

**THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF ESSEX FELLS, NJ
BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING****WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 2025****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 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.**II. Roll Call**

Mrs. Amanda Haber, President
Mrs. Jacquelyn Burke, Vice-President
Mrs. Caragh Lavoie
Mr. Raj Mehta
Mr. Christopher Pisacane

III. Flag Salute**IV. President's Report****V. Student Liaison to the BOE Report**

- Addison Hochkeppel

VI. Public Comment on Agenda Items Only**VII. Superintendent's Report**

- Veterans Day Ceremony
- NJSLA Adaptive Field Testing
- HIB Report
- Gaggle Alerts
- NJQSAC Facility Walkthrough
- American Education Week Nov. 17-21
 - i. Parent Visitation 11/20 & 11/21
 - ii. Staff Year of Service Pinning 11/17
- 6th Grade vs. Faculty Volleyball Game Nov. 26, 11:00am

VIII. Superintendent's Resolutions

RESOLVED that the Board of Education approves Superintendent Resolutions #01–09.

- 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): LeeAnn Smith
Event: X-Bass 3.0 Institute 2025
Location: Virtual
Date: 11/14/25
Cost: \$179.00

Staff Member(s): Veronica Matullo
Event: Foundations Level K
Location: Virtual
Date: 11/18/25
Cost: \$350.00

Staff Member(s): Laurie Fischer
Event: Childhood Apraxia of Speech
Location: Virtual
Date: 12/2/25
Cost: \$295.00

Staff Member(s): Kimberly Trafford
Event: Strengthen the Executive Function Skills of your Students with Special Needs
Location: Virtual
Date: 12/3/25
Cost: \$295.00

Staff Member(s): Veronica Matullo
Event: Reducing Disruptive Behaviors While Increasing Self-Regulation
Location: Virtual
Date: 12/5/25
Cost: \$295.00

Staff Member(s): Deana Hromoko
Event: Differentiated Instruction-Increasing Student Success While Decreasing Teacher Prep Time
Location: Virtual
Date: 1/8/26
Cost: \$295.00

Staff Member(s): LeeAnn Smith
 Event: 3rd Annual Comprehensive Assessment for Intervention
 Location: Virtual
 Date: 1/28/26-1/30/26
 Cost: \$295.00

Staff Member(s): Katie MacKenzie
 Event: Special Educators Accelerate Progress for Students with IEP's by Making Best Use of the Differentiation Accommodations and Modifications
 Location: Virtual
 Date: 2/26/26
 Cost: \$69.00

Staff Member(s): Lisa Massaro
 Event: Wilson Dyslexia Conference
 Location: Virtual
 Date: 2/26/26
 Cost: \$69.00

Staff Member(s): Michelle Barshay
 Event: Wilson Dyslexia Conference
 Location: Virtual
 Date: 2/26/26
 Cost: \$69.00

Staff Member(s): Kimberly Trafford
 Event: NJLA/NJASL Joint Conference
 Location: Atlantic City, NJ
 Date: 2/18/26 – 2/19/26
 Cost: \$351.26

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 for the following:

EFFEE – Variety Show
 November 14, 2025
 6:00pm – 8:00pm
 Media Center/6th Grade Hallway

Moved by: Seconded by:

Ayes: Nays:

- 3. RESOLVED** that the Board of Education accepts and approves, as recommended by the Superintendent, the 2025-2026 Memorandum of Agreement.

Note: Copy available in Superintendent's Office

Moved by:

Seconded by:

Ayes:

Nays:

- 4. RESOLVED** that the Board of Education accepts and approves, as recommended by the Superintendent, the 2026-2027 Preschool Tuition of \$9,000.00.

Moved by:

Seconded by:

Ayes:

Nays:

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

EFFEE
December 16, 2025
Media Center – 7:30pm-9:00pm

Moved by:

Seconded by:

Ayes:

Nays:

- 6. RESOLVED** that the Board of Education accepts and approves, as recommended by the Superintendent, the 2025-2026 Behavioral Threat Assessment Team:

Michelle Gadaleta	Superintendent
Steven Lella	School Business Administrator/ School Safety Specialist
LeeAnn Smith	LDTC/CST Coordinator
Erika Pilato	Counselor/HIB Specialist
Judi Reynolds	Lead Teacher/504 Coordinator
Marco Pannullo	Technology Coordinator
Anthony Tedesco	Class III Officer

Moved by:

Seconded by:

Ayes:

Nays:

- 7. RESOLVED** that the Board of Education accepts and approves, as recommended by the Superintendent, the 2025-2026 Bomb Threat Assessment Team:

Michelle Gadaleta	Superintendent
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Steven Lella	School Business Administrator/ School Safety Specialist LDTC/CST Coordinator Counselor/HIB Specialist Lead Teacher/504 Coordinator Technology Coordinator Class III Officer
LeeAnn Smith	
Erika Pilato	
Judi Reynolds	
Marco Pannullo	
Anthony Tedesco	

Moved by:

Seconded by:

Ayes:

Nays:

8. RESOLVED that the Board of Education accepts and approves, as recommended by the Superintendent, the following team members for NJQSAC District Monitoring:

Michelle Gadaleta	Chief School Administrator
Tina Rivera	District Administrative Staff
Kimberly Trafford	Teacher
Steven Lella	School Business Administrator
Judi Reynolds	Curriculum and Instruction Representative
Lauren Quinn	Local Collective Bargaining Representative
Amanda Haber	District Board of Education Member
LeeAnn Smith	Director of Special Services

Moved by:

Seconded by:

Ayes:

Nays:

9. RESOLVED that the Board of Education accepts and approves, as recommended by the Superintendent, the submission of the 2025-2026 QSAC – DPRs to the New Jersey Department of Education.

Notes: Completed DPR's attached

Moved by:

Seconded by:

Ayes:

Nays:

IX. Business Administrator's Report

- 2024-25 Audit Update
- 2026-27 Budget Update/Calendar
- BOE Election Results
- NJQSAC

X. Business Resolutions

RESOLVED that the Board of Education approves Business Resolutions #01-04.

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

Regular Meeting Minutes October 15th, 2025

Moved by: Seconded by:

Ayes: Nays:

2. **RESOLVED** that the Board of Education approves bills and claims for November in the amount of \$180,767.32, as certified by the School Business Administrator/Board Secretary; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Education approves the payroll for October as certified by the Business Administrator and approved by the Superintendent and Board President in the total amount of \$406,535.61 including \$379,011.89 for the gross payroll, \$5,708.15 for the Board's share of FICA/Medicare and \$21,815.57 for the State's share of FICA/Medicare.

Moved by: Seconded by:

Ayes: Nays:

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 September.

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: Seconded by:

Ayes: Nays:

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

Moved by:

Seconded by:

Ayes:

Nays:

XI. Old Business / Board Discussion

- 2026-2027 School Calendar
- Preschool Tuition

XII. New Business / Board Discussion

- Potential Bathroom Installation
- Storage Solutions

XIII. Public Comment

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: **Legal Matters/Student Privacy (HIB)**. 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:

Seconded by:

Ayes:

Nays:

XV. Adjournment

RESOLVED that this public meeting of the Board of Education be adjourned at _____ P.M. The next regular workshop meeting of the Board of Education will be held on **Wednesday, December 3rd, 2025, at 7:30 P.M.** in the Media Center.

Moved by:

Seconded by:

Ayes:

Nays:

AGENDA

November 12, 2025

2025-2026

Teacher	Section	Total	M	F
Mrs. Axentiou	PK	16	7	9
Ms. Matullo	KM	17	7	10
Mrs. Brutman	KB	17	7	10
Mrs. Fitzgerald/Mrs. Hromoko	1FH	15	7	8
Mrs. Gann	1G	15	7	8
Mrs. Quinn/Mrs. Takkel	2QT	19	12	7
Ms. Duarte	2D	20	12	8
Ms. Kowalski/Mrs. MacKenzie	3KM	15	9	6
Mrs. Focarino	3F	14	8	6
Mrs. Banek/Mrs. Ennis	4BE	17	8	9
Mrs. Lodato	4L	16	7	9
Mrs. Fogarty	5F	20	10	10
Mrs. Jaworski/Mrs. Brzostowski	5JB	20	8	12
Mrs. Santalla/Mrs. Banta	6SB	16	12	4
Mrs. Hacker	6H	14	10	4
TOTAL		251	131	120
Out-of-District	*	3		
FINAL TOTALS		254		
TOTAL FAMILIES		170		

*Total includes 3 out-of-district students.

8/18/2025

Fire Drills: 2024-2025

Month	Fire Drill	Emergency Drill
August	8/22/25	AED/Fire alarm Tests – August 22, 2025
September	9/15/25	Evacuation to Bleachers – September 12, 2025
October	10/24/25	Lockdown – October 29, 2025
November		
December		
January		
February		
March		
April		
May		
June		
July	7/17/2025	Silent Alarm Test – July 3, 2025

HIB / V&V Report

As of Date of BOE Meeting	8/13	9/3	9/17	10/15	11/12										
TOTAL# of Reported Incidents	0	0	0	0	1										
Number of Unfounded Incidents	0	0	0	0	1										
Number of Founded Incidents	0	0	0	0	0										
Violence & Vandalism Incidents	0	0	0	0	0										

ESSEX FELS 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.