

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 January 18, 2023. The meeting was called to order by the Board President, Mrs. Amanda Haber, at 7:34 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 – 7:34 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-Present

Also present: Dr. Michelle V. Gadaleta, Superintendent/Principal; Mr. Steven J. Lella, Business Administrator/Board Secretary; 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.

I am honored to continue to serve as your school board president, and I am pleased to welcome our new school board members to our team. We are a dedicated group of individuals who are committed to improving the quality of education for all of the students in our district.

I have no doubt that our newest members will bring a wealth of knowledge, experience, and enthusiasm to the table. Their unique perspectives and skills will be an asset as we work to make informed and impactful decisions for our school.

I encourage all members, both new and returning, to collaborate and communicate with one another as we work towards our common goal of providing the best possible education for our students.

I am excited to see what we will accomplish together and am confident that, with the addition of our new members, we will be able to achieve great things for the students of Essex Fells.

Thank you all for being a part of this important work. Together, we can make a difference in the lives of our students and in our community.

V. Public Comment on Agenda Items Only

- None

VI. Superintendent's Report

- Dr. Gadaleta read a letter provided by Mr. DaCosta.

- To the Community of Essex Fells,
 - For those of you that I have not had the pleasure of meeting, my name is Jason DaCosta, husband of Kelly (Mitchell) DaCosta. I am reaching out to let each of you know that your ongoing support for my wife and me has been a tremendous help and blessing. Your kindness, support and generosity has been immeasurable throughout the past two and a half years, from all the cards and messages, to the meal train and donations, and everything in between. You are a true example of a community. You have ensured that Kelly will always be a part of this community. I cannot thank you all enough for that gift. She always shared stories about her students and of course her colleagues and friends of almost two decades. The excitement I see in her face when she recalls these stories of her time at Essex Fells makes me realize the depth of your impact. There are no words to express how much she misses you all as you are part of her conversations each and every day. From the bottom of my heart, I just want to say thank you! My gratitude for all that you have extended to us cannot be articulated. We know we are not in this alone. Sincerely, Jason DaCosta.
 - Dr. Gadaleta noted that some staff had attended a wig therapy gathering last Friday for Mrs. DaCosta. Everyone had a very nice time and Dr. Gadaleta provided an update on Mrs. DaCosta's treatments.
 - Dr. Gadaleta spoke about how Counseling and HIB are tied in together. Dr. Gadaleta noted that the daily code of conduct is being utilized every day in student interactions. Dr. Gadaleta also noted that we will be increasing Ms. Pilato's hours as school counselor in February to help with the student interaction. Mr. Mehta asked what Dr. Gadaleta thought was driving this behavior, Dr. Gadaleta explained.
 - Dr. Gadaleta was excited to present new curriculum for adoption. Dr. Gadaleta thanked the staff for their hard work. Mrs. Lavoie asked about some of the curriculum and Dr. Gadaleta discussed.
 - Mr. Toth asked about Superintendent resolutions 2 and 7.

VII. Superintendents Resolutions

RESOLVED that the Board of Education approves Superintendent Resolutions #01 –08.

1. **RESOLVED** that the Board of Education accepts and approves, as recommended by the Superintendent, the payment of the following travel related expenses in accordance with the travel policy 6471 for Professional Development:

Staff Member(s): Michelle Truchel
 Event: Catching Up Students Who've Fallen Behind in Reaching and Writing
 Location: Virtual
 Date: 2/10/23
 Cost: \$279.00

Staff Member(s): Michelle Truchel
 Event: Practical Trauma Informed Teaching Strategies to Increase Student Success
 Location: Virtual
 Date: 3/20/23
 Cost: \$279.00

Staff Member(s): Kristin Gann
 Event: Helping Your Struggling Readers Become More Successful Readers
 Location: Virtual
 Date: 1/26/23

Cost: \$279.00

Staff Member(s): Laurie Fischer
 Event: School Based SLP: Long Disorders vs. Long Differences for English Language Learners
 Location: Virtual
 Date: 1/26/23
 Cost: \$279.00

Staff Member(s): Enrique Manlapid
 Event: NJDOE State Program Approval Council (SPAC) Meeting
 Location: Virtual
 Date: 2/15/23
 Cost: \$0.00

Staff Member(s): Steven Lella
 Event: NJASBO Employment & Benefits Issues
 Location: Birchwood Manor, Whippany
 Date: 1/19/23
 Cost: \$135.81

Moved by: Mr. Mehta	Seconded by: Mrs. Burke
Ayes: 5	Nays: 0

- 2. **RESOLVED** that the Board of Education accepts and approves, as recommended by the Superintendent, the revised 2023-2024 School Calendar.

Moved by: Mr. Mehta	Seconded by: Mrs. Burke
Ayes: 5	Nays: 0

- 3. **RESOLVED** that the Board of Education accepts and approves, as recommended by the Superintendent, the 2023 STEAM Curriculum:

Moved by: Mr. Mehta	Seconded by: Mrs. Burke
Ayes: 5	Nays: 0

- 4. **RESOLVED** that the Board of Education accepts and approves, as recommended by the Superintendent, the 2023 Spanish Curriculum:

Moved by: Mr. Mehta	Seconded by: Mrs. Burke
Ayes: 5	Nays: 0

- 5. **RESOLVED** that the Board of Education accepts and approves, as recommended by the Superintendent, the 2023 Visual and Performing Arts Curriculum:

Moved by: Mr. Mehta	Seconded by: Mrs. Burke
Ayes: 5	Nays: 0

2. **RESOLVED** that the Board of Education approves bills and claims for January in the amount of \$181,194.70, and an additional bills and claims for December in the amount of \$37,056.94, as certified by the Business Administrator/Board Secretary; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Education approves the payroll for December as certified by the Business Administrator and approved by the Superintendent and Board President in the total amount of \$376,160.61 including \$353,395.31 for the gross payroll, \$7,559.18 for the Board’s share of FICA/Medicare and \$17,206.12 for the State’s share of FICA/Medicare.

Moved by: Mr. Mehta

Seconded by: Mr. Toth

Ayes: 5

Nays: 0

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 November;

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: Mr. Mehta

Seconded by: Mr. Toth

Ayes: 5

Nays: 0

4. **RESOLVED** that the Board of Education approves the transfer of funds for the month of December as certified by the Business Administrator and authorized by the Superintendent of Schools.

Moved by: Mr.Mehta

Seconded by: Mr. Toth

Ayes: 5

Nays: 0

5. **RESOLVED** that the Essex Fells Board of Education approves the submission of the following Special Education Medicaid Initiative (SEMI) Program Waiver to the Essex County Office of Education:

WHEREAS, NJAC 6A:23A-5.3 provides that a school district may request a waiver of compliance with respect to the district’s participation in the Special Education Medicaid Initiative (SEMI) program for the 2023-2024 school year, and

WHEREAS, the Essex Fells Board of Education desires to apply for this waiver due to the fact that it projects having fewer than 40 Medicaid eligible classified students,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Essex Fells Board of Education hereby authorizes the Chief School Administrator to submit to the Executive County Superintendent of Schools in the County of Essex an appropriate waiver of the requirements of NJAC 6A23A-5.3 for the 2023-2024 school year.

Moved by: Mr. Mehta

Seconded by: Mr. Toth

Ayes: 5

Nays: 0

6. **WHEREAS**, the Essex Fells BOE is the owner of 8 Media Center Tables and 28 Media Center Chairs; and

WHEREAS, the Essex Fells BOE has determined that there is no educational need for these Media Center Tables and Media Center Chairs; and

WHEREAS, the Essex Fells BOE is desirous to donate these Media Center Tables and Media Center Chairs; and

WHEREAS, the Essex Fells BOE has determined that the HOPE BOE is in need of Media Center Tables and Media Center Chairs;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Essex Fells BOE approves the donation of the Media Center Tables and Media Center Chairs to school districts in need with no compensation to the Essex Fells BOE.

Moved by: Mr. Mehta

Seconded by: Mr. Toth

Ayes: 5

Nays: 0

7. **RESOLVED** that the Board of Education per the 2021-22 FY Audit approves the following account transfers for June 30th, 2022, as certified by the Business Administrator and authorized by the Superintendent of Schools:

- o \$1,881.11 from account 11-000-291-270 to 12-000-261-730

Moved by: Mr. Mehta

Seconded by: Mr. Toth

Ayes: 5

Nays: 0

8. **BE IT RESOLVED** that the Essex Fells Board of Education accepts from the Essex Fells PTA a donation of a new Playground at Essex Fells School in the amount of \$76,145.00.

Moved by: Mr. Mehta

Seconded by: Mr. Toth

Ayes: 5

Nays: 0

IX. Old Business / Board Discussion

- Dr. Gadaleta provided curriculum revisions for review.
- Dr. Gadaleta noted we are waiting for the attorney to review Policy 8601.

X. New Business / Board Discussion

- The Board reviewed and discussed policy.
- Dr. Gadaleta explained Link It! And the pilot program for assessments.

XI. Public Comment

- None

XIII. Resolution to Enter Executive Session

At 8:21 P.M. the Board made a motion to enter into Executive Session discuss personnel and legal matters. The items discussed in Executive Session will be disclosed to the public when the need to maintain their confidentiality no longer exists.

Moved by: Mr. Mehta

Seconded by: Mrs. Lavoie

Ayes: 5

Nays: 0

XIV. Adjournment

At 8:38 P.M. the Board made a motion to adjourn. The next workshop meeting of the Board of Education will be held on **Wednesday, February 1, 2023, at 7:30 P.M.** in the Media Center.

Moved by: Mr. Mehta

Seconded by: Mrs. Burke

Ayes: 5

Nays: 0

Respectfully Submitted,

Mr. Steven J. Lella
Business Administrator/Board Secretary