

The Board of Education of the Borough of Essex Fells, in the County of Essex, New Jersey, convened in a Workshop Meeting held in the Superintendent's Office on September 2, 2026. The meeting was called to order by the Board President, Mrs. Amanda 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 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.

- The meeting was called to order by the Board President

II. Roll Call

Mrs. Amanda Haber, President- Present
Mr. Raj Mehta, Vice-President- Present
Mrs. Jenna Maffuci-Present
Mr. Christopher Pisacane-Present
Mr. Shaun Kessler-Present

Also present: Dr. Michelle V. Gadaleta, Superintendent/Principal, Mr. Steven J. Lella, School Business Administrator/Board Secretary, one member of the public arrived at 7:45 P.M. and one staff member.

III. Flag Salute

- The Board President led the flag salute.

IV. President's Report

Good evening, everyone, and welcome to our first Board of Education meeting of the 2026–2027 school year.

Today was our first day of school, and it was really great to see the building full again. After a quiet summer, there's nothing quite like the hallways busy, classrooms filled, and our students and staff back together. There was a lot of excitement today, and it was a great way to start the year.

On behalf of the Board, I want to thank our administration, teachers, and staff for all of the work that went into getting us ready for today. There is so much that happens behind the scenes before students ever walk through the doors, and we truly appreciate the time and effort that everyone put in to make sure we were ready for a successful opening.

We're looking forward to a great 2026–2027 school year and to everything ahead for our students, staff, and school community.

Welcome back, everyone!

V. Public Comment on Agenda Items Only

- None

VI. Superintendent's Report

- School opened seamlessly today. We had a nice PTA sponsored breakfast and a Spirt Meeting and introduced the new Student Council
- Back to School Night will be September 10th.

VII. Buildings & Grounds

- Summer projects included: outdoor scoreboard installation (we are still waiting on the controllers), fields maintenance, front entrance paving, stucco repair, media center lighting, 6th grade air conditioning partial replacement and new carpeting in the BSI room.

VIII. Curriculum & Instruction

- Dr. Gadaleta explained yesterday's PD events. It has been a full and productive first 2 days.

IX. Finance

- The budget for Buildings & Grounds upkeep was discussed.

X. Personnel

- EFS is fully staffed. We have 2 new staff members, Kristen DiGiacomo (3rd grade) and Nurse Rachel Wychules.
- Jamie Wallace and Stefania Focarino will obtain tenure upon their return, and Nicole Axentiou will obtain tenure in the spring.

XI. Policy

- The Board discussed Policy.

XII. Old Business / Board Discussion

- There is 1 open Board of Education member position on the ballot for the November 3rd election. The term will run from January 2027 to December 2029.

XIII. New Business / Board Discussion

- School picture day will be September 18th.
- The summer EFPD security drill was discussed.

XIV. Public Comment

- None.

XV. Adjournment

RESOLVED that this public meeting of the Board of Education be adjourned at 8:15P.M. The next regular Meeting of the Board of Education will be held on **Wednesday, September 16th 2026 at 7:30 P.M.** in the Media Center.

Moved by: Mrs. Maffucci

Seconded by: Mr. Kessler

Ayes: 5

Nays: 0

Respectfully Submitted,

Mr. Steven J. Lella
Business Administrator/
Board Secretary