

The Board of Education of the Borough of Essex Fells, in the County of Essex, New Jersey, convened in a Regular Meeting held in the Media Center on May 21st, 2025. The meeting was called to order by the Board President, Mrs. 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 8th, 2025. 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
Mrs. Jacquelyn Burke, Vice-President-Present
Mrs. Caragh Lavoie-Present
Mr. Christopher Pisacane-Present
Mr. Raj Mehta-Absent

Also present: Dr. Michelle V. Gadaleta, Superintendent/Principal; Mr. Steven J. Lella, Business Administrator/Board Secretary, and one staff member.

III. **Flag Salute**

- The Board President led the flag salute.

IV. **Public Comment on Agenda Items Only**

- None

V. **New Jersey School Boards Association**

- The NJSBA Training that was scheduled had to be postponed to a later date.

VI. **President's Report**

- Mrs. Haber wished everyone a happy holiday weekend and is looking forward to the End of Year Events.

VII. **Superintendent's Report**

- The 6th Grade vs. Faculty softball game took place yesterday, with a new seating set up for the children to keep them more engaged. The Essex Fells Band played the National Anthem before the game. This was Mr. Alexandris first time running the game and it was a very positive and exciting event.
- Dr. Gadaleta recognized the children's shout out to recognize Mr. Davis for some of his time spent outside of the school day.
- Tomorrow the Student Council Elections for the 2025-26 School Year will take place.
- We will be having an extended Memorial Day weekend, returning 1 of the 2 unused snow days.
- The Olympics will take place May 30th, with the rain date being June 2nd.
- The 6th Grade consortium kickball game was rained out today, and there was a conflict with the original rain date. A makeup date is TBD.
- In June we will be celebrating the following events: Celebration of the Arts, All School Concert, Recognition of the "GOATS" of the year, the 6th Grade Camp, Graduation week, and the introduction of the 6th Grade Time Capsule.
- Dr. Gadaleta explained the full staff evaluation process.

VIII. Superintendent's 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): Marco Pannullo
Event: 2025 Cyber Risk Tour
Location: Secaucus, NJ
Date: 6/3/25
Cost: \$14.85

Staff Member(s): Marco Pannullo
Event: JAMF300
Location: Virtual
Date: 7/7/25-7/10/25
Cost: \$2,000.00

Staff Member(s): Patrica Pakonis
Event: edWeb & ACTFL
Location: Virtual
Date: 5/28/25
Cost: \$199.79

Staff Member(s): Rebecca Fogarty
Event: Meeting the Needs of Your Gifted Students
Location: Virtual
Date: 6/9/25
Cost: \$295.00

Staff Member(s): Steven Lella
Event: 2024-2025 Annual Convention
Location: Atlantic City, NJ
Date: 6/4/25-6/6/25
Cost: \$1,213.18

Staff Member(s): Erika Pilato
Event: Executive Function Mastery Course
Location: Virtual
Date: N/A
Cost: \$249.00

Staff Member(s): Marco Pannullo
Event: Apple Education Community Meet Up
Location: New York, NY
Date: 7/30/25
Cost: \$17.00

Moved by: Mr. Pisacane

Seconded by: Mrs. Burke

Ayes: 4

Nays: 0

2. **RESOLVED** that the Board of Education accepts and approves, as recommended by the Superintendent the appointment of, Emily Zarr, Substitute Teacher for the school year 2024-2025, pending the usual criminal history, background check and county approval.

Moved by: Mr. Pisacane

Seconded by: Mrs. Burke

Ayes: 4

Nays: 0

IX. Business Administrator Report

- None

X. 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

April 16th, 2025

Regular Meeting Minutes

May 7th, 2025

Moved by: Mrs. Burke

Seconded by: Mrs. Lavoie

Ayes: 4

Nays: 0

2. **RESOLVED** that the Board of Education approves bills and claims for May in the amount of \$ 201,633.96; as certified by the Business Administrator/Board Secretary; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Education approves the payroll for April as certified by the Business Administrator and approved by the Superintendent and Board President in the total amount of \$405,824.48, including \$378,008.11 for the gross payroll, \$7,987.87 for the Board's share of FICA/Medicare and \$19,828.50 for the State's share of FICA/Medicare.

Moved by: Mrs. Burke

Seconded by: Mrs. Lavoie

Ayes:4

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 April;

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 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: Mrs. Burke

Seconded by: Mrs. Lavoie

Ayes: 4

Nays: 0

4. **RESOLVED** that the Board of Education approves the transfer of funds for the month of April as certified by the Business Administrator and authorized by the Superintendent of Schools.

Moved by: Mrs. Burke

Seconded by: Mrs. Lavoie

Ayes: 4

Nays: 0

5. **RESOLVED**, that the Board of Education approves the submission of a request to the Executive County Superintendent of Schools for renewal of the required waiver of toilet facilities for kindergarten classrooms 201 and 202 for the 2025-2026 school year.

Moved by: Mrs. Burke

Seconded by: Mrs. Lavoie

Ayes: 4

Nays: 0

6. **BE IT RESOLVED** that the Essex Fells Board of Education accepts a revised donation from the Essex Fells PTA in the amount of \$50,000 to be used for the purchase of school devices on the district's 5-year technology replacement plan.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the following budget line be increased and that the Business Administrator be authorized to administer it:

20-190-100-610 Essex Fells PTA & Foundation Technology Grant \$90,000

Moved by: Mrs. Burke

Seconded by: Mrs. Lavoie

Ayes: 4

Nays: 0

XI. Old Business / Board Discussion

- Dr. Gadaleta thanked the PTA for their revised Technology Grant for 2025-26.

XII. New Business / Board Discussion

- Staff and Vendor reappointments for the 2025-26 school year will be on the June 11th agenda.
- Class lists will hopefully be available by June 11th and will be shared with the staff prior to.

XIII. Public Comment

- None

XIV. Resolution to Enter Executive Session

BE IT RESOLVED that in accordance with the provisions of the Open Public Meetings Act ("Act"), the Essex Fells Board of Education shall conduct a closed executive session pursuant to N.J.S.A. 10:4-12 for the purpose of discussing: **School Business Administrator's Contract, Superintendent Evaluation and Personnel.**

It is anticipated that the length of time of this executive session will be 30 minutes and that action will not be taken in public after the executive session.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the minutes of the executive session will be released when the need for confidentiality in accordance with N.J.S.A. 10:4-12 no longer applies.

Moved by: Mrs. Lavoie

Seconded by: Mrs. Burke

Ayes: 4

Nays: 0

XV. Adjournment

RESOLVED that this public meeting of the Board of Education be adjourned at 8:15 P.M. The next workshop – Budget Presentation meeting of the Board of Education will be held on Wednesday, June 11, 2025, at 7:30 P.M. in the Media Center.

Moved by: Mrs. Lavoie

Seconded by: Mr. Pisacane

Ayes: 4

Nays: 0

Respectfully Submitted,

Mr. Steven J. Lella
Business Administrator/
Board Secretary