

**. THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF ESSEX FELLS, NJ
BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING**

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 16, 2024

REGULAR MEETING – 7:30 P.M. – MEDIA CENTER

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 3rd, 2024. Agendas were mailed to the Clerk of the Borough of Essex Fells, the Progress, and the Star Ledger.

- **Call to Order – 7:30 P.M.**
- **Roll Call**
 - Mrs. Amanda Haber, President
 - Mr. John Toth, Vice-President
 - Mr. Raj Mehta
 - Mrs. Caragh Lavoie
 - Mrs. Jacquelyn Burke
- **Flag Salute**
- **President's Report**
- **Public Comment on Agenda Items Only**
- **Superintendent's Report**
 - Lunch/Recess Update
 - NJSLA Spring Score Report
 - Stronge Inter-rater Reliability Recertification
 - Week of Respect (10/7-10/11)
 - Fire Prevention Week (10/7-10/11)
 - School Violence and Awareness Week (10/18-10/22)
 - Red Ribbon Week (10/23-10/31)
 - Parent/Teacher Conferences (10/23-10/25)
 - Halloween (10/31)
- VII. **Buildings & Grounds**
 - Digital Sign Status
 - Boiler Room 2
- VIII. **Curriculum & Instruction**
 - Grade 5 Social Studies Curriculum
 - Student Liaison to the BOE schedule

IX. Finance

- 2023-2024 Audit
- 2025-2026 Budget
- Application for School State Aid (ASSA) – October 15th, 2024
- District Report of Transported Resident Students (DRTRS) – November 15th, 2024
- SI221 – Menstrual Product Reimbursement Program

X. Personnel

- Public comment by school personnel
- Special Education Teacher Vacancies

XI. Policy

- Policy Follow up
 - P 0141.1 Board Member Number and Term – Sending District
 - P 0141.2 Board Member Number and Term – Receiving District
- New Policy Discussion
 - P 5331 Management of Life-Threatening Allergies in School
 - P 5310 Health Services

XII. Superintendent's Resolutions

RESOLVED that the Board of Education approves Superintendent Resolutions #01–10.

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): Susan Hacker
 Event: Conquer Math 6th Grade Workshops
 Location: Pompton Plains, NJ
 Date: 11/14/24, 12/11/24, 2/6/25
 Cost: \$570.00

Staff Member(s): LeeAnn Smith
 Event: Writing Defensible IEP's
 Location: West Orange, NJ
 Date: 10/15/24
 Cost: \$0.00

Staff Member(s): Stefania Focarino
 Event: Accelerate Progress for Student's with IEP's By Making the Best Use of Differentiation, Accommodations, and Modifications
 Location: Virtual
 Date: 11/12/24
 Cost: \$295.00

Staff Member(s): Jessica Ennis
Event: Grades K-12 Increase Your Success as a Special Education
Resource Teacher
Location: Virtual
Date: 10/18/24
Cost: \$169.00

Staff Member(s): Jessica Ennis
Event: Grades K-12 Strengthening Executive Functioning Skills of
Students with Special Needs
Location: Virtual
Date: 11/21/24
Cost: \$169.00

Staff Member(s): Stefania Focarino
Event: Strengthening the Executive Function Skills of Your Students with
Special Needs
Location: Virtual
Date: 12/13/24
Cost: \$295.00

Staff Member(s): Nicole Axentiou
Event: Creative Curriculum: Gold Assessment System Training
Location: Virtual
Date: 10/29/24
Cost: \$0.00

Staff Member(s): Katie MacKenzie
Event: Best Strategies for the Unique Needs of Third Grade Students
Location: Virtual
Date: 11/14/24
Cost: \$295.00

Staff Member(s): Erika Pilato
Event: School Counselors: Better Support Students Mental Health Needs
Location: Virtual
Date: 11/7/24
Cost: \$295.00

Staff Member(s): LeeAnn Smith
Event: CAI 2025 Conference – State of the Art of SLD Identification,
Linking Assessment Results and Research to Case Conceptualizations and
Interventions
Location: Virtual
Date: 1/22/25, 1/23/25, 1/24/25
Cost: \$420.00

Staff Member(s): Deana Hromoko
 Event: Using AI Tolls to Improve Special Education
 Location: Virtual
 Date: 1/6/25
 Cost: \$275.00

Moved by: Seconded by:

Ayes: Nays:

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

EFRD – Youth Basketball Program
 11/11/24 – 3/21/25 - 5:00pm – 8:00pm
 Gymnasium

Moved by: Seconded by:

Ayes: Nays:

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

EFFEE – Variety Show
 11/15/24 - 6:00pm – 8:30pm
 Gymnasium/Media Center

Moved by: Seconded by:

Ayes: Nays:

4. **RESOLVED** that the Board of Education accepts and approves, as recommended by the Superintendent, the 2024-2025 School Improvement Panel (ScIP)/District Evaluation Advisory Committee/Professional Development:

Michelle Gadaleta	Superintendent/Principal
Jamie Wallace	Teacher Representative
Michelle Barshay	Teacher Representative
Candice Fitzgerald	Teacher Representative
Judi Reynolds	Teacher Representative
Amanda Haber	BOE Representative
Ilyse Negrin	PTA Representative
Paige Daniels	EFFEE Representative

Moved by: Seconded by:

Ayes: Nays:

5. **RESOLVED** that the Board of Education accepts and approves, as recommended by the Superintendent, the 2024-2025 Safety Team/Culture Climate Committee:

Michelle Gadaleta	Superintendent/Principal
Erika Pilato	HIB Representative
Laura Quinn	Teacher Representative
Katie MacKenzie	Teacher Representative
Sue Hacker	Teacher Representative
Lisa Massaro	Teacher Representative
Dorotea Banek	Teacher Representative
Mary Renz	Nurse/Teacher Representative
Ilyse Negrin	PTA Representative
Paige Daniels	EFFEE Representative

Moved by:

Seconded by:

Ayes:

Nays:

6. **RESOLVED** that the Board of Education accepts and approves, as recommended by the Superintendent, the 2043-2025 District Testing Committee:

Michelle Gadaleta	Superintendent/Principal
LeeAnn Smith	Teacher Representative
Kimberly Trafford	Teacher Representative
Judi Reynolds	Teacher Representative
Marco Pannullo	IT Representative

Moved by:

Seconded by:

Ayes:

Nays:

7. **RESOLVED** that the Board of Education accepts and approves, as recommended by the Superintendent, the 2024-2025 Threat Assessment Committee:

Michelle Gadaleta	Superintendent/Principal
Steven Lella	School Business Administrator
Anthony Tedesco	SLEOIII
Judi Reynolds	Teacher Representative
Erika Pilato	School Counselor
LeeAnn Smith	Child Study Team Coordinator

Moved by:

Seconded by:

Ayes:

Nays:

8. **RESOLVED** that the Board of Education accepts and approves, as recommended by the Superintendent, the Maternity/Disability Leave of Absence for Jessica Ennis from January 2, 2025, through June 20, 2025 , using the following days:

January 2, 2025 - January 24, 2025 = 16 sick days
 January 27, 2025 - January 29, 2025 = 3 personal days
 January, 30 2025 - May 1, 2025 = 12 weeks FMLA
 May 2, 2025 - June 20, 2025= 36 days leave of absence
 September 2025 = First day of school return date

Moved by: Seconded by:

Ayes: Nays:

9. **RESOLVED** that the Board of Education accepts and approves, as recommended by the Superintendent, the Maternity/Disability Leave of Absence for Molly Fornini from September 27, 2024, through June 20, 2025, using the following days:

September 30th, 2024 – October 22nd, 2024 = 16 sick Days
 October 23rd, 2024 – October 25th, 2024 = 3 personal Days
 October 28th, 2024 – June 20th, 2025 = Unpaid leave

Moved by: Seconded by:

Ayes: Nays:

10. **RESOLVED** that the Board of Education accepts and approves, as recommended by the Superintendent, the change in employment for Lori Sink from Grade 6 Special Education Maternity Leave Replacement Teacher to Preschool Paraprofessional at a salary of \$30,000, to be pro-rated, pending Grade 6 Special Education hire.

Moved by: Seconded by:

Ayes: Nays:

XIII. Business Administrator's Report

- See Finance

XIV. Business Resolutions

RESOLVED that the Board of Education approves Business Resolutions #01-03.

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

Workshop Minutes	September 4 th , 2024
Executive Workshop Minutes	September 4 th , 2024
Regular Meeting Minutes	September 18 th , 2024
Executive Meeting Minutes	September 18 th , 2024

Moved by:

Seconded by:

Ayes:

Nays:

2. **RESOLVED** that the Board of Education approves bills and claims for October in the amount of \$ 209,424.93; as certified by the Business Administrator/Board Secretary; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Education approves the payroll for September as certified by the Business Administrator and approved by the Superintendent and Board President in the total amount of \$396,873.49 including \$369,769.21 for the gross payroll, \$9,247.72 for the Board's share of FICA/Medicare and \$17,856.56 for the State's share of FICA/Medicare.

Moved by:

Seconded by:

Ayes:

Nays:

3. **RESOLVED** that the Board of Education approves the transfer of funds for the month of July, August and September, as certified by the Business Administrator and authorized by the Superintendent of Schools.

Moved by:

Seconded by:

Ayes:

Nays:

XV. Old Business / Board Discussion

- 2025-2026 School Calendar

XVI. New Business / Board Discussion

- 2025-2026 Preschool Tuition
- Insurance for School Devices

XVII. Public Comment

XVIII. Resolution to Enter Executive Session

WHEREAS the following subject is not appropriate to be discussed in a public meeting and is within the exemptions which may be discussed and acted upon and,

WHEREAS only the following subject(s) shall be discussed in private recess by the Board and the minutes made available to the public as soon as the reason for exemption no longer exists, it is therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED at the Public Meeting of the Essex Fells Board of Education on this day Wednesday, October 16, 2024, pursuant to Sections 7 & 8 of the Open Public Meetings Act, the following subject(s) shall be discussed in a session of the Board closed to the public:

Please be advised that the Board will be going into executive session for approximately thirty minutes for the purpose of discussing personnel and legal matters. Action will not be taken in public after the executive session.

Moved by:

Seconded by:

Ayes:

Nays:

XIX. Adjournment

RESOLVED that this public meeting of the Board of Education be adjourned at ____ P.M. The next workshop meeting of the Board of Education will be held on **Wednesday, November 6, 2024, at 7:30 P.M.** in the Media Center.

Moved by:

Seconded by:

Ayes:

Nays:

AGENDA

October 16, 2024

2024-2025

Teacher	Section	Total	M	F
Mrs. Axentiou/Mrs. Fornini	PS/AM	10	0	10
Mrs. Axentiou/Mrs. Fornini	PS/PM	13	8	5
Mrs. Mauro	KM	15	7	8
Mrs. Brutman/Mrs. Takkel	KBT	15	7	8
Mrs. Fitzgerald	1F	18	11	7
Mrs. Gann/Mrs. Hromoko	1GH	19	11	8
Mrs. Quinn	2Q	13	8	5
Ms. Duarte/Mrs. Focarino	2DF	14	7	7
Ms. Kowalski	3K	16	7	9
Ms. Anderson/Mrs. MacKenzie	3AM	16	7	9
Mrs. Banek	4B	20	8	12
Mrs. Lodato/Mrs. Ennis	4LE	20	9	11
Mrs. Fogarty	5F	15	11	4
Mrs. Jaworski/Mrs. Brzostowski	5JB	15	11	4
Mrs. Santalla	6S	16	6	10
Mrs. Hacker/Mrs. Sink	6HS	16	9	7
TOTAL		251	127	124
Out-of-District	*	3		
FINAL TOTALS		254		

*Total includes 3 out-of-district students.

8/19/2024

Fire Drills: 2024-2025

Month	Fire Drill	Emergency Drill
August	8/27/24	August 23, 2024 – 911 call
September	9/16/24	September 12, 2024
October		
November		
December		
January		
February		
March		
April		
May		
June		
July	July 31, 2024	July 31, 2024 – Walkie-Talkie Check

HIB / V&V Report

As of Date of BOE Meeting	8/21	9/4	9/18	10/16										
TOTAL# of Reported Incidents	0	0	0	0										
Number of Unfounded Incidents	0	0	0	0										
Number of Founded Incidents	0	0	0	0										
Violence & Vandalism Incidents	0	0	0	0										

ESSEX FELLS SCHOOL
DISTRICT MISSION STATEMENT

The Essex Fells School is a very special public elementary school enrolling boys and girls in preschool through the sixth grades. Pupils enjoy small classes and a total school population of approximately two hundred and fifty.

The size of the school is a wonderful asset as it allows a strong sense of community and offers teachers and pupils many opportunities to form bonds of collegiality, identification and support. It also supports the concept that every adult in the school is responsible for every child.

The comparatively small faculty is also a benefit. The faculty as a whole are the decision-making body on all questions of teaching and learning. Teachers find it easy to share experiences and act consistently across pupils' entire academic program. The combined efforts of the staff work to support a pupil centered approach to education.

Essex Fells teachers are encouraged to try new ideas, to work collaboratively with colleagues, and to participate fully in all aspects of schooling.

The mission of the school is etched in the mortar of the original schoolhouse with the words Studies Pass Into Character.

The primary goals of an Essex Fells education include:

1. Developing in all pupils the capacity to think critically and communicate effectively through a mastery of written and spoken English.
2. Motivating all pupils to recognize and develop their academic abilities in order to build character and to achieve their full potential.
3. Teaching children to value themselves, their peers and their teachers.
4. Establishing a respect for and a strong sense of responsibility to the physical, social, and aesthetic world around them.
5. Nurturing a love of country and a pride in our American heritage and citizenship.
6. Communicating a love of scholarship and continued interest in life-long learning.
7. Ensuring all pupils will achieve the New Jersey Student Learning Standards at all levels.

To secure these common goals, the Essex Fells staff of professional educators recognizes that the collaborative engagement of the children in the learning process is the key to intellectual development. Dedicated teachers create classrooms that are alive with cooperative learning activities and child-centered problem-solving routines. Children are encouraged to explore, to question, to make decisions, and to express opinions in a supportive learning environment. Teachers also model their own commitment to learning by continuing to earn advanced degrees. On-going professional development is acknowledged as the foundation for promoting outstanding pupil achievement.