

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

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 22, 2026

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 7th, 2026. 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
Mr. Raj Mehta, Vice-President
Mr. Christopher Pisacane
Mr. Shaun Kessler
Mrs. Jenna Maffucci

III. Flag Salute

IV. President's Report

V. Student Liaison Report

- Kaileigh Milano

VI. Public Comment on Agenda Items Only

VII. Superintendent's Report

- Garden Club Earth Day Event
- Take Your Child to Work Day
- All School Concert
- 2025-2026 Calendar Revision/ Emergency Days
- NJSLA Testing Schedule

VIII. Superintendent's Resolutions

RESOLVED that the Board of Education approves Superintendent Resolutions #01–11.

- 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): Judi Reynolds
 Event: 2026 NJAGC Conference
 Location: Somerset, NJ
 Date: 4/17/26
 Cost: \$339.65

Staff Member(s): Gabriella Day
 Event: Break Through Self-Regulation Intervention for children and Adolescents with Autism, ADHD, Sensory or Emotional Challenges
 Location: Virtual
 Date: 4/30/26
 Cost: \$249.99

Staff Member(s): George Alexandris
 Event: NJAHPERD 107th Annual Convention
 Location: Princeton, NJ
 Date: 5/4/26-5/5/26
 Cost: \$886.58

Staff Member(s): Nicole Axentiou
 Event: Getting Started with Gold By Teaching Strategies
 Location: Virtual
 Date: 5/7/26
 Cost: \$0.00

Moved by: Seconded by:

Ayes: Nays:

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

6th Grade Car Wash
 5/16/26 (rain date 5/17/26)
 8:00am-2:00pm
 Blacktop between the buildings

Moved by: Seconded by:

Ayes: Nays:

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

Kindergarten Girl Scouts
 4/24/26, 5/15/26, 6/12/26
 3:05am-4:15pm
 Gym/Outside

Moved by:

Seconded by:

Ayes:

Nays:

4. **RESOLVED** that the Board of Education accepts and approves, as recommended by the Superintendent, the 2025-2026 calendar revision for the end of year to include school closed on June 22nd for unused snow days making June 19th the last day of school.

Moved by:

Seconded by:

Ayes:

Nays:

5. **RESOLVED** that the Board of Education accepts and approves, as recommended by the Superintendent, the NJQSAC Curriculum Review Team:

Dorotea Banek	Teacher
Michelle Barshay	Teacher
Rory Duarte	Teacher
Deana Hromoko	Teacher
Veronica Matullo	Teacher
Patricia Pakonis	Teacher
Erica Santalla	Teacher
LeeAnn Smith	LDTC

Moved by:

Seconded by:

Ayes:

Nays:

6. **RESOLVED** that the Board of Education accepts and approves, as recommended by the Superintendent, the Out-of-District Program Costs at Newmark School, Inc., (Student 350651) for the 2025-2026 school year, at the following daily/yearly rates:

Estimated 50 days at \$367.41

- April 14, 2026 through June 30, 2026

Total school year cost not to exceed:

\$18,370.50

Moved by:

Seconded by:

Ayes:

Nays:

7. **BE IT RESOLVED** by the Essex Fells Board of Education (hereinafter referred to as the “Board”) that the terms, stipulations and conditions as established in the Agreement between the Board and the Parent of a student whose name is on file in the Superintendent’s office, and which Agreement is located in the student’s file, are hereby adopted and approved by the Board. The Board President and Board Secretary are hereby authorized and directed to execute the Agreement, and any other documents necessary to effectuate the settlement.

Moved by:

Seconded by:

Ayes:

Nays:

8. **RESOLVED** that the Board of Education accepts and approves, as recommended by the Superintendent, the resignation of Lubna Muneer, Assistant to the Business Administrator, effective June 13, 2026.

Moved by:

Seconded by:

Ayes:

Nays:

9. **RESOLVED** that the Board of Education accepts and approves, as recommended by the Superintendent, the resignation of Jessica Ennis, Special Education Teacher effective June 30, 2026.

Moved by:

Seconded by:

Ayes:

Nays:

10. **RESOLVED** that the Board of Education accepts and approves, as recommended by the Superintendent, the 2024-2025 District and School Grade Report for the Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights Act.

Moved by:

Seconded by:

Ayes:

Nays:

11. **RESOLVED** that the Board of Education accepts and approves, as recommended by the Superintendent, the appointment of Donna Phillips, Substitute Teacher, for the remainder of the 2025-2026 school year beginning May 4th, 2026.

Moved by:

Seconded by:

Ayes:

Nays:

IX. Business Administrator's Report

- 2026-27 Budget
- Buildings & Grounds Updates

X. Business Resolutions

RESOLVED that the Board of Education approves Business Resolutions #01-05.

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

Regular Meeting Minutes

March 18th, 2026

Executive Meeting Minutes

March 18th, 2026

Moved by:

Seconded by:

Ayes:

Nays:

2. **RESOLVED** that the Board of Education approves bills and claims for April in the amount of \$263,256.16 as certified by the Business Administrator/Board Secretary; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Education approves the payroll for March as certified by the Business Administrator and approved by the Superintendent and Board President in the total amount of \$401,932.46 including \$374,402.67 for the gross payroll, \$6,415.01 for the Board's share of FICA/Medicare and \$21,114.78 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 March.

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 March as certified by the Business Administrator and authorized by the Superintendent of Schools.

Moved by:

Seconded by:

Ayes:

Nays:

XI. Old Business / Board Discussion

- NJQSAC Curriculum Revisions

XII. New Business / Board Discussion

- Board Attorney

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 Issues, Personnel, HIB Report and the School Business Administrator’s Contract**. It is anticipated that the length of time of this executive session will be approximately 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 meeting of the Board of Education – Budget Presentation - will be held on **Wednesday, May 6, 2026, at 7:30 P.M.** in the Media Center.

Moved by:

Seconded by:

Ayes:

Nays:

AGENDA

April 22, 2026

2025-2026

Teacher	Section	Total	M	F
Mrs. Axentiou	PK	17	8	9
Ms. Matullo	KM	17	7	10
Mrs. Brutman	KB	17	7	10
Mrs. Fitzgerald/Mrs. Hromoko	1FH	16	7	9
Mrs. Gann	1G	16	7	9
Mrs. Quinn/Mrs. Takkel	2QT	20	12	8
Ms. Duarte	2D	20	12	8
Ms. Kowalski/Mrs. MacKenzie	3KM	14	8	6
Mrs. Focarino	3F	14	8	6
Mrs. Banek/Mrs. Ennis	4BE	18	8	10
Mrs. Lodato	4L	15	7	8
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		254	131	123
Out-of-District	*	5		
FINAL TOTALS		259		
TOTAL FAMILIES		174		

*Total includes 3 out-of-district students.

4/13/2026

Fire Drills: 2025-2026

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	11/24/25	Shelter in Place with EFPD - November 25, 2025
December	12/10/25	Shelter in Place - December 15, 2025
January	1/16/26	Lock Down with EFPD – January 16, 2026
February	2/11/26 – Fire Alarm 2/13/26	Shelter in Place with EFPD – February 24, 2026
March	3/19/20	Shelter in Place Medical – March 3 2026 / Shelter in Place Bomb Threat w/EFPD 3/10/26
April		Evacuation to St. Peter's – April 15, 2026
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	12/3	12/17	1/7	1/21	2/25	3/18	4/22			
TOTAL# of Reported Incidents	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1			
Number of Unfounded Incidents	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1			
Number of Founded Incidents	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0			
Violence & Vandalism Incidents	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0			

ESSEX FELLS SCHOOL
DISTRICT MISSION STATEMENT

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

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

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

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

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

The primary goals of an Essex Fells education include:

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

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