

The Board of Education of the Borough of Essex Fells, in the County of Essex, New Jersey, convened in a Regular Public Meeting held virtually January 19, 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 January 13, 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-Present
 Mrs. Kris Huegel-Present
 Mr. Raj Mehta-Present
 Mr. Theodore Skopak-Present

Also present: Dr. Michelle V. Gadaleta, Superintendent/Principal; Mr. Steven J. Lella, Business Administrator/Board Secretary; and approximately 62 Members of the Public.

III. Flag Salute

- The Board President led the salute to the flag.

IV. President’s Report

Good Evening Everyone-

Welcome to our first regular meeting of 2022. Thank you for joining us tonight. Your support is a testament to the value and passion we share for our school community. We appreciate all perspectives and understand that we are all working towards the greater goal - of continued student success.

This month has been challenging with working hard to maintain in-person learning. On behalf of the board, I want to continue to recognize the efforts of the entire staff. Your dedication to our children is unparalleled. Additionally, I would like to thank the work of our parent volunteers for your continued commitment. Showing up every day makes the difference.

We ask that you remain vigilant in contacting the school and protecting yourselves from this virus as this helps to maintain in-person learning.

In some positive news, our own Dr. Gadaleta was a recipient of the NJ-11 Hero’s award. This award recognizes members of the community who have made a difference over the past year. This was an opportunity to remind our everyday heroes that our community is incredibly grateful for all of their work. *Dr. Gadaleta was nominated by parents of EFS, Lauren Kovas, Holly Panagiotakis, Ashley Moran, Gabrielle Mazaud Steiner, Melissa Slomienski, Maribeth Eckert, Viviane Bronstein, and Kate Stefanczyk*

Mrs. Bronstein wrote:

“Dr. Gadaleta went above and beyond her duties and our school was able to keep in person learning during the pandemic, the whole school year 2020-2021. She anticipated the needs and made sure the school had all the material and procedures to mitigate the risks, she worked hard with the school staff and the community to implement all the procedures. Thanks to her initiatives and leadership our kids could have a great learning and social experience throughout the pandemic. She is our hero!”

I echo that sentiment. We are proud to have you Dr. Gadaleta.

On that note, I will now turn it over to Dr. Gadaleta with the Superintendent Report.

V. Public Comment on Agenda Items Only

- None

VI. Superintendent's Report

- Dr. Gadaleta thanked Mrs. Haber for the award recognition.
- Dr. Gadaleta thanked the staff and students for their flexibility regarding the boiler/heat not working on the lower end of building #1 for 2 days. We do now have working heat.
- Dr. Gadaleta updated the Board as to the Safe Return Committee Meeting that took place on the 18th.
- Dr. Gadaleta shared the new Isolation/Quarantine guidelines.
- Dr. Gadaleta reported that covid testing will be available at school, setup with Dr. Nitti and Nurse Renz.
- Dr. Gadaleta provided an update on the tents and thanked an anonymous donation.

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 payment of the following travel related expenses in accordance with the travel policy 6471 for Professional Development:

Staff Member(s): Michelle Truchel
 Event: Make Best Use of Google Classroom Grades 6-12
 Location: Fairfield, NJ
 Date: 2/2/22
 Cost: \$279.00

Staff Member(s): Marco Pannullo
 Event: Tech SPO
 Location: Atlantic City, NJ
 Date: 1/26/22-1/28/22
 Cost: \$811.44

Staff Member(s): Marco Pannullo
 Event: Technology Leadership Academy
 Location: Virtual
 Date: 3/1/22, 3/3/22, 3/8/22, 3/10/22, 5/10/22, 5/12/22, 5/17/22, 5/19/22
 Cost: \$2,500.00

Staff Member(s): Michelle Barshay
 Event: Develop Growth Mindset in Mathematics to Increase Students Perseverance, Engagement and Success
 Location: Virtual
 Date: 4/8/22
 Cost: \$279.00

Staff Member(s): Judi Reynolds
 Event: I&RS/504 – Perfect Together
 Location: Virtual
 Date: 1/20/22
 Cost: \$199.00

Staff Member(s): Dorotea Banek
 Event: New Jersey Educational Tech Conference
 Location: Montclair, NJ
 Date: 3/8/22
 Cost: \$0.00

Staff Member(s): EFS Staff Grades 3-6
 Event: Dr. Tracey Severns, Student Assessments
 Location: Essex Fells School
 Date: 3/8/22
 Cost: \$5,500.00

Moved by: Mr. Skopak Seconded by: Mrs. Huegel
 Ayes: 5 Nays: 0

2. **RESOLVED** that the Board of Education accepts and approves, as recommended by the Superintendent, the revised 2022-2023 School Calendar.

Note: Calendar Attached

Moved by: Mr. Skopak Seconded by: Mrs. Huegel
 Ayes: 5 Nays: 0

VIII. Business Administrator’s Report

- Mr. Lella provided an update on the 2022-23 budget. Mr. Lella discussed the 2% tax levy and the 408k of banked cap the district has available, 338k of which is expiring in this budget.
- Mr. Lella noted the 2021-22 audit is for the most part complete, we are just waiting on the GASB 78 information from the NJ Treasury Department.

IX. Business Resolutions

RESOLVED that the Board of Education approves Business Resolutions #01-06.

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

Regular Meeting Minutes	11/17/21
Executive Session Minutes	11/17/21
Regular Meeting Minutes	12/1/21

Moved by: Mr. Skopak Seconded by: Mr. Toth
 Ayes: 5 Nays: 0

2. **RESOLVED** that the Board of Education approves bills and claims for January in the amount of **\$123,512.22** 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 \$371,078.53, including \$346,724.28 for the gross payroll, \$5,944.11 for the Board’s share of FICA/Medicare and \$18,410.14 for the State’s share of FICA/Medicare.

Moved by: Mr. Skopak 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 December;

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 knowledge, no major account or fund has been over expended in violation of 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. Skopak 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. Skopak 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 2022-2023 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,

IV. Adjournment

At 9:19 P.M. the Board of Education made a motion to adjourn. The next meeting of The Board of Education will held on **Wednesday, February 2, 2022 at 7:30 P.M.** in the Gymnasium.

Moved by: Mr. Skopak

Seconded by: Mrs. Huegel

Ayes: 5

Nays: 0

Respectfully Submitted,

Mr. Steven J. Lella
Business Administrator/
Board Secretary