

BOARD OF EDUCATION
(Official)

March 19, 2015
Elizabeth, New Jersey

The regular meeting of the Board of Education was called on March 19, 2015 at 7:00 p.m., in the MultiPurpose Room, Donald Stewart Center for Early Childhood Education, 544 Pennsylvania Avenue, Elizabeth, New Jersey.

Board President Ana Maria Amin presented the following statement at 7:30 p.m.

“Ladies and Gentlemen, good evening. This is a regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Education. Pursuant to New Jersey Statutes and the rules adopted by the Board of Education, notice of this meeting was sent to Worrall Community Newspapers, The Star Ledger and Cablevision of Elizabeth on Monday, March 16, 2015. 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.”

“I wish to extend a warm welcome to everyone present and to our television viewers to this March 19, 2015 meeting of the Board of Education. We are here to govern, provide management oversight, and make policy for the district. The Superintendent manages the district. This is a meeting of the Board in public, not a meeting of the public.”

“This meeting is being recorded and will become part of the Elizabeth Board of Education permanent record. In order that the recording will adequately reflect the proceedings, please refrain from talking while others are speaking. I also ask that you silence the sound on your electronic devices. Since it is legally mandated that these proceedings be accurately recorded, I may have to ask for order periodically should noise begin to interfere with our recording capabilities. I am pleased that you have taken time this evening to join us. Thank you for your interest in the Elizabeth Public Schools.”

“There will be a public portion for citizens to address the Board. Participants for the public portion must sign in one hour prior to the advertised start of the meeting so that they may have the opportunity to speak. The sign-in sheet states the name, address, telephone number and reason that the person wants to comment, whether it is an agenda item or a general education comment.”

Present: Ms. Bathelus, Mmes. Carvalho, Castillo-Ospina, Messrs. Monteiro, Neron, Perreira, Rodriguez, Trujillo, Mrs. Amin – 9

Absent: None

Superintendent of Schools Olga Hugelmeyer, School Business Administrator/Board Secretary Harold E. Kennedy, Jr., Assistant Superintendent for Schools Rafael Cortes, Assistant Superintendent for Schools Linda Seniszyn, Interim Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning Jennifer Ceden, Comptroller William Greene, Supervising General Counsel/Board Attorney Marvin Lehman, and members of the public were in attendance.

Dr. William A. Greene gave the invocation.

Mrs. Amin spoke of the very sad loss of the passing on March 8, 2015 of Denise Heraz, eighth grade student at Juan Pablo Duarte-José Julián Martí School No. 28. Mrs. Amin then called for a moment of silence.

Colors were presented during the Flag Ceremony by members of the Admiral William F. Halsey, Jr. Leadership Academy Marine Corps Junior R.O.T.C. followed by the Pledge of

Allegiance led by Andrew Valencia, sixth grade student at Ronald Reagan Academy School No. 30.

The *Star Spangled Banner* by Francis Scott Key was performed by students in the Ronald Reagan Academy School No. 30 Jazz Band.

The Pledge of Ethics was led by Diego Garcia, eighth grade student at Ronald Reagan Academy School No. 30.

Mrs. Amin introduced a video presentation of the Core Beliefs and Commitments.

Mr. Rodriguez introduced students in the Ronald Reagan Academy School No. 30 Jazz Band who performed *Ballad* by Chris Sharp. Miss Meredith Foreman, band director, stated that the next selection is *Cold Duck Time* by Eddie Harris and arranged by Erik Morales with soloists Diego Garcia, tenor saxophone; Brandon Aguirre, baritone saxophone; and Andrew Valencia, piano. Miss Foreman stated that the Jazz Band was invited to perform at this year's Leader in Me Symposium, held in Brooklyn New York on March 7, 2015 and performed *Cold Duck Time*.

Mrs. Amin thanked the students for the wonderful performance.

Mrs. Castillo-Ospina recognized students in the Ronald Reagan Academy School No. 30 Jazz Band who performed at the Leader in Me Symposium held in Brooklyn, New York on March 7, 2015 and is a conference that focuses on fostering Stephen Covey's leadership principles and skills to students for the advancement of skills. Mrs. Castillo-Ospina introduced students Brandon Aguirre, George Arteaga, Rebecca Charmel, Eduardo Cruz, Gabriel Deolindo, Diane Diaz, Mauro Ferreira, Diego Garcia, Samuel Hodges III, Josiah Lee, Christopher Lutz, Jose Magana, Talissa Molina, Camila Osorio, Daniel Ortega, Jorge Ortiz, Franco Silva, Yonah Sosa, Sebastian Rodriguez, and Andrew Valencia and band director Meredith Foreman. Mrs. Castillo-Ospina and Board members congratulated the students and presented each with a plaque of commemoration.

Mr. Neron recognized the students from the Thomas Jefferson Arts Academy TV Production for reaching the top 10 finalist in the Sony Picture Project FX Film Festival and being nominated for an Emmy Award in the High School Category for the film "# (hashtag) Twurge – The Twitter Purge" which they produced. Mr. Neron introduced students Roberto Adams, Sofia Aguiar, Gabby Gomez, Miguel Barriento, Esay Candelario, Sofia Fernandes, Nicole Guillermo, Yadimar Jackson, Francis Kelly, Adler Lafleur, Meghan Magnus, Gregory Markowitz, La'Quan Miller, George Montalvo, Daisy Padua, Cassiel Ramirez, Emely Saldivar, Yamily Santana, Brianny Santos, and Matthew Turner and advisor Mary Rivera and faculty tech support Steven Sabet. Mr. Neron recognized HBO cinematographer/producer Pierre Coleman, HBO writer/producer, and HBO writer/director Theodore Perkins who mentored and provided technical guidance to the students of the Thomas Jefferson Arts Academy TV Production. Mr. Neron and Board members congratulated the students, advisors, and HBO director and producers and presented each with a plaque of commemoration.

Mr. Monteiro recognized students from the National Academy Foundation of Engineering at John E. Dwyer Technology Academy for winning the AT&T 4th Annual Student Innovation Competition including first place, Jaroy Richardson and second place Stephanie Medeiros. Mr. Monteiro recognized engineering teachers Erica Hodulik and Julio Tamayo and National Academy Foundation Coordinator Dana Rivas. Mr. Monteiro and Board members congratulated the students and teachers and presented each with a plaque of commemoration.

Mr. Perreira recognized Berthenia Harmon Carolina, Principal of Nicholas Murray Butler School No. 23, who was selected as the recipient of the Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune Award from the National Council of Negro Women, Greater Elizabeth Section, for outstanding community

service. Mr. Perreira and Board members congratulated Berthenia Harmon Carolina and presented her with a plaque of commemoration.

Ms. Bathelus recognized Winfield Scott School No. 2 for receiving the Support Music Merit Award by the National Association of Music Merchants Foundation which recognizes support for school-based music education programs. Ms. Bathelus stated that Winfield Scott School No. 2 was among 120 individual schools in the United States and only 7 in New Jersey to be awarded the Support Music Merit Award. Ms. Bathelus recognized music teachers Annice Benamy and Valerie Liiva-Katz, Principal Hollis Mendes and Vice Principal Linda Ferreira for their efforts in leading Winfield Scott School No. 2 to this special distinction and for their dedication to providing students with an excellent music program. Ms. Bathelus and Board members congratulated them and presented each with a plaque of commemoration.

Mr. Lehman stated that he wanted to make a clarification and the last couple of meetings we have had the pleasure of having some of our outside counsel attend our meetings and sit on the dais. Mr. Lehman stated that the Board is not being charged for their presence and we should be honored to have them here. Mr. Lehman stated that tonight we have Mr. Edelstein who is one of the foremost school law attorneys in the State of New Jersey and in the United States. Mr. Lehman welcomed Mr. Edelstein to the meeting.

Ms. Bathelus requested to have public speaking first before the agenda.

Mrs. Carvalho stated that she wanted to clarify the fee for the last meeting because he told us the fee.

Mr. Lehman stated that we were not charged for the time he was here.

Mrs. Carvalho stated that he said he was giving us a discount.

Mr. Rodriguez asked if none of the attorneys from January until now who sat next to the President would be charging the Board of Education for their services.

Mr. Lehman responded that is his understanding. Mr. Lehman stated that he could check it and advise him accordingly.

Mr. Rodriguez stated that it is important to know because with the tight budget that we have we cut a lot of programs, we cut a lot of things for students, and he knows we have to cut across the board. Mr. Rodriguez stated that it is tough for the taxpayers to have to swallow that pill knowing that there may be an attorney here that we may be wasting frivolous money that could better suited to go to educational programs. Mr. Rodriguez stated that he just wants a clarification that tonight while Mr. Edelstein is not going to charge us we appreciate that as a Board of Education we just want to know if that holds true for the same attorneys that were here for January 14th and February 26th.

Mr. Lehman stated that he could check that and advise him.

Mr. Neron stated that Mr. Bruce Rosen was with us at the last meeting and asked if he is from the same firm as Mr. Edelstein.

Mr. Lehman responded it is a different firm.

Mr. Neron stated that he made it very clear that he was charging and offered us a discount and that is where the confusion is.

Mr. Lehman stated that is why he wanted to clarify it.

Mr. Monteiro excused himself from the meeting at 8:15 p.m.

A motion was made by Mr. Trujillo, seconded by Mrs. Carvalho, that the minutes of the meeting of February 26, 2015 be accepted.

The vote was as follows, however, later in the meeting the motion did not receive the required number of votes:

Affirmative: Ms. Bathelus, Mrs. Carvalho, Mrs. Castillo-Ospina, Messrs. Neron, Perreira, Rodriguez, Trujillo, Mrs. Amin – 8

Negative: None

Secretary and Treasurer's Report for the Month of January 2015

A motion was made by Mr. Perreira, seconded by Mrs. Castillo-Ospina, that the report be accepted.

The motion did not receive the required number of votes (later in the evening the motion did receive the required number of votes):

Affirmative: Mrs. Castillo-Ospina, Messrs. Perreira, Trujillo, Mrs. Amin – 4

Negative: Ms. Bathelus, Mrs. Carvalho, Messrs. Neron, Rodriguez – 4

Mr. Rodriguez stated that during the last meeting on February 26 Mr. Lehman told him that policy 3327 had a provision that claimed in case of a tie vote or at least a vote for any kind of lawyer contracts or insurance contracts that those contracts would automatically be renewed for one year under the regulations and statutes of New Jersey law. Mr. Rodriguez stated that he emailed Mr. Lehman a few times and received no response after two weeks. Mr. Rodriguez stated that Mr. Lehman told him there were two readings of that policy, first read on November 20 and it was read again on the December 11th meeting and then passed. Mr. Rodriguez stated that when he went back to the November 20th meeting and he included this in his email he did not find in the agenda nor in the meetings that policy being read. Mr. Rodriguez stated that in the December meeting the minutes claim it to be the second reading. Mr. Rodriguez stated that he didn't see the first time that it was read. Mr. Rodriguez stated that if the policy wasn't read twice then he doesn't think that policy would be in effect.

Mr. Lehman stated that the last email he received from Mr. Rodriguez asked what meetings the policy was introduced to the Board. Mr. Lehman stated that if you look at the last page of the policy it indicates what meetings it was introduced and then voted upon at the Board. Mr. Lehman stated that when he responded to Mr. Rodriguez with the dates November 20th and December 11th he got the information from the policy itself. Mr. Lehman stated that Mr. Rodriguez emailed him back that he couldn't find it on November 20th. Mr. Lehman stated that he hasn't had a chance to go back and look at the meeting or review the meeting but he did note that on December 11th Mr. Rodriguez voted in favor of the policy.

Mr. Rodriguez responded correct but he did not see the first reading of the policy.

Mr. Lehman stated that he would check and get back to him.

Mr. Rodriguez asked Mr. Lehman if he could get back to him sooner than two weeks.

Mr. Monteiro returned to the meeting at 8:20 p.m.

Personnel Report – Leaves of Absence, etc.

A motion was made by Mr. Trujillo, seconded by Mr. Perreira, that the report be accepted.

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Ms. Bathelus, Mmes. Carvalho, Castillo-Ospina, Messrs. Monteiro, Neron, Perreira, Rodriguez, Trujillo (abstain- A.D., R.C., M.A., D.B., G.G., A.H., S.S., E.Y., A.A., M.B.), Mrs. Amin – 9
Negative: None

Mr. Rodriguez congratulated the retirees especially the certified staff and thanked them for their years of service.

Mr. Monteiro stated that he was voting in the affirmative for the Secretary and Treasurer's Report for the Month of January 2015.

Secretary and Treasurer's Report for the Month of January 2015

The earlier motion to accept the report was carried.

Affirmative: Mrs. Castillo-Ospina, Messrs. Monteiro, Perreira, Trujillo, Mrs. Amin – 5

Negative: Ms. Bathelus, Mrs. Carvalho, Messrs. Neron, Rodriguez – 4

Tuition Report

A motion was made by Mr. Perreira, seconded by Mrs. Castillo-Ospina, that the report be accepted.

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Ms. Bathelus, Mmes. Carvalho, Castillo-Ospina, Messrs. Monteiro, Neron, Perreira, Rodriguez, Trujillo, Mrs. Amin – 9

Negative: None

Superintendent's Report – Considerations

A motion was made by Mr. Perreira, seconded by Mrs. Castillo-Ospina, that the requests be approved.

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Ms. Bathelus, Mmes. Carvalho, Castillo-Ospina, Messrs. Monteiro, Neron, Perreira, Rodriguez, Trujillo, Mrs. Amin – 9

Negative: None

Superintendent's Report – Use of Facilities

A motion was made by Mr. Perreira, seconded by Mrs. Castillo-Ospina, that the requests be approved as recommended except with a waiver of all fees for the requests from A Helping Hand, City of Elizabeth Department of Health and Human Services, The Patrick School, and At Heart's Length.

Mr. Rodriguez asked if the contracts have been amended with the resolution we passed last meeting that if they were to leave our facilities in disarray that we were able to go back and charge for that.

Mr. Kennedy explained.

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Ms. Bathelus, Mmes. Carvalho, Castillo-Ospina (abstain- America's United Soccer Academy), Messrs. Monteiro, Neron (abstain- City of Elizabeth Department of Health and Human Services), Perreira (abstain- At Heart's Length), Rodriguez, Trujillo, Mrs. Amin (abstain- America's United Soccer Academy) – 9

Negative: None

Supplemental Superintendent's Report – Use of Facilities

A motion was made by Mr. Trujillo, seconded by Mr. Perreira, that the requests be approved as recommended.

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Ms. Bathelus, Mmes. Carvalho, Castillo-Ospina, Messrs. Monteiro, Neron Perreira, Rodriguez, Trujillo, Mrs. Amin – 9

Negative: None

Superintendent's Report – Field Trips

A motion was made by Mr. Trujillo, seconded by Mrs. Castillo-Ospina, that the requests be approved.

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Ms. Bathelus, Mmes. Carvalho, Castillo-Ospina, Messrs. Monteiro, Neron Perreira, Rodriguez, Trujillo, Mrs. Amin – 9

Negative: None

Superintendent's Report

Superintendent of Schools Olga Hugelmeier stated that her report includes highlights from InsideEPS beginning with the article *Our School Community Working to Strengthen Our Practices*. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that the district is continually analyzing data and evaluating existing programs and reforms to monitor implementation and effectiveness and this year the district has identified five levers that frame the work being done in the district including early literacy, Algebra in eighth grade, high school persistence and advancement, data driven instruction, and common core alignment. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that this week district leaders met during their monthly Peer Learning Community (PLC) meeting and focused on the high school persistence lever. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that the goal was to identify a problem of practice under the overarching theme of improving on-time graduation rates. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that as part of our work around equity, leaders examined longitudinal high school data on demographics, academics, culture and climate, graduation rates by time in district, ninth grade retention rates, and student transition between ninth and tenth grade. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that once the problem of practice was identified, leaders focused a discussion regarding symptoms, causal factors, and root causes using the Five Whys Protocol. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that leaders will continue engaging in this work to understand the data trends, next steps, and identify strategies and supports to ensure student success. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that leaders and teachers have also been engaged in monthly Peer Learning Community meetings and data dives focused on early literacy in grades PreK-3 and Algebra in eighth grade. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that the literacy data dive examined district data and trends in student performance by subgroup for DRA2, TerraNova, Supera, NJ ASK 3, and Early Literacy Interventions. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that the Algebra data dive examined student performance by subgroup in NJ ASK 8, Algebra coursework, and high school math performance. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that using the 5 Whys Protocol for each data dive, leaders shared the causal factors and findings with teachers at the school level to gather feedback on how to ensure excellence, high expectations and equity for all students. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that this on-going work by our district leaders and teachers will inform and drive the design of the upcoming strategic plan. Mrs. Hugelmeier thanked all of our team members for their valued contributions to this critical work.

Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that the next article is *A Commitment to Advancing Best Practices in Language Arts Literacy*. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that Language Arts Literacy Supervisors Gina Dalton and Maria Fabiano are working closely with Fred Carrigg, former Special Assistant to the Commissioner of Education for Urban Education to continually improve the language arts literacy curricula and district benchmarks to ensure equity, expectations and excellence for all of EPS students in their literacy growth. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that in preparation for the 2014-2015 school year the supervisor and language arts literacy coaches met with Mr. Carrigg to embark on an extensive examination of district benchmarks and as a result

the literacy team created new kindergarten through grade 5 benchmarks that are reflective of incremental measures of literacy development aligned to the Common Core State Standards, the New Jersey State Model Curriculum, developmentally appropriate literacy curricular maps, and the core reading program. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that these benchmarks support the focus on vocabulary development, alphabetic principle in grades K and 1, language arts skills in grades 2 through 5, reading, and writing. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that to support this work Mr. Carrigg joined the supervisor and coaches on school visits of kindergarten and grade 1 classes to interact with students on literacy skills and to see the curricula in action. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that these visits coupled with the benchmark item analysis conducted quarterly have been valuable in examining curricula and promoting student success. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that additional accomplishments stemming from the collaboration with Mr. Carrigg included revising the language arts literacy curricula and interventions to support students in acquiring benchmark skills and the Common Core State Standards. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that based on this work, teachers and administrators received training on benchmarks and training has also been offered to teachers across grade levels on the various components of the language arts curricula. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that in addition to the data analysis of benchmarks, Mr. Carrigg and the literacy team examined a five year trend analysis that was conducted using NJASK and HSPA data. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that this analysis has proven valuable in examining subgroup performance and the work accomplished with Mr. Carrigg continues to strengthen collaboration between the language arts literacy, bilingual/ESL, and special services teams to ensure that students are receiving the highest quality support in their literacy development.

Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that the last article is *Winfield Scott Earns SMMA, Boosts Profile of EPS Arts Program*. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that Winfield Scott School No. 2 was among 120 individual schools in the United States to be awarded the Support Music Merit Award (SMMA) which recognizes support for school-based music education programs by the National Association of Music Merchants (NAMM) Foundation. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that the award is designated by the NAMM Foundation's Support Music Coalition, a program that united non-profit organizations, schools, and businesses and provides them with tools and resources to keep music education strong in their communities. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that each year the NAMM Foundation seeks to celebrate and recognize innovative and resourceful music education programs in the United States and schools are required to complete a comprehensive survey that reveals statistical and factual information about music education and related opportunities for students to learn music. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that through the support and collaboration of Winfield Scott School No. 2 music teachers Annice Benamy and Valeri Liiva-Katz, Principal Hollis Mendes, and Vice Principal Linda Ferreira, School No. 2 demonstrated that their music program is a symbol of the school's dedication to music education which can serve as a path to life-long learning and knowledge of self and culture. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that music education supports healthy social development and the quality of a young person's life. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that the award received by Winfield Scott School No. 2 also is emblematic of the commitment of Elizabeth Public Schools as a whole to arts education and over the past several years arts programs from throughout the district have received high accolades. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that over the past several years, arts programs from throughout the district have received high accolades. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that additionally a large number of the students who have been among those throughout the district to receive a perfect score on state assessments in recent years have been active participants in music education. Mrs. Hugelmeier congratulated Winfield Scott School No. 2 and Supervisor of Music Dennis Argul and Principal Hollis Mendes. Mrs. Hugelmeier thanked all the teachers and all the team members who make this possible for our district. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that this concludes the InsideEPS report.

Mrs. Amin thanked Superintendent Hugelmeier for her informative report.

Authorizations Report – Authorization to Make Application, etc.

A motion was made by Mr. Perreira, seconded by Mrs. Castillo-Ospina, that the report be accepted.

Ms. Bathelus stated that seven members are attending the Panasonic Foundation Leadership Associates Program and asked why seven people are needed to go and how much that total is.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer explained that it is part of a ten year partnership agreement with the Elizabeth Public Schools and the requirement for attendance to the annual conference is to have a total of eight members attend. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that half of the members are funded by the Panasonic Foundation and half are funded by the district. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that this is part of the ten year partnership agreement where we have been attending and it is an opportunity to develop the appropriate strategic strategies for our district and to help us move our district forward.

Ms. Bathelus asked how the members are selected.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer explained that the composition of the team is, first and foremost, a member of the Board, the president of both the teachers' union and the principals' and supervisors' union, the superintendent, members of the cabinet and/or principals, vice principals, and administrators from the district are able to attend.

Ms. Bathelus asked if that is written in policy.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that there is language in the agreement with the Panasonic Foundation with regard to the composition of the team that should be attending.

Ms. Bathelus asked if she could see that.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer responded absolutely.

Mrs. Castillo-Ospina stated that she has participated and it is a very strict program and you receive a wealth of knowledge. Mrs. Castillo-Ospina stated that the Panasonic Foundation has been one of the biggest supporters of our district. Mrs. Castillo-Ospina stated that it is a ten year partnership and we are the only district in New Jersey selected to participate with the Panasonic Foundation.

Ms. Bathelus stated that she wasn't questioning the benefits of the program. Ms. Bathelus stated that she knows we are having issues with our budget and she thought we were paying for everyone.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer explained that there are two representatives from the teachers' union and the president of the teachers' union is part of the agreement. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the EEA is actually sponsoring the teacher who is attending.

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Ms. Bathelus, Mmes. Carvalho, Castillo-Ospina, Messrs. Monteiro, Neron Perreira, Rodriguez, Trujillo – 8

Abstain: Mrs. Amin – 1

Negative: None

Finance and Accounting Report – Authorization to Pay Vouchers

A motion was made by Mr. Perreira, seconded by Mr. Trujillo, that the report be accepted.

Mrs. Carvalho asked about the auto rental.

Mr. Kennedy explained it is for rental of a van that the Sergeant is driving and is being reimbursed.

Mrs. Carvalho asked if it is not part of our regular transportation contract.

Mr. Kennedy responded no and that the trips are usually on the weekend.

Mr. Rodriguez stated that we received a letter and asked why we still have as part of our outside special legal team, the Capece Law Firm, especially when the gentleman is under indictment and he understands that he is not guilty and to have someone possibly representing the district who is under indictment for charges.

Mr. Monteiro asked Mr. Rodriguez where that is on the Finance and Accounting Report.

Mr. Rodriguez stated that he is making a comment.

Mr. Monteiro asked Mr. Rodriguez where that is on the Finance and Accounting Report. Mr. Monteiro stated that we need to stick to the agenda.

Mrs. Amin told Mr. Rodriguez that we need to finish the agenda.

Mr. Rodriguez stated that he has the floor and we are paying lawyer fees along with other vouchers so he just wants to make that comment. Mr. Rodriguez stated that he has the floor and he is going to make a comment on something on this report. Mr. Rodriguez told Mr. Edelstein he can have the floor after he is recognized. Mr. Rodriguez stated that the check to Schwartz Simon is \$298,826. Mr. Rodriguez stated that he appreciates that Mr. Edelstein is giving us tonight for free but he finds it kind of gross that we are paying so much money and he understands that the work was done and his law firm is very good but it is hard for the public to swallow paying our legal fees. Mr. Rodriguez stated that he hopes the legal committee can really look into the fees that we pay and try to find some kind of savings. Mr. Rodriguez stated that he knows tonight we are discussing the budget but he hopes they can find some way to save on legal costs and it is really killing our educational programs.

Mr. Edelstein responded that he certainly recognizes that is a very high number but what may not be so clear is that we are handling about 300 different cases for the district. Mr. Edelstein stated that one of the cases is a consolidation of about 3,000 cases, each one of which has to be looked at separately. Mr. Edelstein stated that one arbitration is a claim against the district of nearly \$40 million. Mr. Edelstein stated that all of the other cases against the district total tens of millions of dollars. Mr. Edelstein stated that he has been asked and he is preparing a cost benefit analysis to show how the claims compare to the fees. Mr. Edelstein stated that as an example if you had a claim against you for \$50,000. which was dismissed and you spent \$10,000. in legal fees to win that case there is an intelligent argument that you are up \$40,000. instead of down \$10,000. Mr. Edelstein stated that he has been asked to provide the analysis and he will. Mr. Edelstein stated that, just so it is clear, he has read, and he is not sure if it was Mr. Rodriguez or not, that people say that we are paid \$500. an hour by the Elizabeth Board of Education. Mr. Edelstein stated that the fact of the matter is that they are paid \$165. an hour.

Mr. Rodriguez asked if that is how much he charges as a partner of his firm.

Mr. Edelstein stated that they have never charged this Board more than \$165. an hour. Mr. Edelstein stated that is what he charges this Board now.

Mr. Lehman stated that his office has always been open to any Board members and he has invited Mr. Rodriguez and other Board members to come and visit at any time to review bills and understand why the bills are what they are. Mr. Lehman stated that other than one visit about two years ago he has not seen nor heard from Mr. Rodriguez in terms of coming to get an

understanding of what these bills are. Mr. Lehman stated that his office is open to any Board members to come and discuss these bills intelligently and get an understanding of what they are.

Mr. Rodriguez stated that, in all due respect, when he sends an email to Mr. Lehman and doesn't get a response for over two weeks it is kind of hard to then come back and tell me that your office is open when a simple email telling me you received my email and we can discuss this over the phone or that you are busy. Mr. Rodriguez stated that he has actually had to copy in the President of the Board of Education to try and get some kind of response and it is very difficult sometimes to communicate with him.

Mr. Lehman responded that he disagrees with Mr. Rodriguez and his office has always been open.

Mr. Rodriguez stated that he gave Mr. Lehman the floor and let him speak and if he can extend the same courtesy he would appreciate it. Mr. Rodriguez stated that he understands that Mr. Lehman has working hours, so does he, so it is difficult. Mr. Rodriguez stated that his mode of communication, which is email, is a little quicker but when he doesn't get a response it is difficult to then find him in other ways. Mr. Rodriguez stated that he appreciates that Mr. Lehman has an open door policy and he will try to visit him as soon as possible.

Mr. Trujillo stated that he supports the right to criticize, to be critical of what goes on here, and to disseminate information as Mr. Rodriguez sees it. Mr. Trujillo stated that, quite frankly, the obsession that Mr. Rodriguez has with legal fees is really taking away from what we are here to do and it is the education of the children. Mr. Trujillo stated that Mr. Rodriguez made his point and he doesn't think the public really needs to see the debating and we all have ample time to get the information we require. Mr. Trujillo stated that Mr. Rodriguez made his statement and if we can just stick to the agenda and respect each other and the rest of our time he would appreciate it.

Mr. Rodriguez stated that he understands that but we are talking about taxpayer money, his money, our children's money. Mr. Rodriguez stated that he doesn't consider it something to be taken lightly or to be pushed off to the side. Mr. Rodriguez stated that he is not sure if Mr. Trujillo sits on the legal committee and he knows that the committees were restructured. Mr. Rodriguez stated that he was actually removed from the special education committee and doesn't know why because he is a special education teacher. Mr. Rodriguez stated that if Mr. Trujillo sits on the legal committee could he please look into it. Mr. Rodriguez stated that he knows Mr. Edelstein is doing a cost analysis and every member on the Board would appreciate that. Mr. Rodriguez stated that there has to be something we could do to at least show the public that we are trying to spend their money in the most appropriate way. Mr. Rodriguez stated that he knows that such a large district needs to have many lawyers and there are cases all the time that are expensive. Mr. Rodriguez stated that as a Board of Education member there has to be a better way and there must always be a better way and if we stay stuck in the status quo it is very dangerous.

Mr. Neron stated that Mr. Edelstein is going to do a cost analysis for the district to see the savings and asked for a cost analysis as to how much we spend on legal fees as a district as compared to other large districts.

Mr. Edelstein responded yes and stated that it might not be completely obvious to people that there is not a single one, not one single one, that was started by the Board of Education. Mr. Edelstein stated that every single one of the cases that he mentioned was started by someone against the Board of Education. Mr. Edelstein stated that does not count the cases covered by insurance and handled through insurance lawyers. Mr. Edelstein stated that you should not think, nor should the public think, that the Board is out suing people.

Mr. Lehman stated that most of the cases date back to the 2009 through 2012 period. Mr. Lehman stated that currently we have very little in the way of new litigation.

Mr. Monteiro stated that, as to the point that Mr. Trujillo made, he wants to be respectful of all the members on this Board and everyone can certainly have their opinions and the right to their opinions. Mr. Monteiro stated that with respect to all of our time the last meeting went until 4:00 a.m. Mr. Monteiro stated that Mr. Rodriguez likes to want to filibuster or take this into a debate or take this into a show or circus and it is not the time or the place. Mr. Monteiro stated that, as Mr. Trujillo says, the Board is transparent and everything, every bill, every attorney fee, every fee, every voucher we pay is here at the Board of Education and you can OPRA it, you can come to the Board of Education, you can sit with the Business Administrator. Mr. Monteiro stated that for Mr. Rodriguez to come to the Board meeting and be disrespectful of all the Board members, all of our time, of all our family time we didn't appreciate it. Mr. Monteiro stated that after this we go into private session and Mr. Rodriguez continues to filibuster, continues to debate these points that keep us here until 4:00 a.m. Mr. Monteiro stated that Mr. Rodriguez should be respectful of not only his time but of all the people's time here tonight.

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Ms. Bathelus (negative- Schwartz Simon Edelstein & Celso, LLC) Mmes. Carvalho (negative- Schwartz Simon Edelstein & Celso, LLC), Castillo-Ospina, Messrs. Monteiro (abstain- Affordable Travel, USA Architects), Neron (negative- Schwartz Simon Edelstein & Celso, LLC), Perreira, Rodriguez (negative- Schwartz Simon Edelstein & Celso, LLC), Trujillo, Mrs. Amin – 9

Negative: None

Mr. Neron asked why there are hand checks.

Mr. Kennedy explained.

Supplemental Finance and Accounting Report – Transfer of Funds

A motion was made by Mr. Trujillo, seconded by Mr. Perreira, that the report be accepted.

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Ms. Bathelus, Mmes. Carvalho, Castillo-Ospina, Messrs. Monteiro, Neron, Perreira, Rodriguez, Trujillo, Mrs. Amin – 9

Negative: None

Award of Contracts Report

A motion was made by Mr. Trujillo, seconded by Mr. Perreira, that the report be accepted.

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Ms. Bathelus, Mmes. Carvalho, Castillo-Ospina, Messrs. Monteiro, Neron, Perreira, Rodriguez, Trujillo, Mrs. Amin – 9

Negative: None

Supplemental Award of Contracts Report

A motion was made by Mr. Trujillo, seconded by Mr. Perreira, that the report be accepted.

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Ms. Bathelus, Mmes. Carvalho, Castillo-Ospina, Messrs. Monteiro, Neron, Perreira, Rodriguez, Trujillo, Mrs. Amin – 9

Negative: None

Miscellaneous Communication

None.

Claims List

A motion was made by Mr. Trujillo, seconded by Mr. Perreira, that the report be accepted.

Mr. Neron asked if the hand checks are not registered in the claims list.

Mr. Kennedy explained.

Ms. Bathelus asked if Edelstein is on the Claims List.

Mr. Kennedy explained.

Mr. Trujillo asked Mr. Kennedy if everyone gets the agenda the same day or does he get the agenda ahead of anybody else. Mr. Trujillo asked if everyone gets the agenda the same day.

Mr. Kennedy responded that everyone gets it the same day.

Ms. Bathelus stated that she has been on the Board for almost three years and when the previous superintendent was here he always sent the Board binders the Friday before the Board meeting. Ms. Bathelus stated that over the last several months they have received the binder on Monday evening at 8, 9, 10 p.m. Ms. Bathelus stated that she knows yesterday Mrs. Carvalho did not receive her second packet until today. Ms. Bathelus stated that everyone is receiving it at the last minute and everyone has lives, you have children, we all have personal lives and working lives. Ms. Bathelus asked if the Superintendent and the Board President can work together to deliver the binders the Friday before the Board meeting so she has time to read it and go through it so she isn't asking so many questions and annoying you if that is what we are doing.

Mrs. Carvalho said that she wanted to clarify that her packet was put in her mailbox last night.

Mrs. Castillo-Ospina stated that whenever the binder is delivered we chose to be here and it is our responsibility to read it. Mrs. Castillo-Ospina stated that if you are a teacher and if you do not prepare your lesson plan and if you don't read what you have to and if you said you did not get this at a certain time then you are not doing your job. Mrs. Castillo-Ospina stated that we volunteer our time to be here for the public, the children, and everyone else. Mrs. Castillo-Ospina stated that the administration spends a lot of time putting the binder together and sending the information and we should be thankful that we get them. Mrs. Castillo-Ospina stated that regardless of when we get them we should review them and give them the benefit of reviewing that at any time. Mrs. Castillo-Ospina stated that it may take a little more time but we chose to be here and out of respect to the Board we could do it. Mrs. Castillo-Ospina stated that she does it and anyone could do it.

Ms. Bathelus stated that they should respect her time and give it to her the Friday before and not think that she should rush and be at work trying to read this at the same time so respect her time and give it to her at least seven days prior. Ms. Bathelus stated that she is sorry that everyone else who has to put this together but you know the Board meeting is going to be on Thursday, March 19th so therefore you should be able to put everything together and not give her last minute things and she is trying to vote on things at the last minute.

Mrs. Castillo-Ospina stated that we all get here thirty minutes before so if there are any changes we could read them.

Ms. Bathelus stated that she shouldn't have to read it here.

Mrs. Carvalho stated that we should have two meetings.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that she would like to make a recommendation and that we have been working towards becoming paperless and all the minutes are now online. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the information is posted on Monday afternoon on the Cloud and during private session we can discuss the accessibility and whether that is working for the Board members and whether we can offer a different option. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the binders are delivered as a backup because we are still in that transition and some like to rely on the paper actually having a binder. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that all the information is posted on Monday and she certainly takes the recommendation into consideration as to having the information available on Friday and will work towards having that. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that in terms of what was distributed this evening there was only one document distributed as a change in the binder. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the majority of the binder was posted online on our Cloud. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that we are working towards moving away from having the binders and trying to acclimate towards having a paperless environment.

Mrs. Carvalho stated that in the past we spoke about getting things itemized. Mrs. Carvalho stated that we purchased things from Bayway Lumber and she sees the prices but we don't know what was purchased and asked if that could be sent to her. Mrs. Carvalho stated that she wanted to make a correction that they do no longer have the Department of Neighborhood Services in the City of Elizabeth. Mrs. Carvalho stated that there are a couple of other things plumbing supplies and she would like clarification on Honeywell.

Mr. Kennedy explained that this is a list of the checks and the dollar amounts. Mr. Kennedy stated that what she may be asking for is the detail that is contained in the purchase order.

Mrs. Carvalho asked if that could be sent to her for Villani Bus Contracted Services Between Home and School. Mrs. Carvalho stated that she doesn't understand how we approve the bussing and there are added vouchers.

Mr. Kennedy explained that the contract is approved and after the services are provided for the month an invoice is submitted for payment.

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Ms. Bathelus, Mmes. Carvalho (abstain- M.C.), Castillo-Ospina, Messrs. Monteiro, Neron, Perreira, Rodriguez, Trujillo, Mrs. Amin – 9

Negative: None

Resolution – Autism Awareness Month

Mr. Perreira read the resolution.

A motion was made by Mr. Perreira, seconded by Mr. Trujillo, that the resolution be adopted.

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Ms. Bathelus, Mmes. Carvalho, Castillo-Ospina, Messrs. Monteiro, Neron, Perreira, Rodriguez, Trujillo, Mrs. Amin – 9

Negative: None

Mrs. Castillo-Ospina stated that she has a nephew with autism and she helped develop the autistic program in her district many years ago. Mrs. Castillo-Ospina stated that it is one of the

most dedicated hardest, work that anyone could have when you have to tell a parent that their child has autism and the only thing they can promise is progress. Mrs. Castillo-Ospina stated that the new swimming program that they developed is one of the greatest things that a child with autism can have. Mrs. Castillo-Ospina stated that they don't have a lot of places that they can go because they may have some behaviors that people may not understand and they may have problems relating, and social and emotional problems. Mrs. Castillo-Ospina stated that she wants people to realize that it is one of the hardest classifications that we have in special education and to become more aware of how parents and schools need to work together. Mrs. Castillo-Ospina stated that schools cannot fix a child and that it takes both and it is team work.

Mr. Monteiro stated that a non-profit organization here in the City of Elizabeth, At Heart's Length, was founded by two of our own team members, teacher Julian Acebo and Transportation Coordinator Lester Dominguez. Mr. Monteiro stated that members on the Board from time to time tend to vote against some of their goodwill events that are taking place here in the City of Elizabeth. Mr. Monteiro stated that this one in particular stands out and At Heart's Length has partnered with the special needs community and are going to use the Elizabeth High School swimming pool to have a swimming program for children with autism. Mr. Monteiro commended At Heart's Length organization for partnering with the parents of children with special needs. Mr. Monteiro stated that he has spoken with the parents about how we can do more as a community together than we can as a community divided. Mr. Monteiro stated that the Board of Education has facilities but not always the resources and the money. Mr. Monteiro stated that the City of Elizabeth with the help of Carlos Cedeno and other councilmembers and as well as the City of Elizabeth with the grants and funding we can do more. Mr. Monteiro stated that as a community we should strive to do more with less. Mr. Monteiro commended the organization, At Heart's Length, for partnering and doing that.

Resolution – National Library Week

Mrs. Carvalho read the resolution.

A motion was made by Mrs. Carvalho, seconded by Ms. Bathelus, that the resolution be adopted.

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Ms. Bathelus, Mmes. Carvalho, Castillo-Ospina, Messrs. Monteiro, Neron, Perreira, Rodriguez, Trujillo, Mrs. Amin – 9

Negative: None

Mr. Monteiro stated that there are three founding members of At Heart's Length including Guiliano Farina who is also a teacher in our district and apologized for not recognizing him. Mr. Monteiro thanked At Heart's Length for the work they do in our community

Resolution – Requisition for Taxes

A motion was made by Mr. Perreira, seconded by Mr. Trujillo, that the resolution be adopted.

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Ms. Bathelus, Mmes. Carvalho, Castillo-Ospina, Messrs. Monteiro, Neron, Perreira, Rodriguez, Trujillo, Mrs. Amin – 9

Negative: None

Resolution – Payment for Unused Sick Days

A motion was made by Mr. Perreira, seconded by Mrs. Castillo-Ospina, that the resolution be adopted.

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Ms. Bathelus, Mmes. Carvalho, Castillo-Ospina, Messrs. Monteiro, Neron, Perreira, Rodriguez, Trujillo, Mrs. Amin – 9

Negative: None

Resolution – Payment for Unused Vacation Days

A motion was made by Mr. Perreira, seconded by Mrs. Castillo-Ospina, that the resolution be adopted.

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Ms. Bathelus, Mmes. Carvalho, Castillo-Ospina, Messrs. Monteiro, Neron, Perreira, Rodriguez, Trujillo, Mrs. Amin – 9

Negative: None

The second reading of the following new and revised policies, regulation, and exhibit was done:

1000/1010	Policy	Concepts and Roles in Community Relations: Goals and Objectives
1221	Policy	Special Education Parent Advisory Committee
1221	Regulation	Special Education Parent Advisory Committee
1312	Policy	Constituent Service
5141.8	Policy	Sports Related Concussion and Head Injury
5141.8	Exhibit	Sports Related Concussion and Head Injury
6114	Policy	Emergencies and Disaster Preparedness
6147.3	Policy	Student Assessment
6173	Policy	Home Instruction
7110	Policy	Long Range Facilities Planning

Resolution – New and Revised Policies, Regulation, and Exhibit

A motion was made by Mr. Neron, seconded by Mr. Rodriguez, to table the resolution.

The motion to table the resolution was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Ms. Bathelus, Mmes. Carvalho, Castillo-Ospina, Messrs. Monteiro, Neron, Perreira, Rodriguez, Trujillo, Mrs. Amin – 9

Negative: None

The Board went into recess at 9:25 p.m.

The Board reconvened in public session at 9:40 p.m.

Board President Amin presented the following public participation statement.

“At this time, the microphones are open for public comment to those who have signed in prior to this session. I shall call individuals to the microphones 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 sixty 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 participants 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.”

Mrs. Amin called upon the first public participant, Angela Bergen, to address the Board.

Angela Bergen, 1052 Coolidge Road, spoke about PARCC and commended the Superintendent for providing alternative education for her daughters.

Mrs. Amin thanked her for her comments. Mrs. Amin called upon the next public participant, Tracey Howard, to address the Board.

Tracey Howard, 185 First Street, spoke about unity in the community.

Mrs. Amin thanked her for her comments. Mrs. Amin called upon the next public participant, Ernestine Smith, to address the Board.

Ernestine Smith, 70 Westfield Avenue, spoke about taxpayers dollars.

Mrs. Amin thanked her for her comments. Mrs. Amin called upon the next public participant, George Castro, to address the Board.

George Castro, 916 Park Avenue, spoke about the diversity of the community.

Mrs. Amin thanked him for his comments. Mrs. Amin called upon the next public participant, Jerry Jacobs, to address the Board.

Jerry Jacobs, 816 Garden Street, spoke about transparency.

Mrs. Amin thanked him for his comments. Mrs. Amin called upon the next public participant, James Carey, to address the Board.

James Carey, 212 Inslee Place, spoke about the sign in sheet for administrators and hiring practices.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer responded that we, as a Board and Superintendent, do not require our team members to sign in. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that in years past under the leadership of Mr. Monteiro he would make it a point every month to recognize the administrators present in the audience. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that we do not require anyone to attend our meeting other than our Assistant Superintendents, Business Administrator, and Comptroller. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the only form that is required for signature in accordance with policy is for public participation.

Mrs. Amin thanked him for his comments. Mrs. Amin called upon the next public participant, Christina Moreira, to address the Board.

Christina Moreira, 805 Gebhardt Avenue, spoke about PARCC.

Mrs. Amin thanked her for her comments. Mrs. Amin called upon the next public participant, Michelle Cunha, to address the Board.

Michelle Cunha, 211 Buchanan Street, Linden, spoke about PARCC.

Mrs. Amin thanked her for her comments. Mrs. Amin called upon the next public participant, Christian Veliz, to address the Board.

Christian Veliz, 1048 North Avenue, spoke about the substitute teacher company.

Mrs. Amin thanked him for his comments. Mrs. Amin called upon the next public participant, Rafael Fajardo, to address the Board.

Rafael Fajardo, 131 Palisade Road, spoke about PARCC and many accomplishments of the district including National Blue Ribbon Schools, student uniforms, and building new schools.

Mrs. Amin thanked him for his comments. Since there were no other citizens signed in to address the Board, Mrs. Amin declared this portion of the public meeting closed.

Stephen Edelstein, Esq., Schwartz Simon Edelstein & Celso, LLC, stated that it is the obligation of every school district in New Jersey to submit an initial budget to the Department of Education through the County Superintendent. Mr. Edelstein stated that the budget approval process starts with a vote on a draft budget.

The President requests a motion to go into Private Session to consider matters exempt under the Open Public Meetings Act. The Board will reconvene in public to take formal action.

A motion was made by Mr. Trujillo, seconded by Mr. Perreira, to go into private session at 10:30 p.m.

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Ms. Bathelus, Mmes. Carvalho, Castillo-Ospina, Messrs. Monteiro, Neron, Perreira, Trujillo, Mrs. Amin – 8

Negative: Mr. Rodriguez – 1

The Board reconvened in public at 11:55 p.m. to continue with the meeting and take formal action.

Mrs. Amin amended the private session statement to include discussion of personnel, specifically, C.L.; appointment of acting supervisor of special services, 2015-2016 budget submission, Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying results, and Workers' Compensation Claims, specifically K.B. and J.R.

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

A motion was made by Mr. Trujillo, seconded by Mrs. Castillo-Ospina, that the report be accepted.

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Ms. Bathelus, Mmes. Carvalho, Castillo-Ospina, Messrs. Monteiro, Neron, Perreira, Rodriguez, Trujillo, Mrs. Amin – 9

Negative: None

Resolution – Appointment of Acting Supervisor of Special Services – Ali Abdul-Malik

A motion was made by Ms. Bathelus, seconded by Mr. Perreira, that the resolution be adopted.

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Ms. Bathelus, Mmes. Carvalho, Castillo-Ospina, Messrs. Monteiro, Neron, Perreira, Rodriguez, Trujillo, Mrs. Amin – 9

Negative: None

Resolution – Settlement of Workers' Compensation Claim (2007-29134) – J.R.

A motion was made by Mr. Trujillo, seconded by Mrs. Castillo-Ospina, that the resolution be adopted.

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Ms. Bathelus, Mmes. Carvalho, Castillo-Ospina, Messrs. Monteiro, Neron, Perreira, Rodriguez, Trujillo, Mrs. Amin – 9

Negative: None

Resolution – Settlement of Workers' Compensation Claim (2009-6480) – J.R.

A motion was made by Mr. Trujillo, seconded by Mrs. Castillo-Ospina, that the resolution be adopted.

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Ms. Bathelus, Mmes. Carvalho, Castillo-Ospina, Messrs. Monteiro, Neron, Perreira, Rodriguez, Trujillo, Mrs. Amin – 9

Negative: None

Resolution – Settlement of Workers’ Compensation Claim (2013-7954) – K.B.

A motion was made by Mr. Perreira, seconded by Mrs. Castillo-Ospina, that the resolution be adopted.

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Ms. Bathelus, Mmes. Carvalho, Castillo-Ospina, Messrs. Monteiro, Neron, Perreira, Rodriguez, Trujillo, Mrs. Amin – 9

Negative: None

Resolution – Submission of the Tentative Budget 2015-2016 School Year

A motion was made by Mr. Trujillo, seconded by Mrs. Castillo-Ospina, that the resolution be adopted.

The motion was defeated by the following vote:

Affirmative: Mrs. Castillo-Ospina, Mr. Perreira – 2

Abstain: Mr. Monteiro – 1

Negative: Ms. Bathelus, Mrs. Carvalho, Messrs. Neron, Rodriguez, Trujillo, Mrs. Amin – 6

Mr. Rodriguez stated that they will be meeting later in the week to get more information.

Mr. Edelstein stated that it is necessary for the Board members to schedule another Board meeting to reconsider this question.

A motion was made by Mr. Trujillo, seconded by Mrs. Castillo-Ospina, for a Board meeting to be held at 8:00 p.m., Monday, March 30, 2015.

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Ms. Bathelus, Mmes. Carvalho, Castillo-Ospina, Messrs. Monteiro, Neron, Perreira, Rodriguez, Trujillo, Mrs. Amin – 9

Negative: None

Mr. Rodriguez thanked Mr. Edelstein for his leadership on the budget vote.

A motion was made by Mr. Neron, seconded by Mr. Perreira, that the New and Revised Policies, Regulation, and Exhibit be taken off the table.

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Ms. Bathelus, Mmes. Carvalho, Castillo-Ospina, Messrs. Monteiro, Neron, Perreira, Rodriguez, Trujillo, Mrs. Amin – 9

Negative: None

Resolution – New and Revised Policies, Regulation, and Exhibit

A motion was made by Mr. Trujillo, seconded by Mr. Monteiro, that the resolution be adopted.

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Ms. Bathelus (negative- Special Education Parent Advisory Committee Policy and Regulation), Mrs. Castillo-Ospina, Messrs. Monteiro, Perreira, Rodriguez (negative- Special Education Parent Advisory Committee Policy and Regulation), Trujillo, Mrs. Amin – 7

Negative: Mrs. Carvalho, Mr. Neron – 2

Minutes of the Meeting of February 26, 2015

There was a change in votes on the earlier motion. The minutes of the meeting of February 26, 2015 did not receive the required number of votes:

Affirmative: Mrs. Castillo-Ospina, Messrs. Perreira, Trujillo, Mrs. Amin – 4

Negative: Ms. Bathelus, Mrs. Carvalho, Messrs. Neron, Rodriguez – 4

Ms. Bathelus stated she voted no on the minutes because she doesn't think that they reflect truly exactly what happened at the last Board meeting. Ms. Bathelus stated that there was a few things that were missing, things that we discussed, resolutions that are not there so she is voting no because it doesn't accurately depict what we discussed at the last meeting.

Mrs. Carvalho stated that she clearly voted no to go into negotiations with the Source for School and it is her understanding that we went into contract.

Mr. Neron stated that he has the same issue and there seems to be a misunderstanding amongst the Board and that vote. Mr. Neron stated even though he did vote no he is looking at the minutes and he cannot see what was told to him at the meeting that we would go into negotiations and not into contract because it is not a direct reflection of what took place.

Mrs. Carvalho stated that she is asking her colleagues on the dais to speak up also because that is not what happened at the last meeting.

Mr. Rodriguez stated that he is voting no. Mr. Rodriguez stated that there seems to be some misunderstanding on his part.

Mrs. Amin asked if there was any old business to discuss. Since there was not any old business to discuss, Mrs. Amin asked if there was any new business to discuss.

Mr. Rodriguez responded to the various public speaking comments. Mr. Rodriguez responded to Angela on the PARCC test and said some positive things about it. Mr. Rodriguez stated that he wanted to remind her and the public that we did pass a resolution, a unanimous resolution, asking the Commissioner of Education to delay the PARCC exam for one year for many reasons. Mr. Rodriguez stated that one of the biggest at least for this district is that the test was not in Spanish, at least that was his comment, and we have such a large bilingual, multilingual population here. Mr. Rodriguez stated that the test was not in Spanish and the HSPT was and makes a big difference especially to our population.

Mr. Rodriguez responded to Tracy that it is sad that even nowadays that we should be united in this City and not trying to divide each other. Mr. Rodriguez stated that the more we divide each other because the more we divide each other between racial lines or between ethnic lines or between what country you're from the worse off it is. Mr. Rodriguez stated that we need to unite and empower each other and not divide and conquer.

Mr. Rodriguez responded to Ernestine that we had heard the complaints of the community in terms of legal bills. Mr. Rodriguez stated that he wanted to applaud Mr. Edelstein because he said he was not going to be charging us tonight. Mr. Rodriguez stated that those pleas do work and they do work up the ladder sometimes slower than people want but it does matter so please keep reaching out to all Board members, not just one side or the other.

Mr. Rodriguez responded to Mr. Castro and thanked him for his bravery. Mr. Rodriguez stated that after the reorganization meeting there was a lot of issues and a lot of emotions and some of them were misplaced to him and he wanted to thank him and tell him it was very brave of him to come up and speak.

Mr. Rodriguez responded to Jerry that tonight was the first time that we heard from Mr. Edelstein and he had hoped he would have heard it from their legal committee but it was the first time they found out about a potential \$40 million lawsuit. Mr. Rodriguez stated that it was a shock at least to him that we maybe have that hanging over our head. Mr. Rodriguez stated that maybe the legal committee can give the full Board an update on what exactly is going on with that.

Mr. Rodriguez responded to Michelle about over testing and that he sat down with the Superintendent talking about that issue. Mr. Rodriguez stated that the Superintendent had convened with teachers from the district and we are in some serious discussions about what to do with the over reliance on testing, the benchmarks, is it too much, is it too little. Mr. Rodriguez stated that is going into the educational management committee to talk through. Mr. Rodriguez

stated that we are aware and we know it is an issue but sometimes things move slowly for good or for worse.

Mr. Rodriguez responded to Mr. Fajardo that he keeps claiming that his legacy is that he built all these schools. Mr. Rodriguez stated that he wants to remind him and the public that not only was it the Board of Education but it was also Senator Lesniak, Assemblywoman Quijano, and at that time Assemblyman Cryan, now Assemblyman Holly, also the Mayor and City Council that all had to work together to accomplish those building projects. Mr. Rodriguez stated that also finally it is the members in this room and our staff that educate our children and we should praise all of them and thank all of them and it wasn't just one person that does it.

Mr. Trujillo stated that Mr. Castro is a friend of his for several years and is an outstanding gentleman. Mr. Trujillo stated that he thinks he is confused in what the banner behind us represents and as you can see the colors there are the same colors that we have here on the floor in the school and you can find them throughout the district. Mr. Trujillo stated that he does not think it was intended to represent the nationality and he knows Mr. Castro's nationality is Colombian and he was under the impression that is what it represented. Mr. Trujillo stated that he knows that not to be true and it is obvious by the floor here and that is not the case. Mr. Trujillo stated that he is sorry that Mr. Castro misunderstood that and he will be reaching out to Mr. Castro tomorrow and hopefully we can clear that up and it is just an honest mistake.

Mr. Neron stated that we discussed a few meetings ago and he has been mentioning it at most of our meetings and he would like to bring it to the attention of the Superintendent and would like some follow up and maybe we can discuss this during education management along with the Assistant Superintendents is the Amistad Commission. Mr. Neron stated that many years ago we had a point person that was to pursue the Amistad Commission to help establish Curriculum of Inclusion. Mr. Neron stated that we have our hands full on the education management committee and we have a lot to be working on but he would like for us to convene around the Amistad Commission and make sure that with all the issues happening in our district, in our country and with racial biases and racial issues, police brutality, and racial injustices happening in our country it is extremely important that we work on a Curriculum of Inclusion. Mr. Neron stated that it is mandated by state law for each district have an Amistad Commission individual. Mr. Neron stated that he needs to get an update to find out who that is and if that person is in place, what they are doing, and how they are properly implementing a Curriculum of Inclusion here in this district.

Mr. Perreira excused himself from the meeting at 12:20 a.m.

Mr. Monteiro stated that he would like to respond to one public speaker, as Mr. Trujillo mentioned, George Castro. Mr. Monteiro commended his words of unity and how the Hispanics need to be more united. Mr. Monteiro stated that Mr. Castro has been a friend of this Board, a friend in the past and he is sure he is a friend now and he is sure he is going through a difficult time having a business to run and the forces of City Hall and the fact that as a realtor he needs to get certain permits and certain inspections through and we know the pressure he is going through. Mr. Monteiro stated that it is not an easy thing to go up against City Hall. Mr. Monteiro stated that he can speak about that with firsthand experience and he wishes he had some of the supporters we have here and he wishes he had Maria Carvalho on City Council when he was there when Patricia Auguste-Perkins was having him escorted out of the room by police officers. Mr. Monteiro stated that he doesn't think anyone should be escorted out nor should there be security on public speakers. Mr. Monteiro stated that public speakers should be respectful of their time, they should be respectful of this Board, and they should not turn vile or offensive. Mr. Monteiro stated that he commends anyone who comes to the Board and speaks. Mr. Monteiro stated that some in the audience are offensive to all of the Hispanics of this great City who worked so hard to come here and toil every day to make it here and many do speak with accents. Mr. Monteiro stated that his father has been in this country for 60 years and he still speaks with a heavy thick accent. Mr. Monteiro stated that we heard Mr. Castro who speaks with an accent.

Mr. Monteiro stated that some in the audience are offensive to all women leaders. Mr. Monteiro stated that it is offensive when speakers use vile attacks on any of our Board members. Mr. Monteiro stated that we all have our right to have our difference of opinions. Mr. Monteiro stated that at the last Board meeting there was a private session, an executive session and what happens in executive session are matters of personnel, matters of privacy that, as our attorney expressed, stay there until they are allowed to be released. Mr. Monteiro stated that, clearly, Mr. Rodriguez took to social media the next day and posted on social media the very things that were being discussed in that executive session. Mr. Monteiro stated that was conduct, clearly, unbecoming of a Board member and clearly put us all in a very difficult situation particularly the Superintendent and Assistant Superintendents who have worked and labored for many months. Mr. Monteiro stated that to put the Superintendent in that position was uncalled for by Mr. Rodriguez. Mr. Monteiro stated that what is going on right now in social media is so disturbing in so many ways and vile because they can hide behind the shadows. Mr. Monteiro stated that Elcy Castillo-Ospina and he spent the last several weeks visiting and having meetings with parents throughout the City, some in coffee shops, some in corner delis, some in their homes and they have met with more than 300 parents all to discuss how to improve our relationships with our City officials and how do we make our schools and our streets better and our City safer. Mr. Monteiro stated that it is clear that the parents are concerned that there is incredible tension with the City and the Board of Education when we are one City. Mr. Monteiro stated that we should all be better than that and the parents understand that and watch these meetings. Mr. Monteiro stated that tonight there were three councilmembers here and he wishes they would spend as much time dealing with the issues on the streets of the City where today two more people were shot and crime is at an all-time high in the City of Elizabeth. Mr. Monteiro stated that he is not pointing fingers because the police know they are understaffed by between 100 to 120 officers and he hears different numbers from different officers off the record and there is turmoil in the police department with morale. Mr. Monteiro stated that it is clear and he hears it from the parents and all of the Board members know that the Mayor has a fatal attraction against this Board of Education and some of the employees here today were City employees. Mr. Monteiro stated that they are upset and angry and the rancor is obviously clear that they lost this election. Mr. Monteiro stated that we have a courageous woman, Mrs. Amin, who voted her conscious, and ran as an independent thinker and commended her. Mr. Monteiro stated that he knows what she is going through with the amount of rancor and discourse, the offensive comments he reads on social media and for people to come here and mock is disturbing. Mr. Monteiro stated that there is no place for that and speaks volumes of the character of what is going on in this City. Mr. Monteiro stated that all he has heard tonight is negativity. Mr. Monteiro stated that he hasn't heard that we have three National Blue Ribbon Schools in this City, student uniforms in all the schools in the City, our test scores have been going up every year, we've built all these new schools, we took six parochial Catholic schools that closed and transformed them and all this great energy. Mr. Monteiro stated that you would think by the six or seventh comment from public speakers that is reflective of all that is going on in this district and all of you know that is not true. Mr. Monteiro stated that everyone has their right but it is sad. Mr. Monteiro stated that we as a Board have to find a better way than to come here and make it a circus. Mr. Monteiro stated that we have to find ways to cut through that and if this is what the rest of the year is going to be like then progress will be cut short. Mr. Monteiro commended Mrs. Amin for her strength, for her courage and stated that we didn't know each other before this election. Mr. Monteiro stated that it is a difficult task of running for office and now being the President of the 4th largest district in the State of New Jersey. Mr. Monteiro stated that we may not always agree on every side of every issue she has his respect and asked that every Board member on this panel shows the same respect to her.

Mrs. Amin asked for a motion to adjourn.

A motion was made by Mr. Trujillo, seconded by Mrs. Castillo-Ospina, to adjourn the meeting.

Mr. Rodriguez stated that he wanted to present a resolution.

Mr. Edelstein stated that we already passed old business and we passed new business. Mr. Edelstein stated that no one had any old business and no one had any new business, we then went to Board member comments, and now the chair has entertained a motion to adjourn. Mr. Edelstein stated that the right thing to do is to call the roll.

The motion did not receive the required number of votes and was not approved by the following vote:

Affirmative: Mrs. Castillo-Ospina, Messrs. Monteiro, Trujillo, Mrs. Amin – 4

Negative: Ms. Bathelus, Mrs. Carvalho, Messrs. Neron, Rodriguez – 4

Mr. Rodriguez stated that he wanted to make a resolution removing the law firm of Garrubbo & Capece from the list of outside counsel because of the current indictment that he is under.

A motion was made by Mr. Rodriguez, seconded by Mr. Neron, to remove Garrubbo & Capece law firm from the list of outside counsel.

The motion did not receive the required number of votes and was not approved.

Affirmative: Ms. Bathelus, Mrs. Carvalho, Messrs. Neron, Rodriguez – 4

Negative: Mrs. Castillo-Ospina, Messrs. Monteiro, Trujillo, Mrs. Amin – 4

On a motion by Mr. Rodriguez, seconded by Ms. Bathelus, the meeting was adjourned at 12:30 a.m.

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Ms. Bathelus, Mmes. Carvalho, Castillo-Ospina, Messrs. Monteiro, Neron, Rodriguez, Trujillo, Mrs. Amin – 8

Negative: None

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