

The Board of Education of the Borough of Essex Fells, in the County of Essex, New Jersey, convened in a Regular Public Meeting held in the Media Center on March 15, 2023. The meeting was called to order by the Board President, Mrs. Amanda Haber, at 7:30 P.M. Mrs. Haber read the following Statement of Compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act: "In compliance with Chapter 231 of the Laws of 1975, a notice for this meeting was posted at the respective offices of the Essex Fells School as of January 4, 2023. Agendas were mailed to the Clerk of the Borough of Essex Fells, the Progress, and the Star Ledger.

I. Call to Order – 7:30 P.M.

- The meeting was called to order by the Board President.

II. Roll Call

Mrs. Amanda Haber, President-Present
Mr. John Toth, Vice-President-Present
Mr. Raj Mehta-Present
Mrs. Caragh Lavoie-Present
Mrs. Jacquelyn Burke-Absent

Also present: Dr. Michelle V. Gadaleta, Superintendent/Principal; Mr. Steven J. Lella, Business Administrator/Board Secretary and (2) Staff members and (2) Members of the Public.

III. Flag Salute

- The Board President led the salute to the flag.

IV. President's Report

Good evening and thank you for joining us. On behalf of the board I want to acknowledge and thank the Essex Fells Foundation for supporting the school production Moana Jr. I was fortunate to attend both shows and it was an incredible experience. All of the students were so proud of all their months of dedication and work that went into the show. I want to thank Mrs. Banek, Mr. Trogani, Ms. McNish and Ms. Butler for the time and effort that you put into the shows. From costumes and sets, to the singing and acting of the students- it was a fantastic display of what can be done with a great staff and school community. Thank you to Dr. Gadaleta for allowing all students to enjoy the show. It builds community and it sparks excitement for the entire school. Thank you also to all of the parent volunteers, who went above and beyond for the greater good. It was an experience that our school will never forget.

V. Public Comment on Agenda Items Only

- None

VI. Superintendent's Report

- Dr. Gadaleta echoed Mrs. Haber and her comments about the musical. She was thankful for the investment made by the Foundation, as well as running the concessions and addressing safety.
- Dr. Gadaleta noted that the 6th Grade took their 9/11 Memorial Trip today. She was very proud to hear the children were well behaved.
- Dr. Gadaleta reported that the tentative budget has been prepared. We are adding a full time school counselor as well as all the costs associated with the Class III Officer while staying at the 2% tax levy cap.

- Dr. Gadaleta explained the planned activities that will take place this Friday as a One Year Memorial Celebration for Mr. Viggiano. The children will end the day with a Blue & Gold Balloon release and activities on the field.
- Dr. Gadaleta noted that we will be tabling resolution #5, as the candidate decided to accept another offer that provided health benefits.

VII. Superintendent’s Resolutions

RESOLVED that the Board of Education approves Superintendent Resolutions #01–09.

- 1. RESOLVED** that the Board of Education accepts and approves, as recommended by the Superintendent, revised Policy 8601 Pupil Supervision After School Dismissal:

Moved by: Mr. Toth	Seconded by: Mrs. Lavoie
Ayes: 4	Nays: 0

- 2. RESOLVED** that the Board of Education accepts and approves, as recommended by the Superintendent, the appointment of the following staff members as after school dismissal supervisors for pupil supervision as needed at the teachers contracted rate of \$65.00 per hour paid in 30 minute increments with parent reimbursement to the Essex Fells Board of Education:

Enrique Manlapid	Teacher
LeeAnn Smith	LDTC Coordinator
Moved by: Mr. Toth	Seconded by: Mrs. Lavoie
Ayes: 4	Nays: 0

- 3. RESOLVED** that the Board of Education accepts and approves, as recommended by the Superintendent, the Comprehensive Equity Plan Statement of Assurance for 2022-2023.

NOTE: CEP Attached

Moved by: Mr. Toth	Seconded by: Mrs. Lavoie
Ayes: 4	Nays: 0

- 4. RESOLVED** that the Board of Education accepts and approves, as recommended by the Superintendent, the Use of Facilities Request extension for the following:

EFFEE
 Moana Jr. Cast Party
 3/22/23 – 12:45pm – 2:00pm
 Gymnasium

Moved by: Mr. Toth	Seconded by: Mrs. Lavoie
Ayes: 4	Nays: 0

- 5. RESOLVED** that the Board of Education accepts and approves, as recommended by the Superintendent, the appointment of Jessica Calabrese as Kindergarten Maternity Leave Teacher, BA Step 3, for the 2022-2023 school year at a prorated salary of \$20,207.25 beginning March 20th, 2023, through June 30th, 2023.

IX. Business Resolutions

RESOLVED that the Board of Education approves Business Resolutions #01-05.

1. **RESOLVED** that the Board of Education accepts the minutes of the following meeting(s):

Regular Meeting Minutes	February 1 st , 2023
Executive Meeting Minutes	February 1 st , 2023

Regular Meeting Minutes	February 15 th , 2023
Executive Meeting Minutes	February 15 th , 2023

Moved by: Mrs. Lavoie	Seconded by: Mr. Toth
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Ayes: 4	Nays: 0
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2. **RESOLVED** that the Board of Education approves bills and claims for March in the amount of \$353,829.57, as certified by the Business Administrator/Board Secretary; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Education approves the payroll for February as certified by the Business Administrator and approved by the Superintendent and Board President in the total amount of \$363,600.43 including \$338,767.95 for the gross payroll, \$6,419.99 for the Board’s share of FICA/Medicare and \$18,412.49 for the State’s share of FICA/Medicare.

Moved by: Mrs. Lavoie	Seconded by: Mr. Toth
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Ayes: 4	Nays: 0
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3. **WHEREAS**, the Board of Education has received the Reports of the Board Secretary (Secretary) and the Custodian of School Monies (Treasurer) for the Month of January;

WHEREAS, in compliance with N.J.A.C.6A:23-2.11(c)3, the Secretary has certified that as of the date of the reports, no budgetary line-item account, in accordance with the minimum chart of accounts as established by the New Jersey Department of Education, has obligations and payments which in total exceed the amount appropriated by the Board of Education;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that in compliance with N.J.A.C.6A:23-2.11(c)4, the Board of Education certifies that, after review of the Secretary’s monthly financial report, and upon consultation with the appropriate district officials, to the best of its N.J.A.C.6A:23-2.11(c)4, and that sufficient funds are available to meet the district’s financial obligations for the remainder of the year; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that pursuant to P.L. 2004 C73, the Board certifies that after review of the Secretary’s monthly financial report and certification, that there are no budgetary transfers that cumulatively exceed 10% that would require the approval of the Commissioner of Education; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the financial reports for the months be accepted and shall become a part of the official minutes of this meeting.

Moved by: Mrs. Lavoie	Seconded by: Mr. Toth
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Ayes: 4	Nays: 0
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4. **RESOLVED** that the Board of Education approves the transfer of funds for the month of February as certified by the Business Administrator and authorized by the Superintendent of Schools.

Moved by: Mrs. Lavoie

Seconded by: Mr. Toth

Ayes: 4

Nays: 0

5. **BE IT RESOLVED** that the Essex Fells Board of Education in the County of Essex, New Jersey, approves the 2023-24 preliminary school district budget for submission to the Executive County Superintendent as follows:

	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Local Tax Levy</u>
General Fund:	\$6,265,425.86	\$5,683,903.86
Special Revenue:	\$163,167.50	\$0.00
Debt Service:	\$99,752.00.00	\$65,836.00
TOTAL:	<u>\$6,528,345.36</u>	<u>\$5,749,739.86</u>

RESOLVED that the Essex Fells Board of Education approve the total travel expenditures for the District at a maximum of \$20,000.00 for the 2023-24 school year; and

RESOLVED that the Business Administrator keep an accounting of all expenditures to ensure compliance with the approved amount; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board authorizes the Superintendent and Business Administrator/Board Secretary to submit the preliminary budget to the Essex County Executive Superintendent of Schools for review and approval, to advertise the preliminary budget in the district’s official newspaper, and establish a public presentation and adoption of the final budget for the 2023-2024 school year on May 3rd, 2023 at 7:30 P.M.

Moved by: Mrs. Lavoie

Seconded by: Mr. Toth

Ayes: 4

Nays: 0

IX. Old Business / Board Discussion

- Dr. Gadaleta reported that she had spoken with the Mayor regarding the SSA for the Class III Officer. The Borough attorney will be making minor revisions/changes and will send to the District’s attorney in order to have approved at the upcoming Borough meeting. Dr. Gadaleta also noted that contract cost detail discussed publicly at the prior BOE meeting was shared at the recent Borough meeting.
- Mrs. Haber noted that Mrs. Burke did attend the Borough meeting but noted she stated she was attending as a member of the public community and not a Board member, as the information was discussed publicly at the prior meeting. Mrs. Haber further noted Mrs. Burke attended with good intention.
- Mr. Toth noted that the responsibility of the Board is policy and the Superintendent’s evaluation, and that Mrs. Burke did intend the Borough meeting with good intention as a member of the community and not speaking on behalf of the Board of Education. Mr. Toth also noted there is caution due to the perception of being a member of the Board, and that the Board had agreed to move forward with the Class III Officer before Mrs. Burke was a Board member.
 - Mayor Davis arrived at 7:50 pm
- Dr. Gadaleta reiterated that the decisions of the Board to move forward was prior to Mrs. Burke being elected to the BOE.
- Mr. Toth agreed the Board’s intention is not to hold up the approval of the SSA.
- Mrs. Haber supported the BOE’s intention to move forward as planned.
- Dr. Gadaleta had received staff input on the new discipline rubric and explained and discussed with the Board.
- Mr. Toth asked about potential updates to the COC. Dr. Gadaleta explained there will be changes made but during the summer to be put in place for the next full school year.

X. New Business / Board Discussion

- Dr. Gadaleta reported to the Board that she had shared at the recent PTA meeting concerns with student attendance and vacations. It was requested if the Board would consider modifying the calendar to extend breaks. Dr. Gadaleta noted that we could however it would bring us to late June and wanted to bring to the Board's attention. Dr. Gadaleta also noted that our MAP testing makeups ended today, but we should have been due a few weeks ago. The Board discussed and agreed to maintain the current calendar.
- Dr. Gadaleta informed the Board of a new two factor authentication of emails they will/should have received.

XI. Public Comment

- None

XII. Adjournment

At 8:12 P. M. the Board made a motion to adjourn. The next workshop meeting of the Board of Education will be held on **Wednesday, March 29, 2023, at 7:30 P.M.** in the Media Center.

Moved by: Mrs. Lavoie

Seconded by: Mr. Toth

Ayes: 4

Nays: 0

Respectfully Submitted,

Mr. Steven J. Lella
Business Administrator/
School Secretary