

BOARD OF EDUCATION
(Official)

October 15, 2020
Elizabeth, New Jersey

The combined regular agenda and business meeting of the Board of Education was called to order on October 15, 2020 at 6:30 p.m. The meeting was previously noticed to be held in in the Multipurpose Room of Dr. Albert Einstein Academy School #29, 919 North Broad St., Elizabeth, New Jersey 07208. However, in light of the public health emergency caused by coronavirus, and the Governor's Executive Order reducing the allowed capacity for indoor gatherings, the Elizabeth Board of Education will conduct the meeting remotely using online platform technology without providing a physical meeting place. Video conferencing technology is available to the public at <https://www.facebook.com/epsnj> and <https://www.youtube.com/user/epschools>.

Prior to the start of the meeting, Board President Diane Barbosa called for a moment of silence for the tragic loss of those who died in a fire on Elizabeth Avenue this past week including three students in our district 11-year old Elizabeth Correias, 8-year old Daniela Marquez Vasquez, and 10-year old Paolaa Marquez Vasquez, along with the girls' mother Merlyn Vasquez and Candida Martinez-DelReyes. Mrs. Barbosa stated that there are no words but just a devastating feeling left and may they rest in peace.

Board President Diane Barbosa presented the following statement at 6:33 p.m.

"Ladies and Gentlemen, good evening. This is a combined regular agenda and business meeting of the Board of Education. Pursuant to New Jersey statutes and the rules adopted by the Board of Education, notice of this meeting using an online platform was sent to The Star Ledger and Cablevision of Elizabeth on October 13, 2020. In addition, this notice is posted on the Bulletin Board in the lobby of 500 North Broad Street, and pursuant to this act, a copy has been filed with the City Clerk of Elizabeth, New Jersey.

There will be an online public portion for citizens to address the Board. Participants for the public portion must register online up to the start of the meeting so that they may have the opportunity to speak. The public participation form states the name, email, and phone number of the person who wants to comment. Members of the public who prefer not to or do not have the means to participate using the online platform may continue to participate by emailing statements relative to agenda items and/or educational matters to the Secretary of the Board at kennedha@epsnj.org. All statements received will be read into the record during the meeting's public comment portion. All emails must be submitted and received by the Secretary of the Board up to the start of the meeting and, as is always the case, must include the public member's full name for the record. Each statement submitted by a participant shall be limited to three minutes in duration. The total time of public comment shall be limited to 60 minutes. Emails received but not read after the 60-minute duration will be spread in full in the Official Board Minutes of this meeting."

Present: Charlene Bathelus, Maria Carvalho, Iliana Chevres, Nathalie Hernandez, Jerry Jacobs, Rosa Moreno-Ortega, Stanley Neron, Stephanie Pestana, Diane Barbosa – 9

Absent: None

Superintendent of Schools Olga Hugelmeyer, School Business Administrator/Board Secretary Harold E. Kennedy, Jr., Chief of Operations Francisco Cuesta, Co-General Counsel Jonathan Williams, Esq. of DeCotiis, Fitzpatrick & Cole, LLP, and members of the community were present via an online platform.

Mrs. Barbosa welcomed everyone and stated that she hopes everyone is safe and healthy. Mrs. Barbosa stated that, as she has said from the onset, the decisions made as a Board are driven by science and data. Mrs. Barbosa stated that we are examining the data on a daily basis and working with our Health Officer and educational officials to find the best way to address the health of our educational community

and our community at large. Mrs. Barbosa stated that we are working every day to try to find better ways to serve our children and keep the education going. Mrs. Barbosa stated that Superintendent Hugelmeyer, central administration, Board members, employees, union representatives, and City of Elizabeth Health Officer Mark Colicchio have been exploring ways to bring back into our schools a smaller number of students. Mrs. Barbosa stated that we are continually looking for ways to help our students who are the least able to learn virtually during this remote system. Mrs. Barbosa stated that we realize that there are certain students that are having a more difficult time learning virtually. Mrs. Barbosa stated that we hope to find ways to better serve them while keeping everyone safe and healthy and that is the most important thing. Mrs. Barbosa stated that they hope to have more details in the coming weeks as the data becomes clearer. Mrs. Barbosa stated that at tonight's meeting she does want to express that we are working to reopen our schools for our special education students who are having a more difficult time virtually. Mrs. Barbosa stated that we are beginning with our autism program in a hybrid instructional model at certain pilot schools and based upon the results we look forward to expanding the hybrid instructional model for other special education students at additional pilot schools. Mrs. Barbosa stated that further details will come from our Superintendent. Mrs. Barbosa stated that is what we have been working on with long days, long hours, meeting after meeting, to try to find a way to phase in keeping at heart what is so important which is our data on our health statistics. Mrs. Barbosa stated that with all the decisions we are making pertaining to our reopening, we try to balance the safety measures of not only our students but our team members and our students and their educational needs by observing all the guidance with the CDC and the NJ Health Department.

Mrs. Barbosa stated that it is hard to believe that we are already in the second month of school. Mrs. Barbosa stated that while we continue to work through the challenges and struggles through this pandemic there are plenty of successes still taking place among our students' performances. Mrs. Barbosa recognized Thomas Jefferson Arts Academy for two significant achievements including senior Diana Benenaula and sophomore Lucille O'Donnell who were among twelve New Jersey students selected for Honorable Mention in the Annual Young Playwrights Competition sponsored by The Theater Project. Mrs. Barbosa stated that even through these tough times our students and team members continue to succeed. Mrs. Barbosa stated that they succeed every day that they are logging-in and we work together toward this common goal of succeeding through this virtual learning. Mrs. Barbosa stated that she can not stress enough how it will take all of us working together to keep our community safe and to keep teaching and learning going strong.

Mrs. Barbosa stated that it is by sitting at the table together with our team members, Superintendent, and administration to look at the way we need to assess things that is how we can reopen our schools responsibly. Mrs. Barbosa thanked Superintendent Hugelmeyer, members of central office, administrators, teachers, and support staff at our schools for all they are doing to give our students the best education possible during this pandemic. Mrs. Barbosa stated that their commitment to our students and families is exceptional and the Board has tremendous gratitude for all they do each and every day. Mrs. Barbosa thanked our parents who are sitting right next to their sons and daughters and working through the virtual learning and learning themselves how to navigate this. Mrs. Barbosa thanked our students and stated that she has great appreciation for our students who are sitting in front of their computer and doing the best to learn all of their academics, keeping their academic goals, and that they should keep on it and keep strong.

Mrs. Barbosa stated that while our meetings and discussion focus on COVID-19 and our reopening plan, it is important to stop and remember all of the communities that we have to cherish and honor during the month of October. Mrs. Barbosa stated that October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month and recognized all of the women suffering from this. Mrs. Barbosa congratulated the communities including Czech American, German American, Italian American, and Polish American and thanked the school community and our greater community as we celebrate your heritage. Mrs. Barbosa stated that it is so important to understand that Elizabeth is strong because of the way we come together and our unique qualities, customs, and traditions to create this tremendous diverse community. Mrs. Barbosa stated that let us continue to stay strong and work together.

Mrs. Barbosa stated that a survey was put out by our Superintendent to ask parents what they needed more help with and we just received the data this week. Mrs. Barbosa stated that we are continuing our parent academies to help support our parents and students in any virtual hardships that they may have.

Mrs. Barbosa presented the following public participation statement.

“At this time, the meeting is open for public comment to those who have registered with the online participation form prior to this session. I shall call individuals to participate based on the order of the sign-in. Each statement made by a participant shall be limited to three minutes in duration. The total time of public comment shall be limited to 60 minutes. No individual is able to yield their time to another individual. All statements shall be directed to the presiding officer; no participant may address or question Board members individually. The following rules for public participation shall apply: time limits will be strictly enforced, no personal attacks on individuals, no vulgar or indecent language, a person may address the board no more than once during a single meeting, speakers should refrain from naming individuals, and comments or questions posed during public participation will not be debated. As a reminder, this is a meeting of the Board in public, not a meeting of the public.

If the 60 minute public comment period expires before all registered online participants have been called, remaining participants can email their statements to the Secretary of the Board at kennedha@epsnj.org and they will be spread in full in the Official Minutes of this meeting. The Secretary of the Board will read into the record all emails that have been submitted up to the start of the meeting. Each statement submitted by a participant shall be limited to three minutes in duration.”

Mr. Kennedy stated that he will call upon the participants in the order in which they registered online to speak.

Mr. Kennedy called upon the first public participant, Maria Lorenz, to address the Board.

Maria Lorenz spoke about ethics.

Mrs. Barbosa thanked her for her comments.

Mr. Kennedy called twice upon the next public participant, Lynda Dellipoali, to address the Board. Lynda Dellipoali did not respond.

Mr. Kennedy called upon the next public participant, Rosa Kachmar, to address the Board.

Rosa Kachmar stated that she recently retired and asked about the unused sick payout.

Mrs. Barbosa thanked her for her comment and stated that Mr. Kennedy will reach out tomorrow.

Mr. Kennedy stated that there is a resolution for the unused sick pay in the agenda for tonight.

Mr. Kennedy called twice upon the next public participant, Mercy Ordonez, to address the Board. Mercy Ordonez did not respond.

Mr. Kennedy called twice upon the next public participant, Marlen Paredes, to address the Board. Marlen Paredes did not respond.

Mr. Kennedy called upon the next public participant, Fatima Singleton, to address the Board.

Fatima Singleton stated that there is too much homework for high school students and no counseling. Ms. Singleton spoke about technical issues for computers and stated that the teachers should be teaching from home.

Mrs. Barbosa thanked her for her comments.

Mr. Kennedy called upon the next public participant, Danielle Fienberg, to address the Board.

Danielle Fienberg spoke about the Open Public Meetings Act and lack of communication.

Mrs. Barbosa thanked her for her comments.

Mr. Kennedy called upon the next public participant, Kason Little, to address the Board.

Kason Little stated that he was disrespected and wants an apology.

Mrs. Barbosa thanked him for his comments.

Mr. Kennedy stated that there were no other public participants registered to address the Board. Mr. Kennedy stated that he received emails prior to the start of the meeting from people who did not want to participate in the audio portion of the meeting.

Mr. Kennedy read the following email received from Lee Pereira:

“Good evening, madam Superintendent, president Barbosa, and members of the board. My name is Lee Pereira and my son attends a multiple disabilities class here in the district. I would like to start by saying thank you for all your hard work and time to address these issues. I appreciate everyone of you up there. I would hate to be in your shoes right now. I am writing this email to ask the board to please consider an alternative option for the self-contained classroom students. Virtual learning is not working for most of these students. My son has Down syndrome Last year in class he was starting to read. Yes READ! (I couldn't believe it either) Unfortunately His skills have now regressed he has no interest. He loves the YouTube videos but hates doing the actual work. These children need someone other than mom teaching them person to person. I understand we are in the middle of a pandemic and yes things seem to be getting worse but the regression these kids are experiencing not to mention lack in social skills well definitely outweigh the survival rate of this virus. We have a lot more information on this virus now then we did eight months ago. We understand the protocol and precautions that need to be taken. So why can't we come up with a better option for our special needs community? I believe with the proper protocols in place like social distancing, smaller class sizes, ventilation, and proper hygiene our district can bring our special Ed students back. Other districts are doing it why can't we? Parents should have the option to send their children to school just like the most vulnerable population has the option to keep them home. I'm afraid this is valuable education time that Our children cannot get back. Studies have shown an absence In the classroom leads to regression. Especially during the early years as they are building their educational foundation. So I am asking the bored to please please please consider an alternate plan to bring these children back into their classrooms. Thank you for your time.”

Mr. Kennedy read the following email received from Maria Echavarria:

“Hello, I'm Maria Echavarria. I'm an active person in this community. I would like to remind you that it's Vaccine Injury Awareness Month, Breast and Liver Cancer Awareness month, Domestic Violence Awareness Month and Selective Mutism Awareness Month. Right now they're playing a 10 part do cu-series, The Truth About Vaccines. Right now until 9PM it's on episode 2, what's in a vaccine. I already saw it and they mentioned aluminum, mercury, formaldehyde, monkey kidney cells and other toxins in vaccines. From 9pm- 9pm a new episode is on. Do you know they've started clinical trials on people of color for covid vaccine? Every Monday there's a rally in front of UMDNJ in Newark NJ. Do you know they're telling males not to get anyone pregnant for 3-6 months because they don't want it to show birth defects. Do you know they're also adding kids as young as 12 years old into clinical trials? There's also a bill out there S2889 allowing pharmacists to administer covid vaccine. Are you prepared to continue injecting poison into people? Are you giving true informed consent and handing packet inserts when administering vaccines including the flu shot that according to a Pentagon study it increases your chances of getting covid? The board members and other officials took the Oath to UPHOLD the constitution. I think you all should read it again including board president. If you don't step down because you just

renege. For those defending board members actions, you're a part of the problem. While members of the public are speaking for their 3 minutes EVERYONE else's mic MUST BE MUTED until speaker is finished. I encourage everyone watches the union county freeholders meeting tonight on Facebook as I sent in my email for public comments. This district is in violation of my constitutional rights for taking down my comments and putting my comments on a blacklist. I would strongly suggest people go to my Facebook page and look for THE TRUTH ABOUT VACCINES. Please people educate yourself. Don't allow them to coerce you into vaccinating for an education. That's not true informed consent. Mind you right now kids are still getting vaccinations while not even in school buildings. I would also suggest people to watch 1986 The Act. Over 4 billion dollars have been paid out by taxpayers for vaccine injuries because vaccine manufacturers are the ONLY PRODUCT without any LIABILITY. According to supreme court vaccines are unavoidably unsafe. Do you know that there's like 5 VACCINES that tell you can cause death. We're trading in a mild illness for neurological disorders and other problems like asthma, epilepsy and other chronic illnesses these pharmaceutical companies are making millions in lifetime medications. Why hasn't this district sent any of my son's records that I signed release forms to since July. Do I need to file for due process? I REFUSE to have my son go back to that school that wanted to take my son to a jail as a Community Based INSTRUCTION/CBI. I've filled out 4 release forms in July.
Thank you”

Since there were no other participants for public speaking and no other emails received, Mrs. Barbosa closed this portion of the meeting.

Mrs. Barbosa stated that we assess the risks of everything. Mrs. Barbosa stated that we have nine Board members, our Superintendent, our administration, and we have constant communication with members of our team and the one priority that we have is our children and our team members. Mrs. Barbosa stated that the reality is that virtual learning doesn't work for everyone the way that it works for some children. Mrs. Barbosa stated that in no way would we ever put anybody in jeopardy. Mrs. Barbosa stated that with her opening comment she expressed what we are phasing in but at every single minute we are assessing the data around things that can be improved. Mrs. Barbosa stated that just going back to the nine Board members, some of us have professions, some are teachers, parents, community members and we have friends and families. Mrs. Barbosa stated that we are out there and talk to people every day, we listen to people every day, and we communicate with people every day. Mrs. Barbosa stated that don't think that we are closed in a bubble. Mrs. Barbosa stated that we try to analyze the data and that is why we sometimes sit in meetings for hours on end. Mrs. Barbosa stated that is why we reach out to our teacher friends, to our community members at times through texts and calls as we are bringing all the information to make the best decisions. Mrs. Barbosa stated that she speaks to the Health Officer once or twice a day, to our Superintendent many times a day, and to staff numerous times a day. Mrs. Barbosa stated that we hold all of these things to make a well informed decision because we do want education to continue and everyone to be safe and that is our priority.

Mrs. Moreno-Ortega stated that October is National Principals Month and recognized their contribution in all our elementary and secondary schools. Mrs. Moreno-Ortega stated that their leadership makes an impact in our school community, in our staff, and in our parents and guardians. Mrs. Moreno-Ortega recognized each one of our principals and vice principals for their hard work and dedication. Mrs. Moreno-Ortega stated that this is the month to celebrate and as a Board member she is very proud of them.

Mrs. Barbosa thanked her and stated that the amount of work that our principals do to run their buildings is superb.

Mr. Neron stated that he wanted to address the Board and community and there were a lot of comments that he heard tonight that were disheartening. Mr. Neron stated that, as a Board member and one of nine who sit on this Board, we are not about to organize chaos. Mr. Neron stated that we are about to organize order. Mr. Neron stated that oftentimes Board members may not agree, the community may not agree but we have to come out with a concerted effort when dealing with the public and when establishing

order. Mr. Neron stated that as you can see nationally in our country we are in political dismay when it comes to order and working towards a cohesive effort when it comes to dealing with the COVID-19 and this pandemic and all the issues that we are dealing with in our country. Mr. Neron stated that when we talk about leadership, leadership is about creating a concerted effort. Mr. Neron stated that it is important to hear the voice of the public and it is important to gauge the public. Mr. Neron stated that at the end of the day when it is time for leadership to speak and really come out with an opinion, we have to do it in an organized and concerted fashion. Mr. Neron stated that we cannot do it in chaos or confusion. Mr. Neron stated that he wanted to address the concerns of the public when it comes to us not being concerned about the students or staff or the well-being of our teachers who work very hard for us and sit on the front lines each and every day. Mr. Neron stated that we are extremely concerned about them and we care for them very much. Mr. Neron stated that he can speak personally as a Board member and as a Board member he does not work alone but with nine Board members and administration. Mr. Neron stated that what he has known over his past seven years as an elected official is that we put the priorities of our teachers and staff in the forefront. Mr. Neron stated that we understand that we can't do the work that we do without them. Mr. Neron stated that we can't celebrate the achievements that we make every day and we would not be able to do virtual and we would not be able to do in-person without the work and the dedication of our staff. Mr. Neron stated that he wants the public to know that we are concerned. Mr. Neron stated that contrary to popular belief on what you are hearing when people speak publicly or speak in public session that we don't care or we are not concerned. Mr. Neron stated that he takes great offense to that because they do care, we are concerned, and the truth be told is that we have about 800 staff members who are currently not in-person in our school district and who have been accommodated for their special request be it that they have childcare issues or underlying issues that are concerning to their health, their well-being, or their schedules. Mr. Neron stated that we have been concerned. Mr. Neron stated that we have also not laid off any staff, not furloughed any staff, and everybody has gotten paid during the very beginning of this pandemic and since we were faced with unprecedented times. Mr. Neron stated that let's be clear that nobody has the right answer, nobody knows what is right or wrong now because we are trying to figure it out. Mr. Neron stated that everybody is trying to figure it out and nobody is a specialist in trying to deal with COVID or in what education should look like right now. Mr. Neron stated that currently it is a huge challenge for our parents to help their children at home, for teachers to teach virtually, for kids to learn virtually, and it is a huge challenge. Mr. Neron asked what are the risks and stated that the risks are bringing the fourth largest city back into full session which would be even a greater risk for our district. Mr. Neron stated that when we look at federal requirements, New Jersey Health requirements, and we look at all the studies that have been done it is really about minimizing the risk and trying to come in and phase into a reopening phase of opening schools and coming up with the best possible method. Mr. Neron stated that everybody is learning this day by day. Mr. Neron stated that he respects the voice of the public and what they have to say. Mr. Neron stated that he wants the public to know that the same concern that you have we have as well. Mr. Neron stated that we are just as concerned and frustrated as you are because it is something that is unforeseen and we've never dealt with and we are trying to figure it out as we go along. Mr. Neron stated, as he stated before and often times, that he doesn't want to waste the public's time or the administration's time or the people who have tuned in to these meetings and bore you with a long drawn out speech. Mr. Neron stated that we need your patience, we need for you to work with us, we hear your concerns, and we have gone on and addressed all the particular issues that you have brought forth and it is an everyday work in progress. Mr. Neron stated to our teachers and to our staff understand that this Board cares for you and we are working every day for you. Mr. Neron stated to our students that we want the very best for you and we want you to succeed. Mr. Neron stated that obviously, we don't work alone and have to work with federal regulations, state regulations, county regulations, and Board policy that we have to implement to make sure that there is a sense of accountability for our teachers, staff, and parents alike so that everybody can work as a community. Mr. Neron stated that this is a communal effort and this is no time for us to be us vs. them. Mr. Neron stated that this is a community concerted effort that we must embark on and must move in that direction. Mr. Neron thanked everyone for their time and for listening.

Ms. Bathelus stated that Mr. Neron did an excellent job speaking for us and the sentiments that he said is exactly how all nine members on the Board felt.

Mrs. Barbosa thanked the Board members for their comments. Mrs. Barbosa stated that what we feel, what we do we love, and we do it every single day.

Mrs. Chevres thanked Mr. Neron for his comments and translated it into Spanish for the Hispanic community.

Mrs. Barbosa stated that we will go tab by tab to review the agenda and each board member may ask questions.

Minutes of the Meetings of September 17 and October 1, 2020
Secretary/Treasurer's Report for the Month of August 2020

Mrs. Barbosa asked if there were any questions.

Personnel Report

Mrs. Barbosa asked if there were any questions.

Mrs. Barbosa asked about the positions for the IT Department.

Chief of Operations Francisco Cuesta explained the positions are needed to support the IT Department due to the challenges of virtual learning.

Mr. Jacobs asked if the funding is sufficient for the afterschool hours for the school nurses.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer explained the duties for the afterschool hours and stated that if additional funding is needed it would be presented for Board approval.

Mr. Jacobs asked about the Title I Task Force administrator duties for afterschool hours.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer explained that one of the primary responsibilities in our Title I plan for Halsey Academy is to ensure that they are monitoring the attendance for all of the students and providing support. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the administrators are responsible for monitoring and reviewing all attendance and explained the duties of the Task Force team.

Tuition Report

Mrs. Barbosa asked if there were any questions.

Superintendent's Report – Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying Investigative Results

Authorizations Report

Mrs. Barbosa asked if there were any questions.

Mr. Jacobs asked about the authorization for payment.

Mr. Kennedy explained that this is payment to employees who waived their medical coverage and the checks will be sent out on October 23rd. Mr. Kennedy explained that there was a discussion with the administration of the union about the restrictions of COVID and the delay of state aid payments to us and they agreed to postpone the payments until October 23rd. Mr. Kennedy thanked the EEA administration for allowing the Business Office to do that.

Mr. Jacobs thanked Mr. Kennedy for shedding light on that and the transparency showing the Board and administration working with the union on these difficult issues in difficult times. Mr. Jacobs stated that he appreciated us being able to share that information.

Mr. Kennedy stated that the same thing is for the perfect attendance incentive. Mr. Kennedy stated that people who missed between no days and three days are entitled to an incentive and that will also be paid on October 23rd through the Payroll Department. Mr. Kennedy stated that the final thing that was agreed to is the payment for retirees for unused sick and vacation days which is on a resolution and will also be paid on October 23rd.

Mrs. Moreno-Ortega asked about the provisional teacher program and if it is the same as alternate route.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer explained the provisional teacher program for standard certificates and stated that it is not the same as the alternate route program.

Finance and Accounting Report – Authorization to Pay Vouchers, etc.

Supplemental Finance and Accounting Report – Transfer of Funds

Mrs. Barbosa asked if there were any questions.

Award of Contracts Report

Supplemental Award of Contracts Report

Mrs. Barbosa asked if there were any questions.

Mrs. Moreno-Ortega asked about the contract with Rutgers University.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer explained that the contract supports our nursing program and has been part of a multi-year grant initiative. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the program offers a dual credit opportunity for our students.

Mrs. Moreno-Ortega asked about the contract with HISPA and how the schools are chosen.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer explained that the Hispanics Inspiring Students Performance and Achievement (HISPA) is a multi-year partnership that is aligned to our commitment to college and career readiness. Hugelmeyer stated that in the past the mentors would come in to speak with our middle school students about their careers. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that in years past this was a budgeted item and this year HISPA offered the virtual mentoring at no cost to the Board. Mrs. Hugelmeyer explained that it is open to all and there is a selection process.

Mrs. Moreno-Ortega asked if the HP laptops are for teacher assistants or CDAs.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that we are fortunate to receive federal government funding with the CARES Act and through the NJ DOE Digital Divide Grants. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that those funding sources have ensured our ability to close the digital divide. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that we have historically had an initiative in grades 3-12 for one-to-one laptop initiative, however, we needed to ensure that we close that gap by affording our students in PreK, K, 1, and 2 to have a laptop. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that we have a one-to-one initiative for the entire school district from PreK through 12th grade. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the IT Department has done incredible work and that it was structured to support classrooms and a one-to-one initiative in grades 3-12. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the IT Department has done an outstanding job supporting families serving over 28,000 children helping them with the technical issues in their home and helping our teachers with their technical issues. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that this contract addresses the need for updated laptops for our teachers. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the laptops typically have a four-year warranty and those warranties have expired so we are replacing those obsolete models. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that we have already taken care of every student in the district and that is through the efforts of the IT Department. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that if you have an issue with your laptop you bring it to the Hardware Department and it is exchanged for another laptop so there is a seamless support for our parents and students so they can continue their education. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the teachers also visit the Hardware Department when they have had a problem and exchange their laptop for

another. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that all of our new registrants have been provided with a laptop upon registering and getting a schedule. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that our PreK three and four-year old students have been provided with an Apple iPad. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that this contract ensures that our teachers have the most appropriate device under the warranty so that we have taken care of their needs through this funding.

Mrs. Moreno-Ortega asked about the contract for the marching band visual designer.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer explained that is the service for the choreography for the marching band.

Mrs. Carvalho asked if the teachers are receiving new Apple laptops.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer explained that the preschool level is the only grade level that uses Apple and the students and teachers each have an Apple iPad so there is compatibility. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that in grades K-12 both students and teachers have the same device, an HP laptop. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that there should not be an issue with compatibility because every teacher and every student are using the same device. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that she will contact the parent who spoke about this tonight with regard to her concern.

Mrs. Carvalho asked if perhaps some teachers are using their personal devices.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that we will follow up and do a survey with our teachers. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that they shouldn't be using personal devices. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the only time is if perhaps, a teacher has turned in their laptop to be serviced and is using their own device temporarily while their device is being repaired but that is very few and far between. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that teachers are usually provided with a replacement laptop.

Mrs. Carvalho asked about the recommendation for security guard training and asked if it will be held virtually or in-person.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer explained that the training will be held at the Dunn Sports Center in-person and observing the proper six-foot distancing. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that multiple trainings have been scheduled in order to ensure that we are abiding by the CDC guidelines.

Mrs. Moreno-Ortega asked about the contract with Progressive Therapy.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer explained that all related services are delivered virtually at this time. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that she will provide detailed information from the vendor in terms of how they are delivering the service.

Miscellaneous Communication – None

Claims List

Mrs. Barbosa asked if there were any questions.

Resolution – National Parental Involvement Day

Mrs. Moreno-Ortega stated that we celebrate all the parents and guardians this month. Mrs. Moreno-Ortega thanked the parents and guardians who support our great students. Mrs. Moreno-Ortega stated that as a mother and as a teacher it's not easy for her to work at home and at the same time being able to track her daughter. Mrs. Moreno-Ortega stated that we know as a Board member that you are involved in your child's education every day and we celebrate you this month.

Mrs. Barbosa highlighted a resolution for National Principals Month. Mrs. Barbosa stated that there is a resolution for the NJSBA Annual Workshop and we are all interested in being there to continue and further our education as Board members working as a team.

Resolution – Puerto Rican Heritage Month

Resolution – Veteran’s Day

Resolution – Approving Renewal of Contract with Max Plumbing and Heating, Inc. to Provide Snow Plowing/Removal Services for 2020-2021 School Year

Mrs. Barbosa asked about the snow plowing removal services.

Mr. Kennedy stated that this is the second renewal of the contract which is for the third year. Mr. Kennedy stated that we have our own plows that do some of our parking lots but the majority are contracted out.

Mr. Jacobs asked if we don’t use the services, are we obligated to pay the full contract value.

Mr. Kennedy responded no and stated that the contract is on an as needed basis. Mr. Kennedy stated that if it doesn’t snow this winter, then we do not have to pay them.

Mr. Jacobs requested that the contract for Max Plumbing and Heating, Inc. be held for further discussion.

Mr. Kennedy stated that the contract for Max Plumbing and Heating, Inc. would not be added to the agenda.

Resolution – Payment for Unused Sick Days

Resolution – Payment for Unused Vacation Days

Resolution – National French Week

Resolution – Anti-Litter Campaign

Resolution – National Principals Month

Resolution – Appointment of Sam Tell and Son, Inc. to Provide Cafeteria Small Equipment

Resolution – Appointment of Central Poly Bag Corp. to Provide Toilet Paper

Resolution – Participation in NJSBA Workshop October 20-22

Resolution – Approving First Renewal of Contract for Peters Chemical Company to Provide Snow and Ice Melt Pellets for 2020-2021

Mr. Kennedy stated that the first reading of two revised policies needs to be added to the agenda.

Mrs. Barbosa added the following to the agenda:

Minutes of the Agenda and Business Meetings for September 17 and October 1, 2020

Secretary’s Monthly Certification and Treasurer’s Report for August 2020

Personnel Report

Tuition Report

Superintendent’s Report – Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying Investigative Results

Authorizations Report

Finance and Accounting Report – Authorization to Pay Vouchers, etc.

Supplemental Finance and Accounting Report – Transfer of Funds

Award of Contracts Report

Supplemental Award of Contracts Report

Miscellaneous Communication – None

Claims List

Resolution – National Parental Involvement Day

Resolution – Puerto Rican Heritage Month

Resolution – Veteran’s Day
 Resolution – Payment for Unused Sick Days
 Resolution – Payment for Unused Vacation Days
 Resolution – National French Week
 Resolution – Anti-Litter Campaign
 Resolution – National Principals Month
 Resolution – Appointment of Sam Tell and Son, Inc. to Provide Cafeteria Small Equipment
 Resolution – Appointment of Central Poly Bag Corp. to Provide Toilet Paper
 Resolution – Participation in NJSBA Workshop October 20-22
 Resolution – Approving First Renewal of Contract for Peters Chemical Company to Provide Snow and Ice Melt Pellets for 2020-2021
 First Reading of Revised Policies for 5132 School Uniforms and 6146 Graduation Requirements

Mrs. Barbosa introduced Superintendent of Schools Olga Hugelmeyer to present the Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying Investigative Results.

Superintendent Olga Hugelmeyer stated that pursuant to Board Policy 5131.1 Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying (HIB) and New Jersey Statute 18A:37 the results of each investigation shall be reported to the Board of Education no later than the date of the next board meeting following completion of the investigation, and include: 1) Any services provided; 2) Training established; 3) Discipline imposed; or 4) Other action taken or recommended by the chief school administrator. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that at the next regularly scheduled meeting after Board members receive the report of HIB investigations, the statute requires that the Board issue a decision in writing to affirm, reject, or modify the Superintendent’s decision pertaining to the cases that were reported to the Board members at the last meeting.

Ms. Bathelus commented that, as stated earlier by many of us, we have gone above and beyond to thank our nurses and our teachers. Ms. Bathelus stated that we have forgotten a big population and we don’t want to be insensitive to the full population of the staff members that service us. Ms. Bathelus gave a special thank you to our custodians, secretaries, supervisors from all departments, and security guards who have assisted us while going through this whole pandemic. Ms. Bathelus stated that not only are our teachers important but in order for us to function as a full community and full district every person that is hired by us, all of our assistants, and everyone makes up who we are as a district. Ms. Bathelus stated that she wanted to take the time to not only express our extreme gratitude for their work but we want to say thank you. Ms. Bathelus stated that a lot of people are saying how come we are only focusing on one population. Ms. Bathelus stated that she wanted to make sure that they know that we do love them, we appreciate them, and want to thank them publicly as well as everyone else who is working. Ms. Bathelus stated that we can’t do this without you and this district would not function without you. Ms. Bathelus stated that we want to say thank you on behalf of everyone. Ms. Bathelus stated that if she forgot someone please don’t discharge her heart.

Mr. Neron stated that we don’t want to forget food services and IT who have been on the front line for us as well. Mr. Neron thanked them for all the great work that they have done keeping our food distribution going and our IT department who have been working arduously to keep virtual learning going.

Ms. Bathelus thanked Mr. Neron for adding that and stated that she appreciates it.

Mrs. Barbosa thanked Ms. Bathelus and Mr. Neron. Mrs. Barbosa thanked our personal aides giving assistance in small groups. Mrs. Barbosa thanked them for continuing the conversation and stated that anytime is appropriate to bring gratitude and thanks to those who help run the Elizabeth Public Schools.

The first reading of the following policies was done:

5132	Policy	School Uniforms
6146	Policy	Graduation Requirements

Mrs. Hugelmeyer explained that the revision to the graduation requirement was presented as part of our August 20th Board meeting with a start date of September 1, 2020. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that at the time at which we had submitted our budget at the August 20th Board meeting, this was part of that submission to the NJ Department of Education and is reflected on the policy. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that with regard to the school uniform policy she would like to acknowledge the Board's efforts in recognizing the challenges of this current situation we are living through. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that this policy demonstrates the importance of flexibility for our parents in ensuring that they are properly supported. Mrs. Hugelmeyer explained the changes for two specific items that had been an update to the school uniform policy for 2020-2021. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the school uniforms that were in effect during the 2019-2020 school year will remain acceptable in the 2020-2021 school year once our classes resume and our children are back in our schools. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that this demonstrates a level of sensitivity on the part of our Board of Education to be supportive of our families. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that those are the two updates for the respective policies that are on the agenda for this evening.

Mr. Jacobs thanked Mrs. Hugelmeyer, the administration, and the policy committee for these changes. Mr. Jacobs stated that he is glad that the Superintendent gave the guidance to allow some flexibility when we do return to school so that there is not an issue with any of our children and that we are able to provide that flexibility at this time.

Mrs. Barbosa asked for a motion and second to accept the agenda.

A motion was made by Ms. Bathelus, seconded by Mrs. Pestana, that the above be accepted.

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Ms. Bathelus, Mmes. Carvalho (abstain- Personnel Report – N.A.), Chevres, Hernandez, Mr. Jacobs, Mrs. Moreno-Ortega, Mr. Neron, Mmes. Pestana, Barbosa – 9

Negative: None

Mrs. Barbosa asked Mrs. Hugelmeyer to review the communication with the IT Department so that if any parent is having a problem with their child's device, they know the steps that they have to take.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that a friendly reminder can be sent to our families. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the first step is to contact our IT Department and they will be provided with an appointment. Mrs. Hugelmeyer explained that dependent on what the respective issue is, they will be directed to the area for personnel to assist with troubleshooting. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that if the laptop needs to be repaired, there is an exchange for a device in the interim while the laptop is being repaired. Mrs. Hugelmeyer explained the procedure for a new student to pick up their new laptop. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that first it begins with a phone call to the IT Department in order to obtain an appointment so that they can receive their service.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that they issue weekly reports to the NJDOE. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that this is a new requirement that was instituted yesterday by the NJDOE where we have to report every Wednesday the number of devices that children are missing and we are very fortunate that we were able to answer zero because every child has a device. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that we are not waiting on any orders that were delayed, on the contrary every child has a device. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the second piece of information that the NJDOE is collecting on a weekly basis is with regard to internet issues. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that we have report to the NJDOE the families that have received a service from Altice and have been provided a router but continue to experience very spotty internet. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that we have reported that to the Department and we are continuing to work with our partner, Altice, on being able to rectify the issues.

Ms. Bathelus asked if Altice is charging us.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the funding was covered by the CARES Act, the federal funding that was made available in June. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the expense for the entire school year was covered by that federal funding.

Ms. Bathelus stated that T-Mobile is providing districts with free internet service. Ms. Bathelus asked if someone from the IT Department can look into this service.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer thanked Ms. Bathelus for sharing the information. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that she will follow-up with our IT Department for this service and she will be happy to report to the Board about it.

Mr. Jacobs stated that he read an article about the E-Rate program and asked if our E-Rate program can help to provide Wi-Fi throughout the City to all of our students using programs through E-Rate. Mr. Jacobs stated that he can get the specifics on the article and it sounded like such a great idea because then all of our students would be able to have Wi-Fi access and we wouldn't have to be paying for it on an annual basis as we are doing currently. Mr. Jacobs stated that from what he understands, the idea was to make sure that there were enough Wi-Fi signals and towers on all of our schools which would blanket our neighborhoods. Mr. Jacobs asked if we could look into that as well.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that it will be her pleasure to look into it. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that she wanted to go back to her comment with regard to Altice. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that they are charging for the 2020-2021 school year but they provided free service from March until June. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that we will look into the free service through E-Rate as well as T-Mobile. Mrs. Hugelmeyer thanked Ms. Bathelus and Mr. Jacobs and stated that we will continue to explore all of the options that can be made available to our City.

Mrs. Barbosa reminded everyone to fill out the Census 2020 and stated that it is important to everyone and makes a dramatic difference to all the funding that we can get. Mrs. Barbosa stated to make sure that you are counted and fill out the Census 2020.

Mrs. Barbosa stated that we had a press release this week and it is on our website. Mrs. Barbosa asked Mrs. Hugelmeyer to explain about it because it is important for our families to know.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that we were confronted with a very interesting situation when we started this school year. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that we had families that had reached out to us that, as a result of the pandemic, had relocated to their respective countries. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that they had not disenrolled their children. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that they had been accessing their education in the Spring and found themselves in this situation where they needed to relocate temporarily to their respective countries whether it was for childcare or a variety of reasons. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that they were reaching out to say that they would like to have their children continue to access their education. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that she reached out to the NJDOE in order to consult with regard to how it is that we are to support our families and whether this was allowable. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the State Department's response was that certainly this was a local decision. Mrs. Hugelmeyer thanked the entire Board because they always keep our children front and center. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that she received so many communications from our Board members inquiring about a number of families that were anxious to have their children start the school year. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that we had a total of sixty children in a variety of nations that had properly documented their circumstances. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that there are families in Egypt, Colombia, Ecuador and it was just amazing how this pandemic impacted so many of our families. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the students received an activation code and continued to receive their education which is such a beautiful story and an amazing experience. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that we find ourselves being able to help our families so that they can continue their education. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the guidance that was provided by our attorneys was that it would be conditional based on the first marking period. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the families all communicated and indicated that their safe return to the United States and the children would be continuing on to receive their education. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that this is an amazing story with regard to the great opportunity that was afforded to them and we had the support of the NJ Department of Education and the great guidance of our attorneys to help craft the appropriate communication to address the concerns.

Mrs. Barbosa stated that it is a beautiful story and we want our children home but we want them to continue their education until they get back to Elizabeth. Mrs. Barbosa stated that the support and patience of everyone in our learning community including our students, families, team members, Superintendent, administration is important and it is truly appreciated that we work through this together. Mrs. Barbosa stated that we continue to be here for one another as we navigate through it all to the best of our ability with the ongoing effects of the pandemic. Mrs. Barbosa stated that it is her greatest and most heartfelt that this year as being the President and working with the Board we continually try to make the best decisions holding everything to the greatest effect, the scientific data, and making sure that everybody is healthy and our students are safe and continue to be educated. Mrs. Barbosa stated that it breaks her heart when she sees our students struggling. Mrs. Barbosa stated that as Board members we always struggle but we are in this together to make the best decisions with the administrators and with all our team members.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that there has been a new development and just prior to our Board meeting Mr. Kennedy and she engaged in a conference call and we have been identified as a school district that will be able to take advantage of COVID testing that will be made available to all of our families and all of our students. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the NJ Department of Health received a grant which is specifically dedicated for inner cities and Elizabeth was on the list. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the NJ DOH reached out to our Health Officer Mark Colicchio and her and they coordinated a call. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that we are going to be launching a COVID testing site in our community beginning on Friday, October 23rd. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that they are waiting for the material to be forwarded to us via email tomorrow so that we can have it translated and available to all of our parents. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that there is a registration process and is one of the requirements is an online registration that the parents would have to complete and then they would receive their appointment. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the hours are from 12:30 p.m. until 7:30 p.m. from Monday through Friday and on Saturday testing will be available from 9:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that will be until we have met all of the needs of our City of Elizabeth, our parents, and our students that attend the Elizabeth Public Schools. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that it is a phenomenal opportunity and we are very grateful to the NJ Department of Health for having identified the Elizabeth Public Schools. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that she will share additional information once she receives it tomorrow. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that it continues to stress the importance of addressing health as Mrs. Barbosa stated and that is a top priority in our community.

Mrs. Barbosa asked if the testing will be done in one of our schools.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that it will be done at the Dunn Sports Center and that is the location that has been designated for a variety of reasons just in terms of the multiple entrances and exits. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the NJ Department of Health, in working with this particular company that has been contracted to conduct the testing, are working vigorously to make sure that they have available the flu shot for our families. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that it is an opportunity for multiple resources not only the COVID test but also the flu shot for our families. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the Dunn Sports Center has been identified as the centralized location. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that we know the convenience of parking and public transportation system so it really is a convenient location for our families to be able to schedule their appointments and obtain their COVID test as well as a flu shot which will be forthcoming.

Mrs. Carvalho asked if this company is going to come in and take over the Dunn Sports Center are our custodians and staff going to be responsible for cleaning the Dunn Sports Center after.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that we are not at all responsible for the proper sanitizing of the facility. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the company that has been contracted by the NJ Department of Health is responsible for properly sanitizing each and every day. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that we do not have any responsibility. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that it keeps all of our personnel very safe which is very important.

Mrs. Carvalho asked if the test will be offered to all of our teachers even if they don't live in Elizabeth.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer responded yes and stated that not only parents and students but all employees of the Elizabeth Public Schools.

On a motion by Ms. Bathelus, seconded by Mrs. Hernandez, the meeting was adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Ms. Bathelus, Mmes. Carvalho, Chevres, Hernandez, Mr. Jacobs, Mrs. Moreno-Ortega, Mr. Neron, Mmes. Pestana, Barbosa – 9

Negative: None

Harold E. Kennedy, Jr.
School Business Administrator/Board Secretary