

APPROVED
Bd. Mtg. 6-12-14

BOARD OF EDUCATION
(Official)

May 6, 2014
Elizabeth, New Jersey

A public hearing on the 2014-2015 Board of Education Proposed Budget was called on May 6, 2014 at 7:00 p.m., in the Multi Purpose Room, Donald Stewart Center for Early Childhood Education, 544 Pennsylvania Avenue, Elizabeth, New Jersey.

Board President Tony Monteiro presented the following statement at 7:45 p.m.

“Ladies and Gentlemen, good evening. This is a special 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 published in the Worrall Community Newspapers, Luso Americano, and Noticiero Columbiano on Thursday, May 1, 2014. 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 for this May 6, 2014 meeting of the Board of Education. 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.

We are here this evening to hear the public express their views regarding the proposed 2014-2015 budget, in accordance with New Jersey Statute 18A:22-13, and I quote, ‘On the date and at the time and place so fixed, the Board of School Estimate or the Board of Education as the case may be shall hold such public hearing at which time the taxpayers and other interested persons shall have an opportunity to present objections and to be heard with respect to said budget and the amounts of money necessary to be appropriated and the various items and purposes for which the same are to be appropriated for the use of public schools in the district for the ensuing school year.’

Those wishing to speak for or against the budget 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, and telephone number of the person wishing to speak.”

Present: Ms. Bathelus, Mrs. Castillo-Ospina, Messrs. Nazco, Neron, Perreira, Rodriguez, Trujillo, Monteiro – 8

Absent: Mr. González – 1

Superintendent of Schools Olga Hugelmeyer, School Business Administrator/Board Secretary Harold E. Kennedy, Jr., Assistant Superintendent for Family and Community Outreach Jerome Dunn, Acting Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning Rafael Cortes, Acting Assistant Superintendent for Schools Linda Seniszyn, Assistant Board Secretary Donald Goncalves, Comptroller William Greene, Supervising General Counsel/Board Attorney Marvin Lehman, and members of the public were in attendance.

Dr. Greene gave the invocation.

Pledge of Allegiance
Pledge of Ethics
Core Beliefs and Commitments

Mr. Monteiro introduced Superintendent of Schools Olga Hugelmeier to present the 2014-2015 Budget.

Mrs. Hugelmeier thanked Board President Monteiro and welcomed everyone to the presentation of the 2014-2015 school budget of the Elizabeth Board of Education. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that the budget has allowed us to maintain the educational improvement efforts we have put in place in recent years and sustain the strong academic progress our students are making. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that providing an equal educational opportunity for all students requires funding public schools at levels sufficient to provide a rigorous curriculum in a broad range of subject areas delivered by well trained teachers and supported by effective school and district leaders. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that this also requires sufficient funds for schools serving our high numbers of low-income students, English language learners, and students with other special needs. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that we have worked diligently to craft a budget that prioritizes and protects school-based instructional positions and closely aligns our limited resources with our ambitious educational aspirations.

Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that over the past several years we have seen both tremendous change and strong academic progress at the Elizabeth Public Schools. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that by most academic measure we continue to see impressive gains in student learning and success. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that this budget recommendation, while not necessarily glamorous or eye-catching, solidly supports our instructional priorities and continues to tightly align our resources to our educational mission. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that with this proposed budget we will be able to sustain the great work happening in our classrooms and keep pushing forward toward our ambitious goal of every child achieving excellence. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that we will enable our teachers, leaders, and staff to continue to do remarkable work with our students.

Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that we asked ourselves the question, "In challenging times such as these how do we establish a budget that is committed to our core values so that we are able to move on to our next level of work?" Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that the development of the current budget begins in the fall of the previous year. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that although final amounts for local, state, and categorical funds are often not available until late in the process, the budget development must allow district administration time to align anticipated resources with goals and objectives. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that the school budget preparations begin with the forecast of future enrollments and district-wide revenue projections. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that we developed a budget that uses the district's maximum revenue limit. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that after the schools and departments completed their proposed budgets the budgets are adjusted to ensure that the priorities of the schools and district were addressed within budget limitations. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that our first priority is success for all students and all students can achieve success and our job is to ensure that every student has the opportunity to do so. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that for all students, teachers will identify areas requiring attention, put measures in place to address them, and closely monitor progress so students achieve the standards we expect. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that teachers will build on the strengths of the students and extend their achievements. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that the second priority is high quality teaching and leadership. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that the basis for improving student learning outcomes is high quality teaching and leadership. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that this includes expanding investment in professional learning and support school-based networks that provide professional support for teachers and school leaders. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that the third

priority is a capable and responsive organization and that using resources wisely and making open and transparent decisions builds community confidence in public education. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that performance will be managed against outcomes, priorities, and targets and technology, research, and innovation will be used to drive change. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that the organization will be responsive so that all members of our Elizabeth Public Schools school community have confidence in the high expectations public schools have of their students and to provide greater equity, transparency, and flexibility in school resourcing, improve budget performance and efficiency, and ensure rigorous and transparent accountability practices at classroom, school, and system levels.

Mrs. Hugelmeier stated our vision that the Elizabeth Public Schools will be one of the best school systems in America and our school data is indicative of the fact that we outperform other large urban districts in New Jersey. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that the district has performed well against other large urban districts in the State of New Jersey in a variety of metrics. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that it is because of this district's leadership that our urban school system is the best in the State and we are striving to become the best in the nation. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that we owe this success to the hard work and dedication of our school leaders, our teachers, and our children. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that our mission is that the Elizabeth Public Schools will provide excellent educational experiences and services to inspire every student to think, to learn, to achieve, and to care. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that we believe that to be a high achieving district it is important to have a mission that is genuinely and widely shared, lived, and aligned with the school's policies and practices. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that our mission statement drives everything that we do. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that she is proud that our school board is committed to a vision of high expectations for student achievement and quality instruction and they define clear goals toward that vision. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that our board is accountability driven and focused on policies to improve student achievement. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that in her experience over the years in Elizabeth she would have to say that our board is best characterized as having strong shared beliefs and values about what is possible for students and their ability to learn and of our school system and its ability to teach all children at high levels.

Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that the Elizabeth Public Schools is committed to equity and excellence for all students. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that excellence is achieved through high standards that ensure that all students grow to reach their highest levels year after year and are college or career ready as high school graduates. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that fostering an organization and culture of high expectations for all students requires the commitment of all of our team members and it is through this commitment from all of our teachers, parents, and community that excellence can be achieved. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that this agenda is not unique to Elizabeth but is also the focus of the international community. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that the agenda of the International Summit on Teaching Professional held in New Zealand focused on three policy goals, equity, excellence, and inclusion of high quality teaching. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that the questions that the summit focused on included the same questions that we discussed during the development of our budget, how can high quality teachers and leaders be attracted to and retained in schools of the greatest need, what are the levers for achieving equity, and how are learning environments created that meet the needs of children. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that at the Elizabeth Public Schools we believe that as education leaders we want our students to succeed. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that the challenge we face is how to ensure our education systems give every child the quality learning experiences they need to develop and realize their individual potential and to do so in ways that value who they are, their language, identity, and culture.

Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that this year's presentation will be in four parts, our financials, our drivers, our programs and services, and our accomplishments. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that preparing for our budget started with our team understanding our present state funding position.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the budget priorities include literacy and mathematics, special education and English language learners, targeted intervention, recruitment, training and retention, and infrastructure and capacity. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that our team has been hard at work to take into account our core values, our 3 E's and every child's needs. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that this is done while we manage our expenditures and fulfill the needs of our community, addressing the record increases to our student population throughout the district. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that student enrollment projections are a major consideration when developing the budget both at the district and school level. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that student enrollment drives the level of state and federal funding that the Elizabeth Public School district receives and in addition, enrollment drives the revenue each school receives. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that not only is enrollment significant to funding levels but it is a determining factor in the number of instructional and support staff needed to provide educational and support services to students. Mrs. Hugelmeyer explained a chart of school enrollment by category showing the actual enrollment of the Elizabeth Public Schools over the last 12 years and that the number of students has increased dramatically over time.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer introduced Dr. William Greene, Comptroller, to present the financials.

Dr. William Greene, Comptroller, stated that the financial statements of the school district are audited every year by an independent auditing firm and Mendonca and Partners gave the district an unqualified independent auditors' opinion which is the highest opinion on the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) for the year ended June 30, 2013.

Dr. Greene stated that the total budget for 2014-2015 is \$495,466,398. which is \$5,343,941. less than the 2013-2014 budget which was \$500,810,339. Dr. Greene stated that 78.8% of our total budget is for instruction and other programs for our students, 3.4% is for administration, 8.8% is for operation and maintenance of plant, and 9.0% is for other which includes community services, employee benefits, transportation, and capital outlay. Dr. Greene stated that there is \$0 debt service.

Dr. Greene stated that the 2014-2015 budget for total salaries decreased by \$3,581,349., benefit costs increased by \$3,982,411., and special education costs increased by \$1,229,234. Dr. Greene stated that although our salaries decreased we also had an increase in costs and the total of our budget actually decreased by about \$5.3 million.

Dr. Greene stated that the vast majority of the revenue will come from the New Jersey State Aid, \$418,995,585, which is 84.6% of our revenue. Dr. Greene stated that the next largest source of our revenue will come from the local Elizabeth taxpayer, \$52,313,124. which is 10.6% of our budget, federal aid is \$14,596,021. which is 2.9%, balance appropriation is \$8,972,784. which is 1.8%, miscellaneous revenue is \$588,884. which is .1%. Dr. Greene stated that the Elizabeth Board of Education is proud to announce that our school district, unlike many other government agencies, has no debt service. Dr. Greene stated that all of our new schools that were built were provided to us by the State of New Jersey and there is no debt service to the taxpayers of the City of Elizabeth.

Dr. Greene stated that the 2014-2015 comparative per pupil cost is \$16,580. per student including \$10,338. for classroom instruction, \$58. for equipment costs, community services and special schools, \$2,245. for cleaning, repair, and maintenance of our schools, our plant and property, \$153. for athletics and extracurricular activities, \$2,474. for support services including health, guidance, child study teams, library, and professional development, and \$1,312. for central administration, school administration, business services, human resources, telephone and postage.

Dr. Greene stated that the administration cost is a focus of the State of New Jersey and the Elizabeth Public Schools spend less on administrative costs and benefits when compared to the State of New Jersey regional cost. Dr. Greene stated that the State of New Jersey regional cost per students is \$1,894. and here in Elizabeth the cost for our administration is \$1,312. per

student. Dr. Greene stated that the Elizabeth Public Schools is spending less this year per pupil on administrative costs and benefits when compared to the State of New Jersey regional cost. Dr. Greene stated that this is important because we are spending most of our money in the classrooms where it belongs.

Dr. Greene stated that when you look at some of the resources for 2014-2015 as compared to the 2013-2014 school year our administration costs actually went down by \$158., legal costs decreased by \$11., operations and maintenance costs decreased by \$151., and equipment costs decreased by \$17. Dr. Greene stated that looking at the challenge of meeting our mission and our goals in educating our students and in an effort to ensure that the interest and commitment of every Elizabeth taxpayer is taken into account the Elizabeth Board of Education is proud to announce that there is no tax increase for the 2014-2015 school year. Dr. Greene stated that we are able to accomplish our goals and still not increase the tax to our residents.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer thanked Dr. Greene for his presentation.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that every budget item in our school based budgets and our district budget ties into one of these five categories including maintaining our school system, raising standards and expanding opportunities, building professionalism, protecting our investments (capital and maintenance projects), and planning for the future. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the State of New Jersey had us complete a form over the past two years and last year when we submitted our budget we were required to provide them with documentation evidence in support of these categories.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the first category is maintaining our school system. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the first category is maintaining our school system and one of the changes in our school budget in the upcoming year is the fact that we were able to ensure sustaining extended day in grades K-8 with a reduction by 45 minutes. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that our present school schedule through June 2014 is PreK regular day schedule from 8:20 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., K-8 extended day schedule from 7:30 a.m. to 3:45 p.m., and grades 9-12 extended day schedule from 7:30 a.m. to 3:57 p.m. Mrs. Hugelmeyer explained that under the 2014-2015 budget the Elizabeth Public Schools has modified the extended day schedule for all K-8. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that under the modified extended day we will still have an extended day schedule for our children helping to distinguish Elizabeth from many other districts in the State of New Jersey. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that students would come to school receiving an additional 45 minutes versus the current 90 minutes of instruction beyond the regular day. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the Elizabeth Public Schools will continue its commitment to teaching and learning in neighborhood and magnet schools with built-in intervention periods as we currently have. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that PreK and High School schedules will continue to operate under the same schedule. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that with this 2014-2015 budget in order to account for an increase in enrollment for the upcoming school year we have accounted for the hiring of 22 new K-12 teachers which represents \$1,410,376. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that this includes kindergarten, high school chemistry, physics, elementary mathematics, bilingual, and special education teachers after an analysis with the involvement of principals and central administration staff in order to ensure that we are accounting for all the needs of our students for the upcoming school year.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that for the upcoming school year we will be offering an after school academic and arts program, essentially an enrichment after school program, at our K-8 schools based on a 3 day program that will operate for one hour per day. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that we want to ensure that we continue to offer our children the best of the offerings we had this year. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that this year Mondays and Fridays were dedicated to the arts and Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays were dedicated to homework help. Mrs. Hugelmeyer

stated that we want to ensure that we are providing an enrichment environment and merging the two areas together and being able to support our children outside of the extended day.

Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that another exciting initiative as we prepare our children for the changes for the 21st century as well as being able to ensure their success on standardized assessments is providing laptop computers for every single student in grades 3-12 starting in September 2014. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that several of our schools already have a one-to-one initiative including iPrep Academy School No. 8, Victor Mravlag School No. 21, John E. Dwyer Technology Academy, Academy of Finance, and several additional sites. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that we want to ensure that as we address the issues of equity and excellence that we are ensuring that all students have the same access throughout the district. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that we want to ensure that all students are engaged in a blended learning environment and being able to be as successful as all other students are in other schools, other districts, and in the nation. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that as we strive to become one of the nation's best we have to ensure that we are providing our children with the same advantages. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that this is also an opportunity in relation to equity to be able to address the digital divide to ensure that students who at this present time may not have a laptop or iPad at home are afforded with the opportunity to have access. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that we have increased our budget by providing a district wide laptop initiative which represents \$1 million per year for a five year lease and is a commitment that we have made to ensure that all schools are offering all children the same opportunities. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that to properly support this initiative we will be increasing our budget by adding 9 new technology team members, essentially technology coaches who will be able to support the new technology as well as be versed in content to support them properly in the schools. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that the nine positions represent an additional \$704,747. in salaries and benefits. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that we are doing this because we had the experience this year of field testing the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) and have been engaged in this work of preparing our students for the common core standards and preparing them for the changes in which students are evaluated. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that we have been working with various samples that have been provided for us in training sessions by the Department of Education so we do understand that the assessment of students is quite different now than it was in previous years when it was paper and pencil administration.

Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that as we continue the category maintaining our school system we are ensuring adequate staffing for instruction by hiring 22 new teachers to address the increase in enrollment mentioned earlier and we are also expanding our bilingual magnet program to include a middle school component as well as a new bilingual magnet program to help service our Haitian-Creole students in grades kindergarten and first grade. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that increases in new instructional materials including supplies, equipment, and textbook allocations for new students are for an anticipated 3% increase in new students. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that when we prepare our budgets we account for a 3% increase across all grade levels and therefore that has to correspond with the instructional materials as well. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that the academic programs will provide for the extended day, language arts literacy and mathematics refurbishment, language arts literacy on-line writing program for grades 4-9, FOSS/STC science materials K-8 refurbishment, music and arts programs, world languages 8-12 refurbishment, new materials for AP Spanish 9-12, and our continued commitment to the Visual Arts Center Partnership. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that we will continue to ensure that our curriculum is up to par and the adequate revisions are occurring on an annual basis. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that the content that will be updated this summer includes language arts literacy, mathematics, science, social studies, bilingual, English as a second language, physical education/health, intervention for mathematics and language arts, library media, art, music, promotion/retention, world language, guidance, and substance abuse.

Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that another component of maintaining our school system is safe and caring initiatives and the categories that we are continuing to fund are alternative programs for at-risk learners, AVID, and Check & Connect mentoring programs at the middle and high schools, maintenance of equipment for the physical education weight rooms, art rooms, and musical instruments, contracted psychiatric services, contracted nursing services, nursing supplies and equipment, student drug screening, sign language interpreter services, and substance abuse coordinator services.

Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that we currently have the Welcome Center which serves as the central registration site for grades 9-12 and this year we will be adding the K-8 central registration center. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that we will have central registration available to all of our children from preschool through twelfth grade. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that under the home and school relationships category is the importance of communication materials and brochures designed to promote school and district programs. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that we provide student and parent handbooks, seminars, newsletters, district website, operation of video channel, PowerSchool Student Information System, and the Learning Management System iLeap Next Gen (Blackboard). Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that we have high school registration that takes place in the evening and summer, student and parent college preparation and financial aid seminars, and attendance liaisons. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that our academic safety nets, our summer programs, include promotion-retention program for K-8, summer remediation and advanced credit for grades 9-12, and contagious curiosity summer program for grades K-8. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that we will provide the after school and Saturday remediation and enrichment programs including after school academic/visual and performing arts program for grades K-8, Saturday SAT Prep program for grades 9-12, and the Saturday recreation program for special education. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that we continue to dedicate ourselves to academic interventions and are expanding our Advanced Via Individual Determination (AVID) for grades K-12 to include 4 additional schools, and we continue to support READ 180, and System 44. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that our programs for special education include Carnegie Learning summer academic program K-8, literacy intervention summer school K-8, moving with math intervention summer program K-8, Sondag program K-8, Lindamood-Bell program, Orton Gillingham K-8, Touchmath K-8, Phonographix 9-12, Ablenet K-8, IEP Direct program K-12, 504 Related Services, extended school year program K-12, contracted speech services, contracted occupational therapy/physical therapy, and Rethink. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that the programs for bilingual education students include bilingual magnet K-1 and 3-6, Point of Entry 9-12, and intervention resources. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that our home instruction includes contracted providers, hospital home instruction, and after school home instruction. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that we will continue to provide transportation services to support academic needs for all special needs students, courtesy for students attending magnet programs, and preschoolers that live outside of a specified area. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that we will maintain athletic and co-curricular activities and provide resources for programs in 6-12 including athletic summer camps, middle school intramural sports program, and the high school athletic program. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that student assessments include formative and summative supplies, NWEA on-line formative assessment system, student growth objectives assessment, NJASK, HSPA, ACCESS, TerraNova, SUPERA, PSAT, SAT, PreIPT, and MAC II. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that we will continue to support the translation of student assessments for formative assessment benchmarks and student growth objectives assessments. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that in the area of technology support for the classroom we provide students in grades 6-12 with an individual email address, continue to fund Microsoft ecosystem, E-Suite Deluxe as the complement for Everyday Mathematics K-6, and maintenance of equipment for TV studio in grades 9-12. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that we will continue to fund computer based training for teachers and students to obtain technology certification. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that the district technology resources provides for financial systems, human resources system, payroll system, accounts payable system,

budgeting system, maintenance of transportation software system, automated telephone messaging system, upgrade of two-way radio network to a digital network, telephone system upgrade for K-12, and video conferencing for K-12. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that the Elizabeth Public Schools was selected by the New Jersey Department of Education to pilot Schoolnet which will serve as our instructional improvement system. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that we had an overview provided for our administrators and we are looking forward to scheduling additional professional development for those administrators in the summer as well as being able to introduce it to all teachers during our professional development in September.

Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that the second category is raising standards and expanding opportunities. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that for career and college readiness we continue to support our International Baccalaureate program at School No. 26, Naviance for College and Career Readiness for grades 9-12, and our partnership with New Jersey Institute of Technology (NJIT) Program for grades 9-12 at John E. Dwyer Technology Academy. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that under visual and performing arts enrichment we have our Visual Arts Center Partnership, Metropolitan Opera Guild Learning Network for grades K-8, music theatre program, marching band instruments, teen arts program, and summer arts institute for students. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that our resources to close the achievement gap include our continued partnership with Rutgers University Business Youth (RUBY) Program for grades 9-12, National Academy Foundation (NAF) Partnerships for grades 9-12, Verbal Behavior Network, bilingual libraries grades 4-8, and expansion of ESL curriculum for grade 12. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that we will revise the ELS offerings for grades 9-12, review special education programs including the IEP review and special education federal reports. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that we will continue maintenance of the K-12 library and media programs including e-books for grades K-12 and digital holdings for grades K-12. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that for review of instruction we continue to support iObservation evaluation system for the Danielson Framework for Teaching and the Marzano School Leadership Evaluation Model. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that resources to enhance educational opportunities include providing appropriate funding for field trips. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that under building professionalism we continue to have literacy training with on-site coaching for Reading Street, literacy, and interventions and our for fall, winter, and spring teaching and learning institutes. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that we will have on-site coaching for mathematics training for Everyday Mathematics and Lenses on Learning, on-site coaching for special education K-8 and Positive Behavior Supports in Schools (PBSIS). Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that for our data resources we will have the necessary resource disk for student data analytics. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that new teacher training includes new teacher network induction programs and the continued partnership with Montclair State University Network for Educational Renewal. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that professional networking on best practices and new pedagogies include the Welcome Back leadership training, Panasonic Foundation, AVID, International Baccalaureate, and peer leadership communities/networks. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that the EE4NJ Educator Evaluation Effectiveness includes teacher and leader evaluation professional development. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that for the Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying (HIB) Law we are providing suicide prevention training for school psychologists and nurses and a bullying prevention program. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that professional development includes differentiated instruction, personalized learning environments, and alternative proficiencies. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that we are also providing diabetes training for nurses. Mrs. Hugelmeier stated that our professional development includes N.J. mandatory trainings and policies which require annual attention/training including alcohol, tobacco and other drug abuse, asthma, blood borne pathogen, concussion awareness, dyslexia, evaluation model for administrators, evaluation model for teachers, harassment, intimidation and bullying, intervention and referral services, suspected gang activity, medical emergency plan (AED and CPR training), right to know, school health services, school nurse delegate for Epi-pen, school safety and

security, sexual harassment and diversity, signs of anaphylactic shock, suicide prevention, and reporting potentially missing or abused children.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the next category is protecting our investments which are our capital and maintenance projects. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the building and infrastructure improvements include sidewalks, roof, ventilation systems, boiler and floor repairs, installation of swipe card system and cameras to improve safety and security, improvement of security systems at various schools, and improvement of access for handicapped students and adults.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the category planning for the future relates to facilities and the building and infrastructure improvements and we continue to focus on the conversion of special spaces in our schools for classroom purposes in an effort to address the increase in enrollment. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that our accomplishments include a record of building and acquiring facilities to improve education including Frances C. Smith Center for Early Childhood Education School No. 50, Donald Stewart Center for Early Childhood Education School No. 51, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Center for Early Childhood Education School No. 52, Dr. Orlando Edreira Academy School No. 26, Dr. Antonia Pantoja School No. 27, Juan Pablo Duarte-José Julián Martí School No. 28, Dr. Albert Einstein School No. 29, Ronald Reagan School No. 30, Msgr. João S. Antão School No. 31, Charles J. Hudson School No. 25 (Holy Rosary), Hamilton Annex (St. Catherine's), George Washington School No. 1 Annex (St. Adalbert's), Mabel G. Holmes School No. 5 Annex (St. Hedwig's), Madison-Monroe School No. 16 Annex (Blessed Sacrament), EHS (St. Vladimir's), iPrep School No. 8 (St. Patrick's), Victor Mravlag School No. 21, and currently under construction Frank J. Cicarell Academic High School. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that we have been meeting with the Schools Development Authority as we plan for a new location for William F. Halloran School No. 22 which will be a new facility.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that that the teaching and learning in the Elizabeth Public Schools continues to be enhanced significantly through the use of technology. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that we have already implemented over 4,000 iPads throughout the district in addition to expanding the number of laptops that have been placed in all of our K-12 schools. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that SMART and STAR boards which are a white board that connects and interacts with computer technology can be found in over 80% of our schools including our early childhood centers to provide students with innovative lessons in all subject areas.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that we are taking care of our children's nutritional needs and this year we provided 2,302,398 breakfasts compared to 2,162,815 last year and this year we provided 3,676,050 lunches compared to 3,295,335 last year. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that we applied for Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program grants for all K-8 grades and were subsequently awarded 16 grants.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that we would be remiss if we did not go back to the article in the Star Ledger on March 28, 2012 and quoted Paul Tractenberg, "Every school district should seek to emulate Elizabeth's record of accomplishment, improvement, and recognition. For a district overwhelmingly populated by poor minority students, it is an extraordinary achievement." Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that it is important that others recognize the work we are doing here in this district as we move ahead and focus our attention to equity, expectations, and excellence.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that the Board of Education and Central Office believe in an open and transparent budget process, all Board of Education meetings are open to the public, and agendas and meeting minutes are available at www.epsnj.org. Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that copies of the tentative 2014-2015 budget are on file at the Board of Education Mitchell Building and a copy of the proposed budget is posted online at the district's website, www.epsnj.org.

Mr. Monteiro thanked Superintendent Hugelmeyer for the thorough and informative presentation. Mr. Monteiro stated that several months ago he gave a directive to the Superintendent and to our Finance Chairman Paul Perreira which was to present to this school board a budget that would be balanced and would require no new taxes on the people of the City

of Elizabeth who are already overburdened with taxes. Mr. Monteiro stated that they came back with a budget that did just that, no new taxes and that would continue to provide excellent educational services here in the City of Elizabeth. Mr. Monteiro thanked the Superintendent, her entire team, and all who worked closely with the Superintendent on a difficult budget. Mr. Monteiro stated that it comes to no surprise to anyone here on the dais that these are difficult times in the State of New Jersey and in the nation and we are just coming out of one of the greatest recessions this country has faced and continues to face. Mr. Monteiro stated that the State of New Jersey has a shortfall of about \$600 million and that may still impact our budget some more but we just don't know that yet. Mr. Monteiro stated that these continue to be difficult economic times for many school districts throughout the State of New Jersey and face serious budget decisions and many have had to reduce staff and cut programs. Mr. Monteiro thanked Mrs. Hugelmeyer and her entire team who have worked day in and day out for the past several months to put this budget together and stated that it is not easy. Mr. Monteiro stated that this is one of the most difficult tasks any board faces, we face it in the private world and we face it in our businesses, when we come to the end of the year and the numbers don't meet our expectations and sometimes we have to do more with less. Mr. Monteiro stated that we are the fourth largest school district in the State of New Jersey and the districts that are above us, Newark, Jersey City, and Paterson, all have been taken over by the State of New Jersey and now the districts under us, Camden and Asbury Park, have also been taken over by the State of New Jersey. Mr. Monteiro stated that here we are in this City a model public school district for not only the State but for the nation and he wants to give credit where credit is due and it's to the principals and the staff who do an incredible job here in our district day in and day out. Mr. Monteiro stated that we still face some difficult times ahead and he can't thank the Superintendent and her team enough that we are going to present a 0% tax budget to the people of the City of Elizabeth.

Mr. Monteiro stated that this is still a working class City and his parents were immigrants to this City and worked hard day in and day out and they are overburdened with taxes. Mr. Monteiro stated that last year unfortunately the politics being what it is in the City they misrepresented our tax increase last year. Mr. Monteiro stated that they put out a lot of misrepresentation of our budget and told a lot of lies. Mr. Monteiro stated that this team works very hard and thanked the Superintendent and her team. Mr. Monteiro stated that we are going to have an incredible school year and our vision is to make this the best school district not only in the State but in the country.

A motion was made by Mr. Trujillo, seconded by Mr. Nazco, to adopt the budget.

Resolution – School Budget for the 2014-2015 School Year

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

The motion was carried by the following vote:

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

Negative: None

Mr. Trujillo asked Assistant Board Secretary Donald Goncalves if we have the tax charts. Mr. Trujillo stated that it is imperative that we speak to the 0% tax increase to the local tax levy. Mr. Trujillo stated that as a resident of the City of Elizabeth, a father of two children who are in this school district, someone who owns a business and a house in this town, to him there are several points in this budget that are very important to many of his constituents. Mr. Trujillo stated that this past November when he was running for re-election to this Board, taxes were a big issue. Mr. Trujillo stated that money in an economy like this is a very sensitive issue and affects

a lot of people. Mr. Trujillo stated that we often become numb to the idea and don't realize that there are people out there that fifty dollars a month to their household budget means a lot, \$600 a year is a big deal. Mr. Trujillo stated that is the difference between a child being able to participate in extracurricular activity afterschool, perhaps a tutor, a trip to the movies, family time, a dinner and it means a lot. Mr. Trujillo stated that there are more people like that in this economy more than ever before and when you are on someone's doorstep and they are telling you how bad things are economically we have a responsibility to listen and we have the ability to make a difference. Mr. Trujillo stated that this is his 7th budget and they are always tough and he hasn't been to one that wasn't difficult. Mr. Trujillo stated that anytime, as Dr. Greene showed, there was a decrease in funding and anytime we received less money from the State we were left with tough decisions because that means that somewhere along the line there has to be a cut, there has to be a savings. Mr. Trujillo stated that the Superintendent goes throughout the district and asks every department to cut, sacrifice, do more with less, and in order to preserve what we already have been able to establish is very difficult. Mr. Trujillo stated that to continue to grow this district with less money is very hard because we hire some of the best and brightest throughout the State of New Jersey to work here and in order to do that and be competitive with other districts and to have parity it is imperative that we offer good salaries. Mr. Trujillo stated that a lot of our money, over 65% of our budget, goes to the classroom and that is a lot. Mr. Trujillo stated that Dr. Greene pointed out that our administrative costs are less than 10% of the budget and that compared to other districts is very impressive and we have continued to do that year after year and we have brought it down this year. Mr. Trujillo stated that we are putting more money in the classroom where it counts and having the impact.

Mr. Trujillo stated that we are good stewards of the public's money. Mr. Trujillo explained a chart comparing the Board of Education tax levy to the City of Elizabeth tax levy for the past fifteen years and that he always finds very interesting because the disparity is incredible. Mr. Trujillo stated that the Board of Education tax levy is \$52 million to the \$133 million for the tax levy for the government of the City of Elizabeth. Mr. Trujillo stated that is not counting the County which just proposed and passed a budget last week that will have an increase to the tax levy again. Mr. Trujillo stated that as a taxpayer it is a bombardment from all three, we pay the City tax, the school board tax, and the County tax and it is tax, tax, tax, spend, spend, spend. Mr. Trujillo stated that at some point it has to stop and something has to give and either the people move out and stop paying, houses go vacant and they stop paying, and somewhere along the line something breaks. Mr. Trujillo stated that he is glad that we adopted this and we are not going to be the cause of that break. Mr. Trujillo stated that with his experience the tax from the City government is going to go up again in June. Mr. Trujillo stated that combining that with the County tax and that is really going to impact real families in Elizabeth. Mr. Trujillo stated that it is important that we continue to be responsible and he applauds the Superintendent because this wasn't easy. Mr. Trujillo stated that it took countless hours with his colleagues, Paul Perreira and the Finance Committee, to come together and minimize the impact, first to the children in the classroom, second to the staff, and just as important to the taxpayer. Mr. Trujillo stated that we have that responsibility and this is a tough year. Mr. Trujillo stated that we had to cut part of the service in the morning, kids are going to start later and that is a tough decision and there are mixed feelings about it, staff doesn't like it, parents like it, and children depending on who you ask like it. Mr. Trujillo stated that it is a tough decision but we were committed to that and unfortunately going forward the afternoon may be on the table someday, hopefully that won't be the case but that is the reality of which we have to be cognizant and we have made a lot of gains with extending the day. Mr. Trujillo stated that we have been trendsetters because we were doing it way before people thought it was popular or even possible. Mr. Trujillo stated that we were chosen to be a pilot.

Mrs. Hugelmeyer stated that working with the National Center for Time and Learning we were one of the districts identified for our work for the fact that we have extended day available to such a large percentage of our children.

Mr. Trujillo stated that this is a model that eventually may or may not become really popular not only across the State but across the country and that is something very powerful and beautiful to be a part of that we are doing here in Elizabeth and we have the opportunity to maybe set a trend throughout the State and the country.

Mr. Trujillo stated that the chart showing where your tax dollars go shows a disproportion. Mr. Trujillo stated that if you are an advocate for public education and in particular special education which is a wide variety and a large spectrum and is very expensive we want more money to go to these services and kids but most of the money collected here, 60%, goes to the City government budget and that it is a large disproportion when it comes to the local tax levy. Mr. Trujillo stated that we have to be responsible as taxpayers who want all these things, everyone wants to drive a Cadillac but his minivan is ten years old and that's the one he can afford. Mr. Trujillo stated that he would love a Cadillac but he can't afford a Cadillac and he can't expect his neighbor to pay for his Cadillac because that would be irresponsible. Mr. Trujillo stated that at the end of the day his minivan got him here and will get him home. Mr. Trujillo stated that we can't keep spending on a Cadillac at City Council and driving a minivan to school. Mr. Trujillo stated that it just is not going to work and something has to give, either everyone has to get a minivan or walk to school or walk to work and eventually something is going to have to happen, not to mention the County is putting pressure on us as well.

Mr. Trujillo stated that all these past budgets have been very challenging and every year we have to adjust, move, reevaluate, and reconsider and we've continued to perform and our children are doing better than ever. Mr. Trujillo stated that he can just imagine how much better we would do if we were able to eliminate the outside pressures that budgets bring, that politics bring, and everything else we have to deal with. Mr. Trujillo commended the staff, teachers in the classroom, principals, and support staff who do an excellent job of doing more with less. Mr. Trujillo stated that two years ago we were able to do the same and the year before that. Mr. Trujillo stated that this is his seventh budget and the 3rd budget that he has seen with a 0% tax increase to the local levy. Mr. Trujillo stated that we are incredibly good stewards of the money and we are doing more with less. Mr. Trujillo congratulated Mrs. Hugelmeyer and stated that it was a big task when Mr. Monteiro came to her and said the consensus was that they did not want to raise taxes. Mr. Trujillo stated that we have to listen to our constituents and they can't afford any more money and this is the difference between families being able to afford the little things in life that we take for granted.

Mr. Perreira thanked Mrs. Hugelmeyer, the assistant superintendents, and everyone at the school district level and stated that this process is so long and it is a lot of work. Mr. Perreira stated that every school and department head had their wish list that they go through and submit and this year was very tough and there were multiple revisions in every department and every school across the district to make sure it was as lean as it could be and is as lean as we have ever been. Mr. Perreira stated that he is happy that we met the directive not to raise the tax levy and thanked Mrs. Hugelmeyer, her team, and everyone involved. Mr. Perreira stated that he is sure that the taxpayers will be very delighted to hear that they are not going to be increased in taxes by the Board of Education. Mr. Perreira thanked everyone involved for the time and great effort.

Mr. Monteiro thanked Mr. Perreira on behalf of the entire Board and our team for the many weeks of long hours and many nights that he put into this budget and Mr. Perreira and his team came through.

Mr. Nazco excused himself from the meeting at 9:00 p.m.

Mr. Rodriguez commended Superintendent Hugelmeier and everyone involved in the budget. Mr. Rodriguez stated that cutting is not an easy task and the taxpayers will obviously appreciate no tax increase from our side. Mr. Rodriguez stated that one thing to Mr. Trujillo's point about the City's taxes is that we are talking about trying not to make things political and he brings that into this forum. Mr. Rodriguez stated that we all know that Mr. Trujillo is running for councilman and there are certain avenues that he has the opportunity to present his disdain and his issues and that is at City Council. Mr. Rodriguez stated that you don't even have to sign in to speak and you can speak at the very beginning of the meeting and talk to them about tax increases there. Mr. Rodriguez stated that he doesn't appreciate the constant political thing and we are trying to get past that and to bring it back into this realm is inappropriate. Mr. Rodriguez thanked everyone involved in having to share the sacrifice here in the district.

Mrs. Castillo-Ospina thanked Mrs. Hugelmeier, staff, administrators, and directors and stated that she saw them working for the past few months on this budget. Mrs. Castillo-Ospina stated that Elizabeth is probably the only City that may have this pre-kindergarten program all day which helps a lot of parents who have to work and have a free education for their children. Mrs. Castillo-Ospina stated that when they drop off their three and four year old children and know that they are going to be educated and fed that is a big advantage for our community. Mrs. Castillo-Ospina stated that for those of us that had to pay years ago for this service it amounts to a lot of money. Mrs. Castillo-Ospina stated that we are obtaining laptops for the students in grades 3-12 and most districts don't have that advantage. Mrs. Castillo-Ospina stated that now that we have the PARCC state tests a lot of accommodations have to be made. Mrs. Castillo-Ospina stated that there are a lot of good things going on including the extended day program which is one of the requirements that the government is asking the districts to have and we already have made that goal. Mrs. Castillo-Ospina stated that she sees the difference in our school system in how our children are being educated and have many opportunities to go to different schools, private schools, and colleges. Mrs. Castillo-Ospina stated that we have to work as a team and it is the only way we can make all these accomplishments.

Mr. Trujillo responded to Mr. Rodriguez's comments and stated that unfortunately Mr. Rodriguez forgets that he was elected, as Mr. Rodriguez was elected. Mr. Trujillo stated that he was elected by a constituency that likes to hear his opinions, supports his views, and gave him the opportunity to sit here for the third time and echo those views whether Mr. Rodriguez agrees with them or not. Mr. Trujillo stated that last time we were here Mr. Rodriguez tried to tell him what he can or cannot talk about and what Mr. Rodriguez feels is appropriate or inappropriate. Mr. Trujillo stated that he respects Mr. Rodriguez's right to have that opinion but he would appreciate Mr. Rodriguez stop lecturing him only because Mr. Rodriguez is so hypocritical. Mr. Trujillo stated that he remembers going to these City Council meetings and he is on the record of being to several of them for several years and this not the first time he has gone to City Council and voiced his opinion at City Council where there is \$130 million debt service in this City and that is political. Mr. Trujillo stated that when the people of the City of Elizabeth vote, they don't vote for \$130 million debt service because it is not told to them. Mr. Trujillo stated that he has been there to complain and in fact remembers Mr. Rodriguez being there complaining about the school district. Mr. Trujillo stated that the irony here is that Mr. Rodriguez doesn't want him to say anything about City Council here as an elected official which he has the right to do and to have his opinion and his constituents want to hear his opinion. Mr. Trujillo stated that when Mr. Rodriguez was a private citizen and was at City Council trying to get elected to the school board, Mr. Rodriguez was criticizing the school board at City Council, so let's tell it how it is. Mr. Trujillo stated that if Mr. Rodriguez has a problem with Mr. Trujillo and what he says that is his

right and he appreciates that. Mr. Trujillo stated that he doesn't expect Mr. Rodriguez to agree with him on most issues, if any. Mr. Trujillo stated that to sit here and say that he is politicizing what he does, he is an elected official and there is an election every year and people decide who they want to represent them here. Mr. Trujillo stated that he will remind Mr. Rodriguez that he was the top vote getter in this election so someone must want to hear what he has to say. Mr. Trujillo stated that when he is talking to them he is not necessarily talking to Mr. Rodriguez, he is talking to them and he doesn't believe Mr. Rodriguez voted for him.

Mr. Monteiro stated that this week he had the opportunity to visit Thomas Jefferson Arts Academy and thanked Principal Michael Ojeda for the invitation. Mr. Monteiro stated that he hopes he has the good fortune of visiting all of the schools as he has been this past year. Mr. Monteiro stated that something really exciting is going on here in the City of Elizabeth and it is just this great energy going on in all of the schools. Mr. Monteiro stated that many of you who have been in this district more than ten or fifteen years knows what he is talking about. Mr. Monteiro stated that he is a lifelong resident of the City of Elizabeth and nothing can make him more proud and excited than to see bumper stickers on the back of cars that say my son attends the Elizabeth schools, perfect scores, the pins and now we have the proud educator pin. Mr. Monteiro stated that his hat is off to the principals, vice principals, and everyone and it is just going on throughout the City and we are leaving no school behind. Mr. Monteiro stated that he knows there are still some schools that struggle a little bit and we know that and we are not giving up on any school and we are working together as a team and that is what is exciting. Mr. Monteiro thanked them because it is a tough job that all of them have and it is a large district. Mr. Monteiro stated that we have to look at the positives. Mr. Monteiro stated that the State is taking over all of the larger districts and we are doing fantastic. Mr. Monteiro stated that we may not have a State Senator who wants to recognize and appreciate what we do here but we know what we do and we know what you do every day and that is what matters. Mr. Monteiro stated that it matters what the parents say and he is really excited.

Mr. Monteiro stated that we are facing another problem, our enrollment. Mr. Monteiro stated that we are discussing this now and we are taking this on because our enrollment is really growing here in the City of Elizabeth. Mr. Monteiro stated that it wasn't long ago that people were fleeing the City of Elizabeth because our school system wasn't doing so well. Mr. Monteiro stated that now we have another problem because people are climbing the wall to come into our City, maybe using addresses in the City and living outside the City of Elizabeth. Mr. Monteiro stated that we are going to try to identify that problem and we have to curb that and stop that. Mr. Monteiro stated that it is a double-edged sword because people actually want to come to the Elizabeth school system and isn't that a great thing. Mr. Monteiro stated that people are living in our neighboring towns and actually want to come into Elizabeth. Mr. Monteiro stated that we can't afford it because of the problems we are having today with the budget and that it costs more and we have to make cuts to programs and reduce bussing and that is because we are taking on so much. Mr. Monteiro stated that is our next big hurdle but is one that we are proud to have because people want to come to Elizabeth. Mr. Monteiro stated that now he is sending the message to people to move to Elizabeth and that they don't have to live in those other towns and we are more than happy to have you in our school system. Mr. Monteiro stated that they could move to Elizabeth and be a part of all the good things going on here.

Mr. Monteiro thanked each and every one who works so hard including staff, teachers, food service, security, custodians, and secretaries. Mr. Monteiro stated that it is a team and it takes everyone to make this successful and thanked everyone. Mr. Monteiro stated that these are some tough times ahead and tough sacrifices and we have to make these hard decisions. Mr. Monteiro stated that sometimes it is not about budget issues or policies and sometimes it is about moral issues and we have to do the right thing for the people of the City of Elizabeth and for our

children. Mr. Monteiro thanked everyone for being here and stated that they will continue to do the right thing for the children of the City of Elizabeth.

Mr. Monteiro presented the following public participation statement.

“At this time, the microphones are open for those wishing to speak for or against the budget who have signed in prior to this session. I shall call individuals to the microphone 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:

1. Time limits will be strictly enforced;
2. No personal attacks on individuals;
3. No vulgar or indecent language;
4. A person may address the Board no more than once during a single meeting;
5. Speakers should refrain from naming individuals;
6. Comments or questions posed during public participation will not be debated.

As a reminder this is not a debate nor an audit but an opportunity for citizens to present objections and to be heard with respect to the budget.”

Since there were no citizens that signed in to address the Board, Mr. Monteiro declared this portion of the public meeting closed.

Karla Coral stated that she wanted to speak but there was no place to sign up.

Mr. Kennedy responded that there was.

Mr. Monteiro stated that she would be allowed to speak and asked for a microphone.

Karla Coral, 911 Jackson Avenue, stated that she has been here for four or five years and did move to Elizabeth because of the schools. Ms. Coral stated that her children attend School No. 16 and sees in the budget how much money is going to the different academies and the other schools and the new schools that are getting improved and it is really nice and hopes her children can at some point participate in those schools. Ms. Coral stated that School No. 16 does not have air conditioning and in the summer when it is hot it is a big issue. Ms. Coral stated that she would prefer her children not get a laptop and have air conditioning to feel comfortable and the million dollars for the next five years go for air conditioning because that is most important. Ms. Coral reported an incident with a school bus driving erratically. Ms. Coral stated that two years ago she had an issue with a school bus and her two children were left twice at the school unsupervised.

Mr. Monteiro thanked her for her comments and stated that he does understand her frustrations and how difficult that is. Mr. Monteiro stated that we are a great school district but we are just not a perfect school district. Mr. Monteiro thanked her for coming and sharing her concerns and stated that they will look into those issues. Mr. Monteiro stated that for a point of clarity for the people at home, we have many busses and not all are Elizabeth Board of Education busses. Mr. Monteiro stated that we have so many students that we have to contract out to private providers such as Villani, Shore, and many more providers. Mr. Monteiro stated that we take

every incident seriously and will investigate. Mr. Monteiro asked Ms. Coral to give her information to Assistant Board Secretary Donald Goncalves.

Mr. Monteiro stated that a gentleman would like to speak and asked him to address the Board.

Bruce Charmel, 732 Vine Street, stated that he is a lifelong resident of Elizabeth who attended the public schools and now his children attend Abraham Lincoln and Ronald Reagan Academy. Mr. Charmel stated that he brags about the Elizabeth school board all the time and how great they are, how well the kids are doing, and that they are ranked No. 1 in the State. Mr. Charmel stated that he knows that the budget is an issue and things have to be cut but changing the start time of the day is concerning because a lot of parents have to go to work at certain times. Mr. Charmel stated that it is an issue changing the start time of school by an hour and having to drop the children off later for school and asked if they can reconsider and think about this more.

Mr. Monteiro thanked him for his comments and stated that they take all of the concerns very seriously. Mr. Monteiro stated that we have a great deal of deliberations and conversations many times in private and behind closed doors about what goes on here in the schools and some policies work incredibly well and others not so well. Mr. Monteiro stated that this district has been so incredibly successful because it has been able to think outside the box over the past ten years. Mr. Monteiro stated that some of the policies we have now are being evaluated and thought out but we take all these comments and concerns by parents to heart. Mr. Monteiro stated that it means a lot to them that Mr. Charmel took his time to come to the Board meeting to speak his concerns and thanked him for being here.

Maria Echavarria, 321 Westfield Avenue, stated that she hopes in the budget there is Orton Gillingham for high school taught all year in the curriculum and not only as early intervention.

Mr. Monteiro thanked Ms. Echavarria for her comments. Since there were no other speakers Mr. Monteiro closed the public speaking portion of the meeting.

On a motion was made by Mr. Perreira, seconded by Ms. Bathelus, the meeting was adjourned at 9:25 p.m.

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Ms. Bathelus, Mrs. Castillo-Ospina, Messrs. Neron, Perreira, Rodriguez, Trujillo, Monteiro – 7

Negative: None

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