

BOARD OF EDUCATION
(Official)

September 12, 2019
Elizabeth, New Jersey

The regular business meeting of the Board of Education was called to order immediately following the agenda meeting on September 12, 2019 in the MultiPurpose Room, Donald Stewart Center for Early Childhood Education, 544 Pennsylvania Avenue, Elizabeth, New Jersey.

Board President Stephanie Pestana presented the following statement at 11:18 p.m. since the agenda meeting was held prior to the business meeting.

“Ladies and Gentlemen, good evening. This is a regular business meeting of the Board of Education. Pursuant to New Jersey Statutes and the rules adopted by the Board of Education, notice of this meeting was sent to The Star Ledger and Cablevision of Elizabeth on September 5, 2019. In addition, this notice is posted on the Bulletin Board in the lobby of 500 North Broad Street, and pursuant to this act, a copy has been filed with the City Clerk of Elizabeth, New Jersey.

We want to welcome everyone present and our television viewers to this 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. We also ask that you silence the sound on your electronic devices. Since it is legally mandated that these proceedings be accurately recorded, we may have to ask for order periodically should noise begin to interfere with our recording capabilities. We are pleased that you have taken time to join us here for our Board of Education meeting. 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 may sign in up to the start of the public speaking 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: Mrs. Barbosa, Ms. Bathelus, Mmes. Chevres, Hernandez, Mr. Jacobs, Mrs. Moreno-Ortega, Mr. Neron, Mrs. Pestana – 8

Absent: Mrs. Carvalho – 1

Superintendent of Schools Olga Hugelmeyer, School Business Administrator/Board Secretary Harold E. Kennedy, Jr., Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning Jennifer Cedeno, Assistant Superintendent for Schools Rafael Cortes, Assistant Superintendent for Schools Judy Finch Johnson, Chief of Operations Francisco Cuesta, Co-General Counsel Jonathan Williams, Esq. of DeCotiis, Fitzpatrick & Cole, LLP and members of the public were in attendance.

Board President Stephanie Pestana presented the following public participation statement.

“At this time, the microphones are open for public comment to those who have signed in. 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. Pestana called upon the first public participant, Kason Little, to address the Board.

Kason Little, 225 S. Seventh Street, stated that safety of our students should be the top priority.

Mrs. Pestana thanked him for his comments and called upon the next public participant, Maria Echavarria, to address the Board.

Maria Echavarria, 321 Westfield Avenue, stated that they need to listen to the parents and that there should be a special needs school in Elizabeth.

Mrs. Pestana thanked her for her comments and called upon the next public participant, Maria Lorenz, to address the board.

Maria Lorenz, 103 Murray Street, stated that a letter should be sent to the family regarding the incident and spoke about special needs.

Mrs. Pestana thanked her for her comments and called upon the next public participant, Iris Medina, to address the Board.

Iris Medina, 1129 Cross Avenue, stated that her child is having problems and requested an evaluation.

Mrs. Pestana thanked her for her comments and called upon the next public participant, Danielle Fienberg, to address the Board.

Danielle Fienberg, 631 North Broad Street, spoke about special education and evaluations.

Mrs. Pestana thanked her for her comments and called upon the next public participant, Stace Gragee, to address the Board.

Stace Gragee, 40 Sunrise Road, Rockaway Township, spoke about the Open Public Meetings Act law.

Mrs. Pestana thanked her for her comments. Since there were no other public participants signed in to address the Board, Mrs. Pestana closed this portion of the meeting.

Vice President Diane Barbosa that there are nearly 130,000 Elizabeth residents including herself, fellow Board members, and those sitting at this meeting that send our children to school every day. Mrs. Barbosa stated that we get it, we understand, and we care. Mrs. Barbosa stated that she sits here tonight as a proud representative of those nearly 130,000 residents, 29,000 students, and 3,600 staff members and administration. Mrs. Barbosa stated that as Chair of the Special Education Committee she knows firsthand what the school board puts in to ensuring that the teachers, staff, and administrators have the best tools to do their difficult job. Mrs. Barbosa stated that we, as Board members, take things that happen in our district very seriously. Mrs. Barbosa stated that we quickly analyze and address and it is our number one priority. Mrs. Barbosa stated that we value all of our special needs students and always make our best efforts to provide them with programming to meet their unique needs. Mrs. Barbosa stated that by definition, special needs students present special challenges but each and every one of our approximately 3,600 special needs students is loved, cared, and educated to the fullest of their unique learning abilities. Mrs. Barbosa stated that we do care.

The second reading of the new Policy File Code 5145.7 – Gender Identity and Expression was done.

Mrs. Pestana asked for a motion to accept the following:

Minutes of the Agenda and Business Meetings of August 22, 2019
Secretary/Treasurer’s Report for the Month of July 2019
Personnel Report
Supplemental Personnel Report
Tuition Report
Superintendent’s Report – Use of Facilities
Supplemental Superintendent’s Report – Use of Facilities
Superintendent’s Report – Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying Investigative Results
Authorizations Report
Supplemental Authorizations Report
Finance and Accounting Report – Authorization to Pay Vouchers
Supplemental Finance and Accounting Report – Transfer of Funds
Award of Contracts Report
Supplemental Award of Contracts Report
2nd Supplemental Award of Contracts Report
Miscellaneous Communication - None
Claims List
Resolution – Requisition for Taxes
Resolution – Adoption of New Policy File Code 5145.7 Gender Identity and Expression
Resolution – School Violence Awareness Week
Resolution – Anti-Bullying Week of Respect
Resolution – Christopher Columbus Day
Resolution – National Disability Employment Awareness Week
Resolution – Italian American Heritage Month
Resolution – National Hispanic Heritage Month
Resolution – Payment for Medical Health Insurance Waiver
Resolution – Payment for Unused Sick Days
Resolution – Payment for Unused Vacation Days
Resolution – Increased Minimum Bid and Quote Thresholds
Resolution – Amendment to Power Purchasing Agreement for the Renewable Energy Program
Resolution – Consent for Waiver of Wholesale Distribution License
Resolution – Approving First Renewal of Contract – Guardian Fence Co., Inc.
Resolution – Appointing EBS Health Care Services, Inc.
Resolution – Amending Maximum Amount of Contract - McCloskey Mechanical Contractors, Inc.
Resolution – Appointing Cooper Friedman Electrical Supply Co., Inc., Pyramid Paper Company, Imperial Bag and Paper Co., and School Specialty, Inc. to Provide Janitorial Supplies
Resolution – Annual Renewal Amounts of Certain Shore Vans, Inc., Student Transportation Contracts to Include Consumer Price Index Increase
Resolution – Renewing Contract with Eric Armen, Inc. to Provide and Deliver Calculators
Superintendent’s Report – Use of Facilities – additional requests
Supplemental Award of Contracts – additional contracts
Resolution – Settlement Agreement and Resignation – S.B.
Resolution – Settlement of Workers’ Compensation Claim (2014-27157) – K.D.

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

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Mrs. Barbosa, Ms. Bathelus, Mmes. Chevres (abstain- Personnel Report – A.M.; Award of Contracts Report – Frontline Technologies Group, LLC, Whitman Co., Panorama Education, Inc., Prevention Links, HISPA, Inc., Trinitas Regional Medical Center, Middlesex County Community College, Educational Consultant James Bauer), Hernandez, Mr. Jacobs (negative- Personnel Report – Appointments; negative- Supplemental Personnel Report- Appointments), Mrs. Moreno-Ortega, Mr. Neron (negative- Personnel Report – Appointments; negative- Supplemental Personnel Report- Appointments; abstain- Superintendent’s Report – Field Trips – F.M.; abstain- Award of Contracts Report – Frontline Technologies Group, LLC, Whitman Co., Panorama Education, Inc., Prevention Links, HISPA, Inc., Trinitas Regional Medical Center, Middlesex County Community College, Educational Consultant James Bauer), Mrs. Pestana – 8

Negative: None

Mrs. Pestana welcomed everyone back and stated that we are looking forward to having a successful 2019-2020 school year.

On a motion by Mrs. Hernandez, seconded by Mrs. Barbosa, the meeting was adjourned at 11:45 p.m.

The motion was carried by the following vote:

Affirmative: Mrs. Barbosa, Ms. Bathelus, Mmes. Chevres, Hernandez, Mr. Jacobs, Mrs. Moreno-Ortega, Mr. Neron, Mrs. Pestana – 8

Negative: None

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