, this process was already in place. Mr. Rodriguez stated that we were going to do work on these buildings regardless of the \$6 million or not. Mr. Rodriguez stated that we continued to work through it whether we were going to get that money or not. Mr. Rodriguez stated that we have a contingency plan where if the state money is ripped from our hands tomorrow this plan will not be as whole and we won't be able to do everything but we will continue to do capital improvement plans anyway regardless of that. Mr. Rodriguez stated that the backstop is there and for the worst case scenario we do have that backstop. Mr. Rodriguez stated that in the finance committee we made sure we had that backstop. Mr. Rodriguez stated that this process is almost like getting a home equity line of credit for your house and first you would go to the bank and get the approval. Mr. Rodriguez stated that once the bank approves you for a certain amount of money then it is almost like a credit card. Mr. Rodriguez stated that first we had to have these estimates so we knew what kind of money we would need. Mr. Rodriguez stated that ultimately this plan was going to go through regardless of the state funding. Mr. Rodriguez stated that with the state funding we can do more. Mr. Rodriguez stated that we made a commitment to improve the schools and not just put on band-aids. Mr. Rodriguez applauded Mr. Couto because his department over the years past was given certain restrictions and they did what they could with that. Mr. Rodriguez stated that at this point we decided that this was an important piece of what we wanted to do here.

Ms. Gallante asked who is the ultimate approver of this project and who approves whether the Elizabeth Board of Education can go into this lease agreement.

Mr. Neron responded that it is the Board and the State Department of Education.

Mr. Lerch stated that it is the Division of Administration and Finance within the Department of Education.

Ms. Gallante asked if the State does not approve it then can it be appealed and what are the timelines for State approval.

Mr. Karrenberg stated that if it is not approved then you can submit a new proposal. Mr. Karrenberg stated that the timelines are fairly accurate.

Mr. Neron thanked her and asked if there was anyone else who would like to speak.

Maria Lorenz, 103 Murray Street, stated that one of the PowerPoint slides states that now we are going to be providing our students with a safe and caring environment. Mrs. Lorenz stated that it is about time because we have been talking about this for three years plus. Mrs. Lorenz stated that some of the comments that we heard from these Board members is that they went to school without air conditioning and survived and it is quite nice that to see that this Board finally admits and sees that we need to have a safe and caring environment. Mrs. Lorenz stated that she wanted to give a little history and that the local revenue in taxes was plus \$6.9 million but the state and local revenues dropped \$370,000. Mrs. Lorenz stated that the operating budget was under and dropped from previous years \$418,000 below from what you received before. Mrs. Lorenz stated that the PreK revenue was minus \$1.7 million and total revenue was minus \$1.4 million and yet your expenses increased by \$593,000. Mrs. Lorenz asked how much is this district in debt currently.

Mr. Neron stated that we are not in debt.

Mrs. Lorenz stated that we are going in debt and asked if the interest rate is fixed.

Mr. Neron responded no. Mr. Neron stated that we are not going in debt. Mr. Neron stated that we are trying to make sure that we can do the work that we need to do ahead of time but gradually we will pay this off because we do get funded to do these necessary improvements and we do get funded to make sure that we can maintain the district. Mr. Neron stated that Plant and Property has an operating budget annually that they are able to utilize and we also have dollars that go into reserve so right now we are not in debt.

Mrs. Lorenz stated that we are borrowing money at an interest rate so technically that is going in debt.

Mr. Lerch stated that the school district has no debt and this is not considered debt. Mr. Lerch stated that this is no different than any other leases the district has now for some of the busses and other equipment. Mr. Lerch stated that the 3% is an estimate at this time and whatever proposals the district receives it will be a fixed rate at that time and the finance committee will make the recommendation to the full Board.

Mrs. Lorenz asked the Board for a commitment that no programs will be affected, nothing will be cut for after school, regular instruction, and if all of that will remain the same.

Mr. Neron responded yes.

Mrs. Lorenz asked if the bid is the lowest bidder, qualified bidder, and how does it work.

Mr. Neron stated that the bids are always the lowest bidder.

Mr. Kennedy stated that it is the lowest qualified bid.

Mrs. Lorenz stated that the members on the finance committee may be conflicted. Mrs. Lorenz stated that Mr. Rodriguez said that in years past there have been band-aids put on. Mrs. Lorenz stated that in years past there have been capital improvements and maybe some band-aids.

Mrs. Lorenz spoke about friends of Board members being hired when that money could be used for capital improvements.

Mr. Kennedy stated that Mr. Couto was correct that in years past when we had capital improvements we couldn't take them on ourselves and had to go to the SDA to get approval. Mr. Kennedy stated that all of these roofing projects, in particular, were all submitted to the SDA. Mr. Kennedy stated that the SDA rejected them all and said that you have to do them yourself. Mr. Kennedy stated that left us in a quandary of things they used to do for us when they had funding and they ran out. Mr. Kennedy stated that the administration and Board want to go forward with these needed improvements.

Mr. Rodriguez stated that the SDA used to be the Schools Construction Corporation and they have changed their name a few times over the years. Mr. Rodriguez stated that the deal with the former Abbott districts is that they would build your schools but you couldn't borrow money and anything over \$500,000. you were forced to ask the SDA. Mr. Rodriguez stated that for instance, if you wanted to redo a football field and it cost \$1 million, then you were forced to ask the SDA to get the money and they lock you out of it then you are stuck and can't do anything and your hands are tied.

Mr. Neron asked if there were any other citizens who would like to comment on the Public Hearing. Since there were no other citizens who would like to comment on the public hearing, Mr. Neron closed the public hearing.

Resolution – Lease Purchase Transaction and Authorization to Submit Application to NJDOE

A motion was made by Mr. Rodriguez, seconded by Miss Goncalves, to adopt the resolution.

Mr. Rodriguez commended Mr. Couto and his colleagues on the Board of Education. Mr. Rodriguez stated that this was a long time coming, a few years, that we did this and it is something very important. Mr. Rodriguez stated that this is a big vote and he hopes that everyone can support it. Mr. Rodriguez congratulated everyone involved.

Mrs. Carvalho thanked everyone who worked on this including our attorneys, Deter Lerch, our finance committee, and our plant and property committee. Mrs. Carvalho stated that Mr. Couto's Department has done a lot of work over the last two years without a lot of money and that we put the brakes on him when we first got here. Mrs. Carvalho thanked him and stated that she looks forward to seeing these projects being done.

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Mmes. Amin, Barbosa, Ms. Bathelus, Mrs. Carvalho, Miss Goncalves, Messrs. Rodriguez, Neron – 7

Negative: None

Superintendent of Schools Olga Hugelmeyer stated that earlier there was a technical issue with the presentation. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that she is continuing her three-part presentation of the Class of 2017 as it relates to the EPS Promise Goals, additional opportunities we are providing our students as it relates to instructional programs as well as an athletic program.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer reviewed the data for the Class of 2017 as it relates to the EPS Promise Goals that was presented earlier by Director of Research, Evaluation and Assessment Amy Gil. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that to further support our Promise Goals we will implement the following programs: Agile Minds Algebra I Curriculum, Pilot Leaders of Tomorrow Character Education Program in 4 elementary schools, Arts Enrichment Program at all elementary schools, Articulation Agreement with Union County Educational Services Commission to design a

Twilight High School Alternative Education Program, expansion of partnership with The Raymond J. Lesniak Recovery High School, and expansion of Middle School Sports Program.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer introduced Morgan Thompson, Director of Academic and Recovery Support at Prevention Links to co-present information on the Raymond J. Lesniak Recovery High School and Prevention Links program.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that as a result of a recent grant that Prevention Links received we now have the opportunity to not only have services provided to 20 of our students but as a result of this grant covering the tuition during the school day we were able to match that by having additional support services be provided to the students in the form of wrap around services.

Morgan Thompson, Director of Academic and Recovery Support at Prevention Links, stated that they are very excited to be continuing the partnership with the Elizabeth Public Schools to assist students who are struggling with substance abuse disorders and who made that tremendous step to seek help, to initiate recovery, to become clean and sober, but who really face some tough challenges returning to their home school environment. Ms. Thompson stated that one of the most important things when receiving treatment services is that they shouldn't return to the people, places, and things that they "used" with. Ms. Thompson stated that we have two recovery high schools in the state, one in Matawan, and The Raymond J. Lesniak Recovery High School.

Ms. Thompson stated that The Raymond J. Lesniak Recovery High School provides a rigorous academic program aligning with your goals of transitioning to a form of higher education. Ms. Thompson stated that they do that with a blended learning module both in-person and virtual instruction. Ms. Thompson stated that the eligibility includes being a willing participant, currently enrolled in high school, committed to obtaining a diploma, and complying with out of school treatment recommendations and committed to abstaining from substances. Ms. Thompson stated that the program components include academic success, health and wellness, recovery planning, recovery mentorship, and family involvement. Ms. Thompson stated that it is about peer support, sense of community, and creating a new environment where recovery and education go hand in hand.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer thanked Ms. Thompson for the detailed information on the support services we provide to our students. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that they look forward to continuing our work together.

Ms. Bathelus excused herself from the meeting at 8:30 p.m.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer introduced Acting Director of Athletics Bartolomeo Candelino to provide an overview of the expansion of our middle school sports.

Acting Director of Athletics Bartolomeo Candelino stated that our middle school program presently consists of 21 teams in three seasons. Mr. Candelino stated that the Fall sports currently include 1 football team, 2 boys' soccer teams, 2 girls' soccer teams, 1 co-ed cross country, and 2 girls' volleyball teams. Mr. Candelino stated that the Winter sports currently include 2 boys' basketball teams, 2 girls' basketball teams, 1 co-ed swimming team, and 1 wrestling team. Mr. Candelino stated that in 2017 one additional boys' basketball team and one additional girls' basketball team were added. Mr. Candelino stated that the Spring sports currently include 2 baseball teams, 2 softball teams, 1 co-ed track and field, and 2 boys' volleyball teams. Mr. Candelino stated that the future plans for the middle school sports program beginning in September 2018 include adding 2 boys' and girls' soccer teams, 1 cross country team, 2 boys' and girls' volleyball teams, and 1 or 2 boys' and girls' basketball teams. Mr. Candelino stated that depending on the budget he would like to add for the middle school sports program a co-ed tennis team, a co-ed golf team, 1 additional baseball team, and 1 additional

softball team. Mr. Candelino stated that he thinks it would be a wise thought moving forward if we could consider adding on a varsity level a lacrosse team. Mr. Candelino stated that the sport of lacrosse is really growing considerably in our country and the opportunities for our student athletes to obtain scholarships and move on to college with getting financial assistance at some of our higher institutions. Mr. Candelino stated that universities such as Duke and Johns Hopkins have excellent lacrosse teams.

Mr. Candelino stated that our boys' soccer team was Union County Co-Champions, boys' football team finished 5-6, both cross-country teams have winning records, girls' soccer team had a winning record, and our girls' volleyball team had a winning record.

Mrs. Amin excused herself from the meeting at 8:38 p.m.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer thanked Mr. Candelino and stated that the plan we have in place shows our commitment not only to the academics but also to the arts as well as athletics.

Mr. Neron thanked everyone for attending this evening.

The President requests a motion to go into Private Session to consider matters exempt under the Open Public Meetings Act, specifically for discussion of personnel, specifically, A.P., G.T., S.M., J.C., W.T., J.G., W.D., reorganization, supplemental personnel report; legal, specifically, contracts – audit services, food services selling prices; and workers' compensation claims, specifically, R.C. The Board will reconvene in public to add to the agenda.

A motion was made by Mr. Rodriguez, seconded by Miss Goncalves, to go into private session at 8:50 p.m.

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Mmes. Barbosa, Carvalho, Miss Goncalves, Messrs. Rodriguez, Neron – 5

Negative: None

Mr. Neron excused himself from the meeting at 9:30 p.m.

A motion was made by Miss Goncalves, seconded by Mrs. Barbosa, to reconvene in public session at 9:40 p.m.

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Mrs. Barbosa, Miss Goncalves, Mr. Rodriguez, Mrs. Carvalho – 4

Negative: None

Board Vice President Carvalho added the following to the agenda:

Authorization for Revised Food Services Selling Prices

Resolution – Settlement of Workers' Compensation Claim (2012-1431) – R.C.

Resolution – Settlement of Workers' Compensation Claim (2015-13672) – R.C.

Resolution – Reorganization

Resolution – Suspension – S.M.

Resolution – Suspension – J.C.

Resolution – Suspension without Pay – A.P.

Resolution – Suspension – W.T.

Resolution – Suspension – J.G.

Resolution – Suspension with Pay – W.D.

Resolution – Appointing and Approving Form of Contract – Central Poly Bag

Resolution – Appointing and Approving Form of Contract – Systems Electronics, Inc.

Resolution – 2017-2018 Board Goals

On a motion by Miss Goncalves, seconded by Mr. Rodriguez, the agenda meeting was adjourned at 9:56 p.m.

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Mrs. Barbosa, Miss Goncalves, Mr. Rodriguez, Mrs. Carvalho – 4
Negative: None

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