

BOARD OF EDUCATION
(Official)

September 20, 2023
Elizabeth, New Jersey

Prior to the start of the regular agenda/business meeting of the Board of Education, which was held on September 20, 2023, at 6 p.m. in the auditorium of the Sonia Sotomayor School No 25, 525 Elizabeth Ave, Elizabeth, New Jersey, Board Members, District Administration, School Staff members and the public audience were treated to performances by students from throughout the district in recognition of National Hispanic Heritage Month.

“Pirates of the Caribbean-Rumba” by Armand Van Helden, was performed by Students from throughout the School District.

Timeline of Sonia Sotomayor School No. 25 was narrated by Students of Sonia Sotomayor School 25

“Sonia Sotomayor School No. 25 Celebración!” Hispanic Heritage Month Original Song was performed by Students of Sonia Sotomayor School No. 25

“Rumores de la Caketa” by Issac Albeniz was performed by Patricio Olivero, a Student at Thomas Jefferson Arts Academy

Hispanic Heritage Cultural Showcase was staged by Students of Juan Pablo Duarte – Jose Julian Marti School No. 28

Hispanic Heritage Live Musical Museum was performed by Students of Terrence C. Reilly School No. 7

“Maria Luisa” by J. Sagreras was performed Ledia Heneen, a Student at Thomas Jefferson Arts Academy

“Quimbara” by Celia Cruz was performed by Students of Thomas Jefferson Arts Academy

Board President Iliana Chevres welcomed everyone to the September 20, 2023, regular agenda/business meeting of the Elizabeth Board of Education.

Mrs. Chevres called the meeting to order and read the following statement at 7:02 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 September 15, 2023. 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, New Jersey.

“We want to welcome everyone present here at Sonia Sotomayor School No. 25, and to our television viewers to this September 20, 2023, 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. The presiding officer may interrupt, warn or terminate speaking when talking becomes personally directed, abusive, obscene, or irrelevant; request any individual to leave the meeting when that person does not observe reasonable decorum; request the assistance of law enforcement officers in the removal of a disorderly person when that person’s conduct interferes with the orderly progress of the meeting; call for a recess or an adjournment to another time when the lack of public decorum so interferes with the orderly conduct of the meeting as to warrant such action.

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. 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.”

“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.”

Present: Mmes. Barbosa (arrived at 7:14 p.m.), Carvalho, Dorgely, Mr. Jacobs, Mrs. Moreno-Ortega, Mr. Neron Mrs. Goncalves Pestana, Mr. Rivera, (arrived at 7:14 p.m.), Mrs. Chevres-9
Absent: None

Superintendent of Schools Olga Hugelmeyer, School Business Administrator/Board Secretary Harold E. Kennedy, Jr., Assistant Superintendent for Schools, Judy Finch Johnson, Assistant Superintendent for Schools, Rafael Cortes, Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning, Dr. Jennifer Cedeno, Deputy Counsel Heather Ford, Chief of Operations Frank Cuesta, Comptroller Rajeev Malhotra and Co-General Counsel Edward Kologi of Kologi Simitz Law Office, Esq., and members of the community were present.

A Moment of Silence was held in memory of both Sharon Robin King Jones, a Home Instruction Teacher with the Department of Social Services and Sonia R. Gomez, a General Worker at Benjamin Franklin School # 13.

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 Stan Neron.

The Star-Spangled Banner was played.

The Pledge of Ethics was led by Board Member Stephanie Goncalves Pestana.

Board Secretary Harold E. Kennedy read the following public participation 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. The following rules for public participation shall apply:

1. Time limits will be strictly enforced.
2. No personal attacks on individuals.
3. No vulgar or indecent language.
4. A person may address the Board no more than once during a single meeting.
5. Speakers should refrain from naming individuals.
6. Comments or questions posed during public participation will not be debated.

The presiding officer may:

1. Interrupt, warn or terminate a participant’s statement when the statement is too lengthy, personally directed, abusive, obscene, or irrelevant.
2. Request any individual to leave the meeting when that person does not observe reasonable decorum.
3. Request the assistance of law enforcement officers in the removal of a disorderly person when that person’s conduct interferes with the orderly progress of the meeting.
4. Call for a recess or an adjournment to another time when the lack of public decorum so interferes with the orderly conduct of the meeting as to warrant such action.

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

Mrs. Chevres called upon the first public participant, Samad Siddiqui, to address the Board.

Mr. Siddiqui spoke about the needs of Special Education students.
Mrs. Chevres thanked him for his comments.

Mrs. Chevres called upon the next public participant, Nikita Clarke Huff, to address the Board.

Mrs. Clark Huff spoke about job concerns of Secretaries within the District.
Mrs. Chevres thanked her for her comments.

Mrs. Chevres called upon the next public participant, Kason Little, to address the Board.

Mr. Little spoke about District policies.
Mrs. Chevres thanked him for his comments.

Mrs. Chevres called upon the next public participant, Daisy Cosme, to address the Board.

Ms. Cosme spoke about concerns about her daughter's school.
Mrs. Chevres thanked her for his comments.

Mrs. Chevres called upon the next public participant, Maria Medeiros, to address the Board.

Mrs. Medeiros spoke about the needs of Special Education students.
Mrs. Chevres thanked her for her comments.

Mrs. Chevres called upon the next public participant, Christina Moreira, to address the Board.

Mrs. Moreira spoke about the needs of Special Education students.
Mrs. Chevres thanked her for her comments.

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

Mrs. Medeiros spoke about the Uniforms policy of the district.
Mrs. Chevres thanked her for her comments.

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

Board President Iliana Chevres then asked Superintendent Hugelmeyer to present her report to the community.

Superintendent Olga Hugelmeyer began by thanking and acknowledging the students, parents, teachers, and administrators who helped celebrate National Hispanic Heritage Month which is taking place from September 15th through October 15th.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer spoke about the return to school, as our District opened all schools for the 2023-2024 School Year, on Friday, September 8th. Students were greeted by members of the Elizabeth City government, Officers from the City Police Department, Board of Education members, and Administrators from the Central office. In addition, News Channel 12 sent a

reporter and camera crew to cover the opening of schools, while also reporting on the emphasis being placed on social and emotional learning, in the new school year.

Superintendent Hugelmeyer was proud to announce that JVJ Stem Academy had been named a 2023-2024 Microsoft Showcase School. In addition, in the latest U.S. News and World Report, High School Rankings, Elizabeth High School, Frank J. Cicarell Academy had been ranked No. 12 in NJ and No. 278 in the United States. Moreover, Alexander Hamilton Preparatory Academy was ranked No. 45 in NJ and No. 1,019 in the country. Furthermore, in the Jay Mathews Challenge Index which rates the Top 300 Most Challenging High Schools in the United States, John E. Dwyer Technology Academy was ranked # 200.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer informed the Board and those in attendance that under the auspices of Mayor Bollwage and the City of Elizabeth Department of Public Health and Services, Free Dental Clinics will be offered at School #1 (250 Broadway 908-436-5565) and School # 3 (700 2nd Ave 908-436-6226). These Clinics are open to Elizabeth residents in grades K-12. To make an appointment call the school's nurses.

The Superintendent presented several slides which gave updates on Student assessments. The Kindergarten Early Assessment (KEA) is the state required assessment beginning with the 2023-2024 school year. The assessment must be administered within the first six to eight weeks of the school year to measure children's knowledge, skills, and behaviors at the beginning of kindergarten. The KEA assesses the following areas:

- Social-emotional development
- Cognitive development
- Language and literacy development
- Mathematical and scientific reasoning
- Physical development

The New Jersey Graduation Proficiency Assessment (NJGPA) is the state required assessment for high school graduation that consists of two content areas: English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics.

Students have three opportunities to pass each content area:

- March of 11th grade
- Summer between 11th and 12th grade.
- October of 12th grade.

Due to limited space and staff in July, students were invited to participate in the summer administration if they had passed one of the two content areas in March. About 160 students participated in the July administration. All 12th graders who did not pass one or both areas in March and/or July will be given the opportunity to take the NJGPA again between October 10 and October 16, 2023, with make-up dates October 17-20, 2023. Substitute assessment opportunities will be made available to students who have taken the NJGPA but have not passed one or both subjects.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer presented a slide which showed the High School Delayed Opening Schedule for the 2023-2024 Assessment Calendar. High School students not participating in the assessment administrations below will have a delayed opening at 9:30a.m.

October 10-13, 2023: New Jersey Graduation Proficiency Assessment (NJGPA)
October 11, 2023: PSAT/NMSQT
October 26, 2023: SAT School Day
March 4, 2024: SAT School Day
March 11-15, 2024: New Jersey Graduation Proficiency Assessment (NJGPA)
May 22-May 23, 2024: New Jersey Student Learning Assessment (NJSLA) ELA & Science
May 20-May 21, 2024: New Jersey Student Learning Assessment (NJSLA) Math

Mrs. Chevres then asked for a motion to go into private session, specifically for discussion of: an HIB Appeal, Legal matters, specifically, Workers Compensation settlement J.B., D.R., S.G., Settlement Agreement A.H.; Personnel Matters, specifically Interviews; Award of Contracts, Social and Emotional Learning Professional Development: The Board will reconvene in public and may take formal action.

A motion was made by Mr. Jacobs and seconded by Mrs. Carvalho to go into private session at 8:11 p.m.

The motion was carried by the following vote:

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

Negative: none

Mrs. Goncalves Pestana left the meeting at 11:12 p.m.

A motion was made by Mrs. Dorgely and seconded by Mr. to return to public session at 11:13 p.m.

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Mmes. Barbosa, Carvalho, Dorgely, Mr. Jacobs, Mrs. Moreno-Ortega, Messrs. Neron, Rivera, Mrs. Chevres - 8

Negative: none

The following items were added to the agenda:

Resolution - Settlement of Workers Compensation Case - S.G.

Resolution - Settlement of Workers Compensation Case - J.B.

Resolution - Settlement of Workers Compensation Case - D.R.

Resolution - Settlement Agreement - E.C.H.

Resolution - Appointment of Acting Supervisor of Guidance - Melanie Padilla

Award of Contract – Social and Emotional Learning Professional Development.

Resolution - Authorization to enter into Lease agreement 539-541 Westminster Ave, Elizabeth NJ.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that according to Board Policy 5131.1 Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying (HIB) 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 each investigation and include any services provided, training established, discipline imposed, or other action that was taken or recommended.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that at the next regularly scheduled meeting after Board members receive the report of HIB investigations, the statute requires that the Board issue a decision in writing to affirm, reject, or modify the Superintendent's decision pertaining to the cases that were reported to the Board members at the last meeting.

Mrs. Chevres asked for a motion and second to adopt the following agenda.

Opening Calendar
Official and Private Minutes (August 16, 2023)
Treasurer/Secretary's Report (July 31, 2023)
Personnel Report
Supplemental Personnel Report
Tuition Report
Supplemental Tuition Report
Superintendent's Reports
Authorizations Report
Finance and Accounting Report
Supplemental Finance and Accounting Report
Award of Contracts Report
Supplemental Award of Contracts Report
Claims List
Resolutions:
Anti-Bullying Week of Respect
Christopher Columbus Day
Italian American Heritage Month
National Hispanic Heritage Month
School Violence Awareness Week
National Disability Employment Awareness Month
Requisition for Taxes
Adoption of Revised Regulation: Revised Policy 4151.4251 Attendance Patterns/Sick Leave
NJ Single Accountability Continuum (QSAC)
Application to NJ Department of Education for Schematic Plan Reviews
Application to NJ Department of Education for Schematic Plan Review
Amended Resolution – Durham School Services LP
Appointing Three Companies for Custodial Equipment
Transfer of Maintenance Reserve Funds
Appointing Driscoll Foods (Fresh Fruit & Vegetable Program)
Appointing Systems Electronics, Inc. (Fire Alarms)

Transfer of Capital Reserve Funds
Appointing Scholastic, Inc. for Guided Reading Materials and Training
Appointing Companies for Winter Sports Equipment and Supplies
Appointing School Specialty LLC for Creation of Sensory Rooms
Payment for Unused Sick Days
Payment for Unused Vacation Days
ESSER II Late Liquidation Application
Workers' Comp Settlement – S.G.
Workers' Comp Settlement – J.B.
Workers' Comp Settlement – D.R.
Settlement Agreement – E.C.H.
Appointment of Acting Supervisor of Guidance – Melanie Padilla
Lease Agreement 539-541 Westminster Avenue, Elizabeth, N.J.

A motion was made by Mrs. Dorgely and seconded by Mr. Jacobs to approve the agenda.

Affirmative: Mrs. Barbosa, Mrs. Carvalho (Abstain on Tab 4b 1 Elizabeth Department of Recreation use of School 22, Tab 5-1 Use of O'Brien Field by School #3 -Elizabeth Department of Recreation), Mrs. Dorgely (Abstain on Tab 5 Pg 4 and Tab 7 pg. 16), Mr. Jacobs, Mrs. Moreno-Ortega, Mr. Neron (Abstain on Tab 4b 1 Elizabeth Department of Recreation use of School 22, Tab 5-1 Use of O'Brien Field by School #3 -Elizabeth Department of Recreation), Mr. Rivera (Abstain on 4bb use of Thomas Jefferson Arts Academy by Church of Latter Day Saints, Tab 9 Fund 11 Pg 13 -Travel Reimbursement – I. Rivera), Mrs. Chevres (Abstain Tab 2a pg. 26 -Transfer of Ana Maria Medina Custodian)

Negative: none

Mrs. Chevres asked if any Board members have questions or comments. Being none, she asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

On a motion made by Mrs. Dorgely, seconded by Mrs. Barbosa, the meeting was adjourned at 11:40 p.m.

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Mmes. Barbosa, Carvalho, Dorgely, Mr. Jacobs, Mrs. Moreno-Ortega, Messrs. Neron, Rivera, Mrs. Chevres -8

Negative: none

Harold E. Kennedy, Jr.
School Business Administrator/Board Secretary