

The Board of Education of the Borough of Essex Fells, in the County of Essex, New Jersey, convened in a Workshop Meeting held in the Media Center on November 2, 2022. 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 October 26, 2022. 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-Absent
 Mrs. Kris Huegel-Present
 Mr. Raj Mehta-Present
 Mr. Theodore Skopak-Absent

Also present: Dr. Michelle V. Gadaleta, Superintendent/Principal; Mr. Steven J. Lella, Business Administrator/Board Secretary, Dr. Michelle Nitti, 1 Staff Member and 6 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 tonight. I want to start by thanking the community for coming out to vote in the school board election last week (or before for the early voters). It is an important opportunity to pick the representation that supports the beliefs and ideas of the citizens. I want to thank the candidates for taking an interest in serving the school and community. It is not an easy undertaking but it shows that there is deep commitment and care for what happens for our children. As our new board will assume their positions in January, I want to thank Mrs. Huegel and Mr. Skopak for their service on the board. You both have dedicated countless hours to making Essex Fells the best that it can be and we are grateful for all that you have contributed in keeping the traditions of the community in mind while also being thoughtful moving the school forward. On tonight's agenda we will recognize various staff members for their years of dedication and service to EFS. These 8 members of our staff exemplify hard work, dedication and a level of care that is the essence of Essex Fells. While we are recognizing milestone years, we are thankful for all of our staff as we enter into our Thanksgiving holiday. On behalf of the Board I want to wish everyone a safe, healthy and Happy Thanksgiving.

V. Public Comment on Agenda Items Only

- None

VI. Superintendent's Report

- Dr. Gadaleta noted that November 14th – 18th will be American Education Week, Parent Visitation. Dr. Gadaleta asked parents to choose 1 day to visit their children for safety and health concerns.
- Dr. Gadaleta reported on the new law regarding having a Threat Assessment Management Team, which we will try to implement for September.
- Dr. Gadaleta referenced the resignation of Mrs. Brown as PE Teacher, and the appointment of the new K inclusion teacher.

VII. Superintendents Resolutions

RESOLVED that the Board of Education approves Superintendent Resolutions #01-02.

1. RESOLVED that the Board of Education accepts and approves, as recommended by the Superintendent, the resignation of Michelle Brown, Physical Education/Health teacher, with December 23rd, 2022, as the last day of employment.

Moved by: Mrs. Huegel

Seconded by: Mr. Mehta

Ayes: 3

Nays: 0

2. RESOLVED that the Board of Education accepts and approves, as recommended by the Superintendent, the appointment of Jessica Scoras, Kindergarten Inclusion teacher, MA, Step 5, at the salary of \$64,885 which will be prorated, for the 2022-23 school year beginning on or about January 3, 2023, pending the usual criminal history and background check for new hires.

Moved by: Mrs. Huegel

Seconded by: Mr. Mehta

Ayes: 3

Nays: 0

VIII. Buildings & Grounds

- Dr. Gadaleta and Mr. Lella provided an update on the roof project. Punch list items still need to be addressed.
- Dr. Gadaleta and Mr. Thomas attended a webinar for the NJ Clean Energy HVAC Grant, which will provide funding to districts to upgrade or repair HVAC units. Mr. Thomas will prepare for an audit of the current HVAC units. Up to 75% will be covered by the state upon meeting state requirements.
- The gymnasium AED has been installed and hard wired to 911. Epi pens are in the AED units.

IX. Curriculum & Instruction

- Dr. Gadaleta was excited to share the teachers hard work on the curriculum revisions. A draft will be provided at the next BOE meeting. Dr. Gadaleta shared some of the Health and PE Curriculum.

X. Finance

- None

XI. Personnel

- Dr. Gadaleta informed the Board that she would be advertising for another K Inclusion vacancy and PE vacancy. Dr. Gadaleta noted the difficulty finding quality candidates, and currently we have spent 14k vs. our 5k advertising budget.
- Dr. Gadaleta wished Mrs. Brown luck on returning to her former district and noted that this is a difficult position to fill.

XII. Policy

- Dr. Gadaleta shared P7446 (School Security Program) and provided a template of agreement from the attorney.
- Dr. Gadaleta also shared P9205 (Communication Between Parents and Staff Members) and noted that although this is not a Strauss Esmay policy, the attorney will implement for EFS. The attorney also provided to Dr. Gadaleta a sample letter template for potential BOE review to parents who do not adhere to the policy

XIII. Old Business / Board Discussion

- Dr. Gadaleta reported that she and Mr. Lella had met with the Mayor, Chief of Police, Police Captain and the Borough Administrator / Clerk on how to proceed with the Class III Officer. The discussion focused on budgeting which Dr. Gadaleta shared with the Board.
- Dr. Gadaleta wants parents to be aware that flu cases are on the rise and asked parents to remain vigilant.

XIV. New Business / Board Discussion

- Dr. Gadaleta reported that at her Superintendent Consortium meeting they had reviewed drafts of the 2023-24 calendar and discussed options for snow days and graduation. The BOE discussed.

XV. Public Comment

- Mrs. Burke commented on the following:
 - How the Health lessons are being addressed.
 - If we are obligated to pay the PE teacher upon release.
 - The vestibule area and safety doors
 - That she looks forward to the opportunity to serve as a possible BOE Member.
- Mrs. Steiner asked about the procedure for Mrs. Brown's replacement and asked how we advertised. She also commented on the calendar start and finish dates.
- Mrs. Candido commented on the calendar of the last day of school in the past.
- Mrs. Lavoie provided comments on the calendar and the last day of school. She also asked about focus groups for the PE teacher.
- Mrs. Burger, speaking on behalf of the EFTA, thanked the Board for taking action so quickly regarding the policy regarding communication between parents and staff.
- Mrs. Burke asked if it were possible to use some of Mr. Viggiano's old activities. Dr. Gadaleta explained the lesson plan.

XVI. Resolution to Enter Executive Session

At 8:26 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: Mrs. Huegel

Seconded by: Mr. Mehta

Ayes: 3

Nays: 0

XVII. Adjournment

At 8:55 P. M. the Board made a motion to adjourn. The next meeting of the Board of Education will be held on **Wednesday, November 16, 2022 at 7:30 P.M.** in the Media Center.

Moved by: Mrs. Huegel

Seconded by: Mr. Mehta

Ayes: 3

Nays: 0

Respectfully Submitted,

Mr. Steven J. Lella
Business Administrator/Board Secretary