

Approved March 28th
EBOE Meeting

BOARD OF EDUCATION

February 22, 2024
Elizabeth, New Jersey

Board President Charlene Dorgely welcomed everyone to the February 22, 2024, regular agenda/business meeting of the Elizabeth Board of Education.

Mrs. Dorgely called the meeting to order and read the following statement at 5:40 p.m. Ladies and Gentlemen, good evening. This is a combined regular agenda and business meeting of the Board of Education. Pursuant to New Jersey Statutes and the rules adopted by the Board of Education, notice of this meeting was sent to The Star Ledger and Cablevision of Elizabeth on February 16, 2024. In addition, this notice is posted on the Bulletin Board in the lobby of 500 North Broad Street, and pursuant to this act, a copy has been filed with the City Clerk of Elizabeth.

“We want to welcome everyone present here at School No. 51 and to our television viewers to this February 22, 2024, meeting of the Board of Education. We are here to govern, provide management oversight, and make policy for the district. The Superintendent manages the district. This is a meeting of the Board in public, not a meeting of the public.

“This meeting is being recorded and will become part of the Elizabeth Board of Education permanent record. In order that the recording will adequately reflect the proceedings, please refrain from talking while others are speaking.

We also ask that you silence the sound on your electronic devices. Since it is legally mandated that these proceedings be accurately recorded, we may have to ask for order periodically should noise begin to interfere with our recording capabilities.

“There will be a public portion for citizens to address the Board. Participants for the public portion must personally sign in prior to the start of the meeting so that they may have the opportunity to speak. The sign-in sheet states the name, address, telephone number and reason that the person wants to comment, whether it is an agenda item or a general education comment. “

We are pleased that you have taken time this evening to join us here for our Board of Education meeting. Thank you for your interest in the Elizabeth Public Schools.

Present: Mmes. Barbosa, Carvalho, Chevres, (joined the meeting at 5:51 p.m.), Mr. Jacobs, Mrs. Moreno-Ortega, Mr. Neron, (joined the meeting at 5:46 p.m.), Mrs. Goncalves Pestana, Mr. Rivera, Mrs. Dorgely -9

Absent: None

Superintendent of Schools Olga Hugelmeyer, School Business Administrator/Board Secretary Harold E. Kennedy, Jr, Assistant Superintendent for Schools, Rafael Cortes, Assistant Superintendent for Schools, Judy Finch Johnson, Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning, Dr. Jennifer Cedeno, Chief of Operations,

Francisco Cuesta, Comptroller Rajeev Malhotra, Deputy Counsel Heather Ford, and Co-General Counsel Michael Simitz Esq. of Kologi Simitz Law Office, were in attendance.

A Moment of Silence was held in memory of Anthony Joseph Aschettino, Teacher, Victor Mravlag School No.21, and Victor DeOliveira, Security Guard, Chessie Dentley Roberts School No 30.

Colors were presented during the Flag Ceremony by members of the Admiral William F. Halsey, Jr. Health and Public Safety Academy Marine Corps Junior R.O.T.C.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Board Member, Diane Barbosa.

The Star-Spangled Banner was played.

The Pledge of Ethics was led by Board Member, Isaias Rivera

Mrs. Dorgely asked Superintendent Hugelmeyer to present the Student Representative to the Board.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer said she wished to share some background on Jeremiah Laporte as given to her by Mr. Ted Panagopoulos, principal of JVJ Stem Academy. “It is an honor to have Mr. Jeremiah Laporte represent JVJ Stem Academy as student representative to the Board of Education. Jeremiah not only possesses kindness and compassion but remarkable leadership ability. One of his notable accomplishments was his active participation on our fund-raising committee where his dedication and resourcefulness significantly led to its success. Serving as chair of our ambassadorship program he effectively bridged communication between students and administration, making sure student’s voices were valued and heard. His commitment to supporting his peers is admirable. Jeremiah initiated a peer tutoring program that has proved invaluable to those in need. Additionally, he created a “Buddy System” that facilitated a smooth integration of new students into the JVJ community, fostering a feeling of welcome and support from the start. Jeremiah’s influence beyond our school is extended through his appearances as a motivational speaker, advocate, and poet. He has had impactful appearances including one before the State Senate. Jeremiah’s academic achievements are just as impressive as he approaches his studies with rare seriousness and enthusiasm. His excellence in course work and genuine passion for learning is evident by his insightful contributions to class discussions and his ability to bridge concepts across disciplines. Jeremiah LaPorte is an exceptional student who embodies leadership, dedication, and kindness to both his academics and community. He is the perfect fit to be the Student Representative to the Board of Education.” Mrs. Hugelmeyer asked Mr. Laporte to join the Board on the dais.

Board President Mrs. Dorgely asked Mr. Kennedy to have the record reflect Mr. Laporte’s attendance at tonight’s meeting. It was duly noted by Mr. Kennedy.

Mrs. Dorgely read the following statement.

Citizens may address the Board.

“At this time, the microphones are open for public comment to those who have signed in prior to this session. I shall call individuals to the microphone based on the order of the sign-in. Each statement made by a participant shall be limited to three minutes in duration. The total time of public comment shall be limited to 60 minutes. No individual is able to yield their time to another individual. All statements shall be directed to the presiding officer; no participant may address or question Board Members individually. Each speaker shall comply in all respects with Board Policy 9322 (copies were provided next to the sign in sheet)”.

The following rules shall apply:

1. Time limits will be strictly enforced.

2. No personal attacks on individuals or naming of individuals.
3. No vulgar or indecent language.
4. A person may address the Board no more than once during a single meeting.
5. Comments will not be debated.

Any person in violation of the Policy will be warned, and their comments terminated if needed. If such violation continues, this individual may be escorted from the meeting.”

“As a reminder this is a meeting of the Board in public, not a meeting of the public.”

Mrs. Dorgely called upon the first public participant, R. Dominique Muhammad a.k.a. Rickey Funderberk to address the Board.

Mr. Muhammad spoke about plans for the celebration of Iftar (The breaking of the Fast) on March 29th. Mr. Muhammad was joined by Derek Wali Abdul a.k.a. Kareem Johnson who further explained the significance of the Holy Day.

Mrs. Dorgely thanked them for their comments.

Mrs. Dorgely called upon the next public participant, Maria Lorenz, to address the Board to address the Board.

Mrs. Lorenz voiced her concern about an e-mail trail that she received in response to her OPRA request.

Mrs. Dorgely thanked her for her comments.

Since there were no other public participants signed up to address the Board, Mrs. Dorgely closed this portion of the meeting.

Mrs. Dorgely stated that for the presentation portion of our meeting this evening, we have created a video highlighting the initiative sponsored by Board Member Jerry Jacobs, Black History is American History. Throughout the month of February, Elizabeth Public Schools will be promoting the vast and exceptional contributions of Black Americans to communities across the United States. Students will be engaged through lessons, activities, events, and performances that will help them to better understand and learn more about the African American experience.

Superintendent of Schools Olga Hugelmeyer presented her report to the Community.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer announced that it was National School Counselors Week. A video was played in honor of our School Counselors who work tirelessly on behalf of Elizabeth Public School students.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer announced that the Elizabeth Public Schools received a \$4.3 million grant from the School Development Authority (SDA) in Emergent Capital Project Funding.

The Superintendent reported that a press release had been issued just a few hours earlier, announcing that Elizabeth would be one of five (5) School Districts throughout the state to be part of an nineteen million dollar EPA Clean Air Grant for emissions free electrical buses.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer announced that Elizabeth will be partnering with the New York Academy of Sciences for a Scientist-in-Residence Program. Studies have continually shown that young people exposed to the Sciences through active inquiry-based learning are more likely to pursue STEM education. One of the most effective ways

to engage students is to have students perform genuine scientific research with a real scientist. Created in cooperation with the New York City Department of Education in 2012, the Scientist in Residence Program matches Scientists and Public-School teachers to bring scientific inquiry into the classroom. The Scientist/Teacher pair will develop and implement a yearlong project that will engage students in genuine scientific research. The Scientists from the New York Academy of Sciences have met with teachers and administrators, and we are excited to implement this program. We will be providing periodic updates to the Board and community about this exciting and once in a lifetime opportunity for our students to have scientists in the classroom(s).

The Superintendent announced that the Elizabeth Public Schools will be offering “Addressing Equity Through Cultural Education and SEL Training. The district has been fortunate to be able to make a training video with the Authors, Dr Larry Leverett and Dr. Maurice Elias along with our department of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion and the district’s I.T. department. The video will be shared with our teachers and other team members who interact with students. Key Topics that will be addressed include:

- Personal Biases
- Getting to Know Students
- Adapting Teaching Approaches
- Elevating Student Culture
- Involving the Family and Community

Mrs. Hugelmeyer thanked the Director of Equity and Inclusion, Mr. Samuel Etienne, for his help in facilitating the development of this video.

The Superintendent also announced that the Elizabeth Public Schools will be offering Families and Parent Development Workshop Series. These workshops will touch on a wide variety of topics including:

- Managing Stress
- Helping your Child with Mathematics
- Strategies to Elevate Learning
- Career and Professional Learning.

Several of these workshops are already on the District website. Further topics will include Literacy and Social and Emotional Learning. Mrs. Hugelmeyer thanked Dr. Marchetti for her efforts in working with the Instructional Directors in developing Math Skill videos that have been very well received by our families. It is so important for our parents and families to understand the curriculum for their students.

The second part of the Superintendent’s report featured Recognitions for achievements for the district.

Elizabeth High School – Frank J Cicarell Academy, Alexander Hamilton Preparatory Academy and John E. Dwyer Technology School made the 2023 AP School Honor Roll.

Two Elizabeth Schools were named NJ Schools of Character – John E. Dwyer Technology Academy and School # 3 Nicholas J. LaCorte/Peterstown School achieved this designation.

John E. Dwyer Technology Academy’s “No One Eats Alone Day” was certified as a “Promising Practice by Character.org.

The Elizabeth High School Lady Minutemen Girls Basketball Team won the Union County Tournament. They defeated Cranford in overtime on February 18th. It was their first Union County title since 1997.

The William F. Halsey Health and Public safety Academy was named a Naval Honor School. It was the third time in Four (4) years that Jr ROTC program at Halsey had achieved this distinction, which means they are in the top twenty percent of all programs nationwide. As a result of this prestigious designation students can apply directly to the United States Naval Academy, The United States Air Force Academy, and the United States Military Academy at West Point. Under the terms of the award, a letter of recommendation from their Senior Marine Corp Jr ROTC Instructor carries as much weight as a letter from a U.S. Representative or Senator.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer presented a series of slides, highlighting how to navigate the EPS website, specifically the Special Services webpage which can be found on the District home page. On the Special Services webpage, you can find information on topics such as Child Find, Child Study Team, Elizabeth SEPAC, IEP, and the Transition to Adulthood Program.

The Superintendent gave an update on Graduation Requirements. On January 16th, 2024, Governor Murphy signed into law that requires all graduating high school students (Class of 2025 and beyond) and families to complete either: the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or the NJ Alternative Financial Aid Application. These documents must be submitted prior to receiving a high school diploma. To help our students and families comply with this new law the following initiatives are underway:

- On the District website there is a guide to completing the FAFSA
- On the High School level, every school hosts a Senior Financial Aid Completion Events.
- District Financial Aid Nights were held on 1/17/24 and 2/7/24 and one more is scheduled for 3/13/24.
- Partnership (Data Sharing Agreement) with Higher Education Student Assistance Authority (HESAA) – will provide frequent completion updates.

Future EPS Initiatives to support Financial Aid Completion include:

- Increased Financial Aid night for students and families – will be Bi-weekly starting January 2025
- School Level – Embedded Financial Aid assistant through our Financial Literacy Curriculum
- Increased partnership with Higher Education Student Assistance Authority (HESAA) will include more frequent data sharing and additional professional development for school staff.
- Training for students/guardians on the updated graduation requirements including waiver opportunity.

A student shall be exempt from the FAFSA Graduation Requirement if the student or the student's parent or guardian submits to the school district a signed waiver form requesting the exemption from the requirement and a form signed by the school counselor authorizing the exemption for good cause as defined by the New Jersey State Board of Education.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer thanked Mr. Anthony DiDonato, Director of Student Services for the District for leading the charge for these initiatives in response to the new law.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer announced that beginning in 2024, the SAT Test has gone digital. This includes SAT School Day as well as National Dates on Saturdays. The digital SAT uses multistage adaptive test (MST). This means that the digital SAT fairly and accurately measures the same things in a shorter, more secure test while maintaining reliability of the scores. Elizabeth Public Schools will administer its SAT School Day on Tuesday April 23, 2024. The following students will be administered the SAT.

- All Grade 11 students in all high school schools.
- Grade 12 students who do not have SAT scores as per Policy 6146 Graduation Requirements.

The Superintendent informed the audience that Early Childhood Lottery Registration is open from February 21 – March 22. The Gifted and Talented Program Application period is from February 27 to April 12. An Information session for the Gifted and Talented Program will be held on February 27 from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. at School 22.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer showed a slide listing the celebrations and observances that the Schools and District will be honoring during the month of March- they include:

- Read Across America Day-March 1st.
- National School Social Worker Week – March 3rd – 9th
- National School Breakfast Week – March 4th to the 8th
- The Grand & Glorious Celebration of St. Patrick’s Day – March 17th.
- American Red Cross Month
- Irish American Heritage Month
- Music in our Schools Month
- National Nutrition Month
- Gifted and Talented Students Month
- Women’s History Month
- Social Workers Month
- Youth Art Month

Mrs. Dorgely asked if there were any questions or comments regarding the Superintendent’s Report to the Community. Board Member Jerry Jacobs asked for a few moments to make some comments. He stated that once again that Black History is American History, and that February is his favorite month of the year. Mr. Jacobs also commended Board President Dorgely for her for the implementation of the monthly initiatives being piloted by individual Board members each month. In addition, Mr. Jacobs wanted to commend the Girl’s Basketball team for winning the Union County Tournament, their first County title since 1997. This is a new era of Girl’s basketball and he hoped to see a good crowd for their next state tournament game on Monday the 25th. Student Representative, Jeremiah LaPorte asked if the exemptions for the FAFSA graduation requirement will be presented in more detail. Mrs. Hugelmeyer replied in the affirmative and said that students and families will be fully informed of the exceptions to the graduation criteria.

Before initiating a review of items that were proposed to be on the Agenda for this evening’s meeting, Mrs. Dorgely thanked all the Director’s in attendance. She commenced a review of the agenda items and instructed the Board members to ask questions regarding specific items.

Tab 1a) Official and Private Minutes (January 25th, 2024) were added to the Agenda.

Tab 1b) Treasurer/Secretary’s Report (December 31st, 2023) was added to the Agenda.

Tab 2a) Personnel Report/Supplemental Personnel Report, Chief of Operations Mr. Francisco Cuesta provided the following summary: There are six (6) retirements, four (4) resignations, three (3) promotions and fifteen (15) appointments, which Mr. Cuesta believed are the most important item(s) on the agenda tonight. In addition, there are 26 transfers which Mr. Cuesta explained can be for a variety of reasons, among those are self-requests, changes in Special Education placements or for legal reasons. Moreover, twenty (20) people have earned salary increases as they have earned master’s degrees or reached six (6) year status. As points of information, Mr.

Cuesta informed the Board that during the 2022-2023 School year, the Human Resources Department completed eight hundred (800) verification of employment inquiries, two hundred and fifty (250) Loan forgiveness applications and three hundred and nine (309) team members were aided by the district's tuition reimbursement program. Board Member Rosa Moreno Ortega thanked Mr. Cuesta and the Human Resources Department for their continued efforts in hiring new teachers and staff as well as performing so many duties behind the scenes. Mr. Rivera questioned what appeared to be duplicate staffing in a Social Emotional Learning Program. Mrs. Hugelmeyer explained that in order to expend remaining ESSER funding the program had been extended and one individual who had been part of the original staff, now only wanted to be, an as needed substitute.

Tab 2a) was added to the Agenda.

Tab 3) was added to the Agenda.

Tab 4) Superintendent's Reports

Tab 4a)- was added to the Agenda.

Tab 4b)- was added to the Agenda.

Tab 4bb)- was added to the Agenda.

Tab 4c – Mr. Rivera requested clarification on page 3 Request # 11- which was a typo, and the time was changed to a.m. rather than p.m. He also noted that Request # 68 on page 17, had a date changed to May 29th, Mrs. Hugelmeyer asked Assistant Superintendent for Schools, Mr. Rafael Cortes, to summarize the field trips on the agenda to be approved: Mr. Cortes stated that on a school year to date basis the Board has approved four hundred and forty-four (444) field trips and there are one hundred eleven (111) Field Trips that need to be approved. Of these trips, sixty-nine (69) are for grade K-8 while thirty-one (31) are for high school students. Among the field trips there are fifteen (15) journeys to universities and colleges (15) to various competitions, four (4) to Museums and seven (7) are in-house i.e. trips to Jefferson Arts Academy for their play. Board Member Illiana Chevres thanked Mr. Cortes for the information he provided. She was also pleased to see that there was a visit to Lifetown which will help students learn life skills as they shop and travel through a simulated town. Mrs. Moreno-Ortega asked for a synopsis of the Field Trips by school and grade. She understands that at this time of year field trips may be slanted towards high school seniors and eighth graders as part of graduation celebrations. In addition, Mrs. Moreno Ortega complimented School No. 9's principal, Christina Viegas, for having placed seventeen trips on tonight's agenda. Board President Dorgely reiterated that the responsibility for requesting/scheduling field trips is at the school level. It is important to get our students out of the classroom to see the bigger world. Board Member Stephanie Goncalves Pestana informed the Board the Education Management Committee is doing a deeper data dive to review field trips by school, grade etc., as well as getting information on any field trips that were proposed but were denied and the reasons for the denial.

Tabs 4c, and 4d were added to the Agenda.

Tab 5, Authorizations Report- Superintendent Hugelmeyer asked Dr. Michael Ojeda to give a summary of his authorization request. Dr Ojeda was seeking authorization for the Elizabeth Public Schools to participate in the New Jersey Autism Study conducted in collaboration with the New Jersey Department of Health and Education and US Center for Disease Control and Prevention. (CDC). This will allow the District to submit data as part of a longitudinal study encapsulating information from across the state.

Dr. Jennifer Cedeno, Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning summarized the Donations that the District wished to accept for this month:

Musical Instruments including saxophone, clarinet and/or guitar(s) from Project Matters to Winfield Scott School No. 2 to ensure that interested students have access to musical instruments.

880 Coats from Mahr Team ILA Local 1235 for Jerome Dunn Academy of Mathematics, Technology, and the Arts School No. 9 students.

Games, Pizza and Water from ST Math for Jerome Dunn Academy of Mathematics, Technology, and the Arts School No. 9 for Family Math Night.

Festool Safety Sanding Equipment and Uniforms from the Collision Repair Education Foundation in support of the Collision Repair Program to improve student safety for dust extraction for the students at Thomas A. Edison Career & Technical Academy

Dr. Cedenó thanked all of the Donators for their gifts.

Mr. Anthony DiDonato, Director of Student Services, requested approval for the School District to enter into a Partnership with the New Jersey Statewide Student Support Services (NJ4S), a new initiative from the New Jersey Department of Children and Families. The partnership will be in place from February 1, 2024 through June 30th, 2024.

Mr. Samuel Etienne, Director of Equity and Inclusion, recommended that Thomas A. Edison career and Technical Academy be authorized to host the Schoolwide Career and Technical Education (CTE Career Day) allowing students to participate in workshops in areas that interest them. Mr. Etienne recommended that the District sign an Affirmation of Partnership with the College of New Jersey for the Expanding Access to Computer Science Education Professional Learning Grant which provides free computer science professional development training for our teachers.

Dr. Sandra Nunes, Director of Bilingual and ESL Education informed the Board and audience about the Second Annual Elizabeth Public Schools Multi Cultural Festival on May 16th at School No. 28 from 4:30 to 7:00. This gives students and families the opportunity to feel represented, welcomed and be a part of our greater School Community

Assistant Superintendent for Schools, Judy Finch Johnson, informed the Board that she had 113 Fund Raising Requests that were seeking approval/authorization tonight. Among the fundraisers are Crazy hat and Hair Days, Wear Green day, Movie nights, dances, and College sweatshirt day.

Athletic Director Ben Candelino spoke about an opportunity that the Girl's Middle School Basketball teams had to play a simulated game during half time of the Rutgers Women's Basketball game on Tuesday February 13th.

Board Vice President, Mr. Stanley Neron, complimented Mr. Candelino and Mrs. Hugelmeyer for facilitating the Middle School Girl's Basketball teams being able to attend the aforementioned Rutgers Women's game. This gave these girls exposure to both higher education as well as top level Division 1 Athletics. As a result of how well this trip was received by both our girls' teams and Rutgers, the girls have been invited to participate in Rutgers' Women's Basketball camp this summer. The District and the City of Elizabeth Department of Recreation will coordinate this opportunity for the girls.

Mrs. Barbosa asked Dr Ojeda if this was the first time that the District was participating in a CDC study. Dr Ojeda replied in the affirmative and said that New Jersey's data will be incorporated into the national data. From this data, the CDC will share what services are available to those with autism plus try to find why Autism diagnoses have surged so significantly in the last fifteen years. Once the study is completed, copies of the study will be available to the Board and our schools.

Mr. Rivera asked for clarification regarding the policy on exposure to water parks and water. Superintendent Hugelmeyer explained that we do not require students to sign a waiver releasing the District from liability on these trips. Prior to any field trip parents receive information regarding the trip and what

activities, rides, and exposures the students may have on the trip. Parents can decline participation. Mr. Kennedy explained that our students are covered by insurance while on school trips.

Tab 5) Authorizations Report was added to the Agenda.

Tab 6) Finance and Accounting Report Mrs. Carvalho asked about the payment to Fusus, for Security Software for the District. Mr. Alberto Marsal, Director of I.T., explained that in conjunction with the Elizabeth Police Dept. this software allows the police to monitor emergency situations in our schools. This is a shared expense with the Police Dept. Mrs. Hugelmeyer added that this was part of enhanced security steps that were approved and undertaken in the prior school year as part of a three-year Security plan. Mrs. Carvalho then inquired about the payment To Murray Paving and Concrete LLC. Mr. Luis Milanes, Director of Plant, Property and Equipment explained this particular payment was for completed work and the overall project 90% is complete. The work so far included renovation of the adult bathrooms at the front of School No. 5 as well as the conversion of a locker room area to a “Sensory Friendly Room” for Special Services. Mr. Malhotra answered the next question raised by Mrs. Carvalho regarding Payment to Wex Bank. He explained that this expense is payment for fuel charges for District School Vehicles. Mrs. Carvalho’s final question was about payment to Zenith Construction for improvements to Williams Field and how close the project was to completion. Mr. Kennedy explained that the payment encompassed the final payment on a \$1,400,000 contract. The only item still remaining to be completed is a change order. Mrs. Moreno-Ortega inquired about payment for Vape monitors and what steps were being taken to protect these devices. Mr. Milanes explained these monitors are being installed at all the District High School where they are attached to the ceiling and are covered by a “cage” to prevent damage. Mrs. Barbosa asked about the payment to Union County Educational Services. Mr. Malhotra said that this was for charges for the 2022-2023 school year that the vendor was delinquent in sending the invoice. Mr. Malhotra paid the invoice via hand check upon receipt.

Tab 6) Finance and Accounting Report was added to the Agenda.

Tab 6a) Supplemental Finance and Accounting Report was added to the Agenda.

Tab 7, 7a) Award of Contracts Report/Supplemental Award of Contracts report.

Superintendent Hugelmeyer asked Dr. Kathy Badalis, Director of Professional Development, to present the Four (4) Contracts, Dr. Badalis had on the Agenda for approval:

- Codemonkey Studios – purchase a twelve (12) Month license which will include course curriculum online support and implementation for Elementary Grade Levels – funded by Title iV
- Teacher to Teacher, LLC – to provide professional development training for parents and families at Mabel G. Holmes School No.5 – funded by Title I
- Foundation for Educational Administration, Inc- Present Hot Issues in School Law. Administrators throughout the District will attend either a morning or afternoon session on March 27th.
- Elevate Educators LLC – conduct professional training for teachers at Mabel G. Holmes School No.5 -Funded by Titles I & II.

At Mr. Kennedy’s Request, Dr. Badalis summarized what type of programs are funded by each “Federal Title Law”. Titles I and II support Professional Development. Title III funds Bilingual and Multi-Lingual initiatives. Title IV provides money for well-rounded programs, safe and healthy school programs, and IT costs.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer asked Mr. Anthony DiDonato, Director of Student Services, to discuss the contracts which he was seeking approval for this evening:

- Avid Center – Professional Development for the new District Avid Coordinator.
- New Jersey Center for Tourette Syndrome and Associated Disorders, Inc – Professional development training for staff members.
- Stepping Stones Group, LLC. – Hire four (4) Registered Behavior Technicians to support students who are on Behavior Intervention Plans as well as train teachers and staff to better work with students with behavioral challenges.
- The Malcolm Bernard Historically Black Colleges and Universities College Fair Inc. - enter into partnership with said entity for a HBCU college fair on March 19th.
- Charlie Behm – New Jersey Workplace – provide the Wellness & Self Care Workshop to all school counselors and social workers. This workshop is designed to educate professionals on a variety of stress management and mindfulness practices to improve health and overall well-being.

The Superintendent requested that Mr. Samuel Etienne, Director of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion to speak about the contracts that he is presenting for approval:

- Inspired Instruction – conduct three (3) Targeted and Effective NJSLA Strategies for Social Studies Teachers as students prepare for New Jersey State Assessment Tests. It will help teachers incorporate NJSLA - ELA standards into their instructional practices.
- Adrienne Y. Bailey, Senior Consultant – Continue working with Strides implementation with identified schools. Dr. Bailey will ensure that the STRIDES Project is aligning with the district's overall strategic plans, priorities, and equity policy.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer asked Ms. Jamie Leavitt, Director of Food and Nutrition to present the one contract she had on the agenda:

- American Wear, Inc- provide Food Service worker uniforms and aprons.

Superintendent Hugelmeyer requested Dr. Daphne Marchetti, Director of Elementary and Secondary Education to present the Contract approval requests she has on tonight's agenda.

- Carnegie Learning Inc. – Provide Professional Development services to support Mathematics and English Language Arts for general education teachers K-12, advanced bilingual teachers school administrators for the 203-2024 school year and Summer 2024
- Children's Literacy Initiative – Provide Professional Development for Early Literacy Instruction to service grades K-5 for the 2023-2024 school year and Summer and September 2024.
- Mind Research Institute – Provide ST Math Summer Immersion Program. Will be available during the Summer 2024 Promotion/Retention Program

Superintendent Hugelmeyer asked Mr. Alberto Marsal, Chief Information Officer for the District, to inform the Board about his Contract Request – HP. Inc -purchase of 300 HP laptop computers. These will replace damaged and/or older models plus provide newly hired teachers with computers.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer asked Mr. Luis Milanes, Director of Plant, Property and Equipment to review his contract requests for this evening's meeting:

- In-Line Heating and Air conditioning – replace of heat pump in the Nurse's office in School No.4

- USA Architects – architectural/engineering services for new offices at the Imperial Building.
- Commercial Interiors Direct Inc- replacement of the stage curtains at School No. 7
- Servpro of Central Union County – HVAC coil cleaning at Schools 6 and 30
- Billy Contracting and Restoration Inc.- Hall Improvements at School No. 26 @ 31.
- Breakdown Products – Maintenance of Grease Traps at various school locations.
- Nuenergen LLC. – Energy management services - Tracking, Procurement, Auditing and Demand Services Response services for various schools within the district.
- Weatherproofing Technologies Inc. – provide proprietary HVAC New Life Restoration Program for a Roof Top Unit at Elizabeth High School – Frank J Cicarell Academy.

The Superintendent asked Dr. Michael Ojeda to present the contracts he had on the docket for approval:

- Bayada Home Health Care, Inc. -Rescind Nursing services as special needs student has moved from the district.
- Starlight Homecare Agency Inc. d/b/a Star Pediatric Home care Agency – no longer has the capability to serve a specific special needs student.
- St. Joseph’s University Medical Center – To provide feeding and swallowing evaluations on an as needed basis. Critical for evaluating students who have swallowing and digestive disorders.
- Imagine-A Center for Coping with Loss – to provide grief training for a group of twenty (20) staff members.
- Bayada Home Health Care – replaces Starlight Home Care Agency. Bayada will provide individual nursing services for a special needs student attending school outside the district.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer asked Dr. Sandra Nunes, Director of Bilingual and ESL Education, to discuss the contract that she recommended for approval.

- Inspired Instruction – provide professional development for grades 3-8, bilingual teachers, bilingual in class support teachers, and K-8 and High School ESL teachers on integrating NJLSA into daily Math and ELA classes.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer spoke on behalf of Dr. Dorothy McMullen Director of Special Projects who could not be in attendance tonight. The following contracts were presented for approval.

- Project Broken – allow students to participate in two hour “Healing Stage” workshops. Various art forms are used to depict mental health, addiction, and disabilities.
- Carolyn Dorfman Dance Company – provide dance professional in residency – the dance residency will take place during regular school hours during scheduled dance classes at all the district high schools.

Board President Charlene Dorgely asked if there any questions from the Board Members regarding the Contracts approval presentations.

Mr. Neron asked Mr. Marsal if the laptop computers being sourced were identical as the bids had a wide variety of prices. Mr. Marsal said they were the same across each bid. Mr. Neron also thanked and complimented Mr. Eric Kulick for his help in getting the Middleschool Girls basketball team to the Rutgers game. In response to a question from Mrs. Dorgely, Mr. Marsal stated that the laptops were HP’s and used Windows as their operating system.

Mrs. Moreno-Ortega inquired of Dr. Marchetti if the contract with Inspired Instruction incorporated the new 2024 NJSLA standards for phonics. Dr. Marchetti replied that her department has already started

work on the implementation of the revised standards and the contract with Inspired Instruction incorporated the new phonics goals. Mrs. Moreno-Ortega asked Dr. Badalis if the professional development sessions for parents and families of School 5, were scheduled with consideration of working families' schedules. Mrs. Badalis said that the school staff scheduled these sessions and prior practice had them in the evenings and attendance had been very good. Mr. Anthony DiDonato was personally thanked by Mrs. Moreno-Ortega for documentation she had asked for at a prior meeting.

Mr. Jacobs asked Mr. Etienne if this was the last tear of STRIDES. Mr. Etienne explained that STRIDES is funded through ESSER and if that funding is complete, the District will have to make the decision whether to carry the program forward with alternate methods of paying for it. Mr. Jacobs posed a question for later discussion with the Education Management Committee on how the District can address the "Learning Loss" experienced by students during the Pandemic and if remaining ESSER funds can be used to address the educational loss students experienced. He also asked Mr. Milanese about the hallway repairs at School No. 26. In response Mr. Milanese said cracks had been discovered outside of the building and a new concrete slab was being installed to prevent any further deterioration. Mr. Jacobs also asked for some specifics about Nuenergen and Mr. Kennedy replied that he believes the district has benefited from the energy price sourcing that this vendor has provided. His final question was about the HVAC repair at Frank J Cicarell Academy – Mr. Milanese explained that a blade had broken in the unit which had disabled the air conditioner. A further inspection showed cracks in the chassis. Weatherproofing Technologies will rebuild and reinsulate the unit.

Student Representative, Mr. Laporte inquired who oversees the implementation of the STRIDES Program. Mr. Etienne replied it was his responsibility to implement the program, but it is a collaborative process including School principals, Assistant Superintendents and Directors in the District. In addition, Dr. Bailey, a consultant for our district as well as a consultant from STRIDES also participate in the process.

Mrs. Dorgely asked Dr. Badalis how many training sessions were scheduled in the Teacher-to-Teacher program. Dr. Badali explained that once the contract is approved, specific dates and logistics will be worked out. She estimates the eight sessions. The same question was asked about Elevate Educators program. Details again will be worked out in conjunction with School 5. The Board president asked Dr. Marchetti about the timing of the Contacts she proposed. Dr. Marchetti replied that they will start in March of 2024 and carry over into the 2024/2025 school year.

Mrs. Carvalho asked Ms. Leavitt about the contract for uniforms for Food Service Employees. Mrs. Leavitt explained that the vendor sets up an "online store" that allows employees to select the uniform they want within a set allowance. Further discussion was held on uniforms, allowances and contractual requirements across both Food Service and Plant, Property, and Equipment.

Tabs 7, 7a and 7b were added to the Agenda.

Mrs. Dorgely asked the Student Representative, Jeremiah Laporte, to give his report to the community.

Dear Madam superintendent, fellow board members and everyone in attendance tonight. As we look back over the month of February we must acknowledge both the educational and historical significance of this month. As we are all aware black history month is a month of remembrance, reformative practice and growth. We must also acknowledge the educational precedent that the district of Elizabeth has set including the Amistad act and all of our efforts across the district to promote the knowledge of our history but also to combat the miseducation of it.

During the month of February, the STEM Academy presents the “A touch of success” to our freshman. This year with the partnership of my peers on the student council and the administration we were able to expand that presentation into a tour. Being able to present to over 10 schools district wide.

Similar activities took place across the district with the Board of Education hosting performances from schools across the district sharing their understanding and stories of black history through dance, poetry, and other musical selections.

Hamilton Academy also presented schoolwide “Celebrating black culture through HBCUs' ' and is gearing up for an Alumni Visit from Hamilton graduates who also attended and graduated from HBCUs, while Jefferson held their performance of Unplugged selling out with over 200 tickets sold.

On Friday the 1st the JVJ STEM Academy will be hosting “JVJ Day” watching Hidden figures and reviewing the precedent set that the academy of JVJ STEM honor and follow

With a special commendation to the Halsey JROTC who qualified for nationals this year. Birds also hum while Jefferson Academy, Cicarell Academy, and even our Board begin ramping up for the Relay for Life upcoming this March, an event which has been held for over a decade in our district.

Myself alongside other students from my academy are excited to be hosting the Breaking Barriers Conference at Kean University geared towards, education, health wellness, and youth empowerment this April at Kean University. With speakers coming from over 4 states, including our very own Board President and Vice President participating.

I want to thank the Board for the privilege of having me represented during this month as well as the privilege of being the first representative from my academy to be seated. I also want to thank my family for joining me here tonight. Thank you all.

Mrs. Dorgely asked each of the Committee Chairs to present the minutes from their respective February Committee Meetings.

Special Education Committee

February 1, 2024

12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Attendees: Charlene Bathelus Dorgely, Board President, Iliana Chevres, Board Member/Chairperson of the Special Education Committee; Diane Barbosa, Board Member, Isaias Rivera, Board Member, Ed Kologi, General Counsel, Judge Malone, General Counsel, Harold Kennedy, School Business Administrator, Olga Hugelmeyer, Superintendent of Schools, and Dr. Michael Ojeda, Director of Special Services.

The committee reviewed the Special Education Committee Focus Areas during the meeting. The focus areas include:

1. Address parent outreach via workshops.
2. Monitor the SEPAC Policy.
3. Communication with parents regarding constituent services
4. Conduct biannual roundtables with special education administrators.
5. Review all extracurricular programs offered to special education students.
6. Funding and delivery of special education services
7. Discuss special education issues in urban districts.

The committee discussed providing virtual workshops to parents in the evening in order to accommodate as many parents as possible. The committee requested that this month's community updates include how parents can navigate the district's website. A recommendation was to include a pre-recorded training video for parents.

The committee reviewed the current extracurricular activities for special needs students including Special Olympics, Autism Field Day, Afterschool Academic Programs, Extended Year Summer Programs, and Saturday Swimming and Soccer programs. The committee also reviewed the upcoming ESEPAC meeting scheduled for March 6th for the Executive Committee and an information session provided by the Surrogate's Office scheduled for May 2024.

Educational Management Committee

February 7, 2024

4:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Attendees: Charlene Bathelus Dorgely, Board President, Stephanie Goncalves Pestana, Board Member/Chairperson of the Educational Management Committee; Rosa Moreno-Ortega, Board Member, Jerry Jacobs, Board Member, Ed Kologi, General Counsel, Judge Malone, General Counsel, Harold Kennedy, School Business Administrator and Olga Hugelmeyer, Superintendent of Schools.

The committee reviewed the Educational Management Committee Focus Areas during the meeting. The focus areas include:

1. Review on a quarterly basis the priority data and outcomes for the following:
 - Academic Achievement
 - Academic Growth
 - Graduation Rate
 - English Language Proficiency
 - Chronic Absenteeism

2. Monitor on a quarterly basis prioritized data:
 - Understand performance for SY22/23 (baseline)
 - Examine specific EPS accountability indicators aligned to ESSA Accountability Indicators
 - Evaluate effectiveness.

3. Evaluate the Strategic Plan on a quarterly basis in the area of Teaching and Learning
 - Implementation of curriculum measured by classroom observations.
 - Student performance and achievement gap reduction are measured by formative and summative assessments.
 - Student access to and success in rigorous courses and programs, disaggregated by race and ethnicity, economically disadvantaged, special education, and ELL.
 - Retention of Black and Hispanic Students in ninth grade.

The committee also discussed extracurricular opportunities for students by examining school field trips scheduled during this past school year. The committee also discussed the revised English Language Arts standards and the timeline for the curriculum update.

Legal Committee

February 8, 2024
12:00 p.m. – 12:45 p.m.

Attendees: Charlene Bathelus Dorgely, Board President, Stan Neron, Board Member/Chairperson of the Legal Committee; Iliana Chevres, Board Member, Isaias Rivera, Board Member, Michael Simitz, General Counsel, Judge Malone, General Counsel, Harold Kennedy, School Business Administrator, Olga Hugelmeyer, Superintendent of Schools and Richard Flaum, Special Counsel.

The committee reviewed the Legal Committee Focus Areas during the meeting. The focus areas include:

1. Closing out of all pending legal matters prior to the 2023-2024 school year.
2. Monitor federal, state, and district policies.
3. Revise all policies as per board and district requests.
4. Provide a monthly update on all new federal and state policies to the public and board.
5. Discuss strategies to implement new policies.
6. Monitor the cost of legal fees incurred by the board for 2023-2024.

Special Counsel briefed the committee on pending matters.

Finance and Accounting Committee

February 15, 2024
1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Attendees: Charlene Bathelus Dorgely, Board President, Jerry Jacobs, Board Member/Chairperson of the Finance and Accounting Committee; Stephanie Goncalves-Pestana, Board Member, Michael Simitz, General Counsel, Judge Malone, General Counsel, Harold Kennedy, School Business Administrator, Rajeev Malhotra, Comptroller and Olga Hugelmeyer, Superintendent of Schools.

The committee reviewed the Finance and Accounting Committee Focus Areas during the meeting. The focus areas include:

1. Engage in discussions to provide an understanding of funding budget priorities, budget processes, and goals that will enable the Finance and Accounting Committee Board members to give input to staff and make recommendations as appropriate.
2. Monitoring of the Strategic Plan Priority on Operational Effectiveness
Examine the district's operational efficiency by discussing the Business Office functions such as:
 - Board agenda.
 - Bidding and procurement processes and procedures
 - Operational efficiencies of the entire district, specifically in transportation, plant and property, food service, and human resources.

The committee discussed the key dates of the Budget Procedures Calendar.

- Governor’s Budget Address scheduled to take place on February 27, 2024
- The Finance & Accounting Committee will meet on March 13, 2024, from 12:00p.m. – 1:00p.m.
- A Special Board Meeting is scheduled for March 18, 2024, at 5:30p.m. to approve the submission of the 2024-2025 tentative budget.
- A Public Hearing on the 2024-2025 budget is scheduled for May 2, 2024 at 5:30p.m.

School Properties Committee

February 21, 2024

12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Attendees: Charlene Bathelus Dorgely, Board President, Maria Carvalho, Board Member/Chairperson of the School Properties Committee; Iliana Chevres, Board Member, Jerry Jacobs, Board Member, Judge Malone, General Counsel, Harold Kennedy, School Business Administrator, Olga Hugelmeyer, Superintendent of Schools and Luis Milanes, Director of Plant, Property and Equipment.

The committee reviewed the School Properties Committee Focus Areas during the meeting. The focus areas include:

1. Provide oversight of Long-Range Facilities Plan and Budget.
2. Oversee groundbreaking for School No. 4, Hamilton Preparatory Academy, and Immaculate Conception.
3. Explore beautification projects that include our Edison Career & Technical Students, Plant, Property, and Equipment, including TCUs, Concession stands at Williams Field, and a Farm to Table Program.
4. Review existing partnerships with the county and city to create a sustainability plan, including the Dig In Grant and the Recycling Grant.
5. Explore grant opportunities to fund special projects, such as the expansion of water filtration devices.

The updating of the Five-Year Long-Range Facilities Plan was discussed. The expected completion is June 2024. In addition, availability of various properties to meet the needs of the district were discussed. The committee also discussed the upcoming meeting with the Archdiocese to finalized plans for Immaculate Concepcion for the new school year. Future plans for improvements to School No. 5 were discussed and a report on cost estimates was requested. The committee concluded the meeting with a discussion on the status of the ventilation projects throughout the district. A presentation will be made at the March board meeting to provide the community with an update of the ventilation schedule at School Nos. 4 (Relocated), 5, 6, 12,18,19, Hamilton Academy, Edison Academy (both Main and 9th Grade Annex).

Tab 9) Claims List was added to the Agenda.

Resolutions 10 to 10n:

Mrs. Dorgely wanted to acknowledge the following Resolutions and the corresponding events that the District would be celebrating in the upcoming month of March:

- Youth Art Month
- National School Breakfast Week
- National School Social Workers Week
- Read Across America March 2nd, 2024.
- St. Joseph's Day, Tuesday March 19th.
- St. Patrick's Day Sunday March 17.
- Women's History Month
- Irish American Heritage Month.
- Music in the Schools Month

Mr. Kennedy stated that due to state regulations Resolution 10, Approval of the Corrective Action Plan for the Year Ended June 30, 2023, and the corresponding Finding had to be read in public: Finding - Statutorily Calculated allowed excess cash in the Food Services Enterprise Fund. The allowed cash balance on June 30, 2023, exceeded the allowed average of three months of expenditures by approximately \$850,000. Corrective Action Plan – The Food Services Accountant will monitor available cash balances to ensure that available cash balances do not exceed three months. Capital Expenditures will be adjusted prior to fiscal year-end when projected cash balances are calculated. Target completion date is June 30th, 2024.

Student Representative, Mr. Laporte remarked that the resolutions are impressive, it is important that they make it down to the school level and students are informed of the events, celebrations, and honorees. Mrs. Dorgely replied that the Superintendent informs principals and other staff members of the resolutions, and that information should be making its way to the students.

Resolutions 10 to 10n were added to the Agenda.

Mrs. Dorgely asked for a motion to approve the entire Agenda.

A motion was made by Mr. Neron and seconded by Mrs. Goncalves Pestana to approve the entire Agenda.

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Mrs. Barbosa, Mrs. Carvalho, (with an abstention on Tab 4a pg. 1-Dr Cedeno attendance at College Board Conference Tab 4b pg.2 Elizabeth Police Department use of Facility) Mrs. Chevres (with an abstention on Tab 4b pg. 1 Bayway Family Success Center use of facility), Mr. Jacobs, Mrs. Moreno-Ortega, Mr. Neron (with an abstention on Tab 4a pg. 1-Dr Cedeno attendance at College Board Conference Tab 4b pg.2 Elizabeth Police Department use of Facility, Tab5 b pg. 2 Bayway Family Success Center use of facility), Mrs. Goncalves Pestana, (with an abstention on Tab5 pg1 School # 22 Arbor Day Contest sponsored by the Union County Board of Commissioners), Mr. Rivera, Mrs. Dorgely(with an abstention on tab 4bb Peniel Church of God use of facility) -9

Negative: none

Mrs. Dorgely thanked all the Directors in attendance for their time and assistance at tonight's Board Meeting. In addition, she thanked Eric Kulick for his efforts at each meeting. Moreover, she thanked the I.T. staff, Mrs. "G" who attends each meeting, the security staff and the Elizabeth Police Dept. She further remarked that it is important to have Black history noted in all our schools. Black History is American History. A final thank you to our student representative and his family for being in attendance this evening.

Board President, Mrs. Dorgely then asked for a motion to go into Private Session to consider matters exempt under the Open Public Meetings Act, specifically for discussion of:

Personnel, specifically termination of R.J.P.

Legal matters, specifically settlement of special education matters, and school incident report.

The Board will reconvene in public and may take formal action.

A motion was made by Mrs. Goncalves Pestana and seconded by Mr. Neron to go into private session at 8:22 p.m.

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Mmes. Barbosa, Carvalho, Chevres, Mr. Jacobs, Mrs. Moreno-Ortega, Mr. Neron, Mrs. Goncalves Pestana, Mr. Rivera, Mrs. Dorgely -9

Negative: none

Mrs. Barbosa left the meeting at 8:25. Mr. Neron left the meeting at 9:41

A motion was made by Mrs. Goncalves Pestana and seconded by Mrs. Chevres to return to public session at 9:47 p.m.

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Mmes. Barbosa, Carvalho, Chevres, Mr. Jacobs, Mmes. Moreno-Ortega, Goncalves Pestana, Mr. Rivera, Mrs. Dorgely -7

Negative: none

The following item was added to the Agenda:

Resolution - That R. J. P., Security Guard, be terminated effective February 23, 2024, for cause.

A motion was made by Mrs. Goncalves Pestana and seconded by Mrs. Cheveres to approve the additional Agenda item.

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Carvalho, Chevres, Mr. Jacobs, Mmes. Moreno-Ortega, Goncalves Pestana, Mr. Rivera, Mrs. Dorgely -7

Negative: none

Mrs. Dorgely asked Mrs. Hugelmeyer to present the H.I.B. Report for the month of February.

HIB Presentation for the February Board of Education Meeting

1.) Pursuant to Board Policy 5131.1, Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying, and New Jersey Statute 18A:37, "The results of each investigation shall be reported to the Board of Education no later than the date of the next board meeting following completion of the investigation and include: 1) Any services provided; 2) Training established; 3) Discipline imposed; or 4) Other action taken or recommended by the chief school administrator."

2.) Since our last Board of Education meeting on January 25, 2024, and through February 15, 2024, our school counselors, and school based social workers have completed 40 HIB investigations. Of these investigations 16 cases were Founded for HIB as per New Jersey law. There were 15 males, 29 females, 37 regular education students and 7 special education students that were the alleged victims. There were 30 males, 36 females, 53 regular education students, and 13 special education students that were the alleged offenders. Of the 16 cases Founded for HIB, 3 cases were Founded based on Race/National Origin, 1 case was Founded based on Ancestry, 3 cases were Founded based on Sexual Orientation, 1 case was Founded based on Gender and 11 cases were Founded based on "Other" identifying characteristics. Of the services provided and actions taken for these investigations, there were 14 skill development lessons/trainings, 38 counseling sessions, 2 targeted behavioral interventions, 7 referrals for outpatient mental health treatment, 1 classroom change, 1 change of school placement, 6 administrative counseling sessions, 10 in school detentions, 27 parent conferences, 5 referrals to outside agencies, 15 out of school suspensions, and 8 cases are continuing to be monitored.

3.) The HIB statute further requires that at the next regularly scheduled meeting after board members receive the initial report of HIB investigations, that the Board issue a decision, in writing, to affirm, reject, or modify the superintendent's decision pertaining to the 56 cases that was reported to you at the last Board meeting on January 25, 2024. In order for you to do so, the investigation summaries from those investigations, which were reported to you at the last board meeting, have been provided for your review prior to voting.

Are there any questions?

As there were no questions regarding the H.I.B. Report, Mrs. Dorgely asked if any Board members had any further questions or comments. Being none, she asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

On a motion made by Mrs. Chevres, seconded by Mr. Rivera, the meeting was adjourned at 9:52 p.m.

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Mmes. Carvalho, Chevres, Mr. Jacobs, Mmes. Moreno-Ortega, Goncalves Pestana, Mr. Rivera, Mrs. Dorgely -7

Negative: none

Harold E. Kennedy, Jr.

School Business Administrator/Board Secretary