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

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 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

- Emma Haber
- Bradford Mazzara

VI. Public Comment on Agenda Items Only

VII. Superintendent's Report

- NJSLA-A District Score Report
- Parent/Teacher Conferences
- Veterans Day Ceremony
- American Education Week
- 6th Grade vs. Faculty Volleyball Game Nov. 25, 11:30am

VIII. Superintendent's Resolutions

RESOLVED that the Board of Education approves Superintendent Resolutions #01–04.

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): Laura Quinn
Event: Guiding PK and K Students to Better Behavior and Increased Learning
Location: Virtual
Date: 12/3/26
Cost: $295.00

Staff Member(s): Melissa Dillon
Event: Getting Started With the Creative Curriculum for Preschool
Location: Virtual
Date: 12/8/26
Cost: $0.00

Staff Member(s): Erica Santalla
Event: Restorative Practices in the Classroom
Location: Virtual
Date: 12/9/26
Cost: $295.00

Staff Member(s): Lisa Massaro
Event: Best Science of Reading Strategies for Helping Students Who May Have Dyslexia K-12
Location: Virtual
Date: 12/16/26
Cost: $295.00

Staff Member(s): Rosalie Takkel
Event: Strengthening Your Students Executive Function Skills
Location: Virtual
Date: 12/16/26
Cost: $295.00

Staff Member(s): Deana Hromoko
Event: Helping Students Who Have or May Have ADHD
Location: Virtual
Date: 1/6/27
Cost: $295.00

Staff Member(s): Stefania Focarino
Event: Cutting Edge Strategies for Increasing Learning in the 4th Grade
Location: Virtual
Date: 1/19/27
Cost: $295.00

Staff Member(s): Lisa Massaro
Event: Increasing Your Effectiveness as a Reading Specialist
Location: Virtual
Date: 1/26/27
Cost: $295.00

Moved by: Seconded by:

Ayes: Nays:

2. **RESOLVED** that the Board of Education accepts and approves, as recommended by the Superintendent, the 2027-2028 Preschool Tuition of $10,000.00 per general education student.

Moved by: Seconded by:

Ayes: Nays:

3. **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 Parents 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:

4. **RESOLVED** that the Board of Education accepts and approves, as recommended by the Superintendent, the first reading of the following bylaws/policies/regulations:

P 0143	Board Member Election and Appointment (Revised)
P 2361.6	Unauthorized Audio and/or Video Recording (New)
P 2363	Student Use of Privately-Owned Technology (Abolished)
P & R 2412	Home Instruction Due to Health Condition (M) (Revised)
P 2422	Statutory Curricular Requirements (M) (Revised)
P & R 2422.02	Parental Opt-Out From Certain Instruction (M) (New)
P & R 5320	Immunization (Revised)
P 5514	Student Use of Vehicles on School Grounds (Revised)
P & R 5516	Student Use of Internet-Enabled Devices (M) (Revised)
P 5517	School District Issued Student Identification Cards (M)
P & R 6471	School District Travel (M) (Revised)
P 7523	School District Provided Technology Devices to Students
P 8660	Transportation by Private Vehicles – To and From School-Related Activities (M) (Revised)
P 8662	Transportation by Private or District-Owned Vehicles – To and From School (M) (New)
P 9181	Volunteer Co-Curricular Activity Advisors/Assistants
P 9182	Athletic Coaches (New)

Moved by: Seconded by:

Ayes: Nays:

IX. Business Administrator's Report

- BOE Election Results
- 2025-26 Audit
- 2027-28 Budget

X. Business Resolutions

RESOLVED that the Board of Education approves Business Resolutions #01-08.

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

Regular Meeting Minutes	October 7th, 2026
Executive Meeting Minutes	October 7th, 2026
Regular Meeting Minutes	October 21st, 2026
Executive Meeting Minutes	October 21st, 2026
Moved by:	Seconded by:
Ayes:	Nays:

2. **RESOLVED** that the Board of Education approves bills and claims for November in the amount of $231,865.12 as certified by the 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 $406,231.67 including $378,619.25 for the gross payroll, $6,344.03 for the Board's share of FICA/Medicare and $21,268.39 for the State's share of FICA/Medicare.

Moved by:	Seconded by:
Ayes:	Nays:

3. **RESOLVED** that the Board of Education approves the transfer of funds for the months of August and September, as certified by the Business Administrator and authorized by the Superintendent of Schools.

Moved by:	Seconded by:
Ayes:	Nays:

4. **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 July and August.

   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:

5. **RESOLVED** that the Board of Education approves the withdrawals from Capital Reserve for the 2025-26 year for the following purposes:

Gymnasium Air Conditioning Panel	$1,000.00
Roof Cupola Rebuild	$13,200.00
Boiler Plumbing Upgrades	$9,568.00
Boiler Emergency Repairs	$32,250.00
Gymnasium Air Conditioning Units	$5,229.43
PA System Upgrade	$3,975.00

   Moved by: Seconded by:

   Ayes: Nays:

6. **WHEREAS**, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-16.12, the Essex Fells Board of Education maintains student activity funds under the supervision of the School Business Administrator/Board Secretary; and

   WHEREAS, the following sub-accounts have concluded its activities and holds remaining balances of the following; and

Miscellaneous	$835.81
Interest	$138.59
Library	$521.59
Sunshine	$250.00

   WHEREAS, at the recommendation of the Building Principal and Student Activity Advisor, the remaining funds are to be transferred to the Student Council Sub-Account;

   NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Essex Fells Board of Education hereby approves the transfer of $1,745.99 from the listed sub-accounts to the Student Council Sub Account effective June 30,2026, and authorizes the School Business Administrator/Board Secretary to execute all necessary accounting entries.

   Moved by: Seconded by:

   Ayes: Nays:

7. **BE IT RESOLOVED**, upon recommendation of the Superintendent, Motion to approve the Family Medical Leave of Absence, without pay, for 91257279, from November 16th, 2026, to January 6th, 2027.

   Moved by: Seconded by:

   Ayes: Nays:

8. **WHEREAS**, NJAC 6A:23A-14.3 and 14.4 permit a Board of Education to establish and/or deposit into certain reserve accounts at year end, and

   WHEREAS, the aforementioned statutes authorize procedures, under the authority of the Commissioner of Education, which permits a board of education to transfer anticipated excess current revenue or unexpended appropriations into reserve accounts during the month of June by board resolution, and

   WHEREAS, the Essex Fells Board of Education wishes to deposit anticipated current year surplus into a Emergency Reserve account at year end, and

   WHEREAS, the Essex Fells Board of Education has determined that up to $250,000 is available for such purpose of transfer;

   WHEREAS, the Essex Fells Board of Education wishes to deposit anticipated current year surplus into a Capital Reserve account at year end, and

WHEREAS, the Essex Fells Board of Education has determined that up to $500,000 is available for such purpose of transfer;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Essex Fells Board of Education that it hereby authorizes the district's School Business Administrator to make this transfer consistent with all applicable laws and regulations.

Moved by: Seconded by:

Ayes: Nays:

XI. Old Business / Board Discussion

- BlueSnap
- 2027-2028 School Calendar
- Fireside Chats

XII. New Business / Board Discussion

- Field Trips
- Technology Usage
- EFS Halloween Schedule

XII. 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, Negotiations and the Superintendent'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 Workshop Meeting of the Board of Education, will be held on **Wednesday, December 2, 2026, at 7:30 P.M**. in the Superintendent's Office.

Moved by: Seconded by:

Ayes: Nays:

2026-2027

Teacher	Section	Total	F	M
Mrs. Axentiou/Mrs. Dillon	PK	17	6	11
Mrs. Brutman	KB	17	11	6
Mrs. Quinn	KQ	17	10	7
Mrs. Fitzgerald	1F	17	10	7
Mrs. Gann/Mrs. Hromoko	1GH	17	10	7
Ms. Duarte	2D	16	9	7
Ms. Matullo/Mrs. Takkel	2MT	16	9	7
Ms. Kowalski	3K	20	9	11
Ms. DiGiacomo/Mrs. Brzostowski	3DB	20	8	12
Mrs. Banek	4B	14	6	8
Mrs. Lodato/Mrs. Focarino	4LF	14	6	8
Mrs. Jaworski	5J	17	10	7
Mrs. Fogarty/Mrs. Mackenzie	5FM	16	8	8
Mrs. Santalla	6S	18	10	8
Mrs. Hacker/Mrs. Banta	6HB	19	11	8
TOTAL		**255**	**133**	**122**
Out-of-District	*	5		
FINAL TOTALS		260		
TOTAL FAMILIES		171		

*Total includes 5 out-of-district students. 9/8/2026

Fire Drills: 2026-2027

Month	Fire Drill	Emergency Drill
September	September 14, 2026	Lock Down with EFPD – September 9, 2026
October	October 28, 2026	Shelter in Place with EFPD – October 22, 2026
November		
December		
January		
February		
March		
April		
May		
June		
July		
August		

HIB / V&V Report

As of Date of BOE Meeting	8/12	9/2	9/16	10/7	10/21	11/18										
TOTAL# of Reported Incidents	0	0	0	0	0	0										
Number of Unfounded Incidents	0	0	0	0	0	0										
Number of Founded Incidents	0	0	0	0	0	0										
Violence & Vandalism Incidents	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.