

The Board of Education of the Borough of Essex Fells, in the County of Essex, New Jersey, convened in a Regular Meeting held remotely on May 19, 2021. The meeting was called to order by the Board Vice President, Dr. Steven LoCascio, at 7:33 P.M. Dr. LoCascio read the following Statement of Compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act: “In compliance with chapter 231 of the Laws of 1975, a notice for this meeting was posted at the respective offices of the Essex Fells School as of January 8, 2021. Agendas were mailed to the Clerk of the Borough of Essex Fells, the Progress and the Star Ledger, and posted on the district’s web-site”.

I. Call to Order – 7:33 P.M.

- The meeting was called to order by the Board Vice President.

II. Roll Call

Mrs. Kris Huegel, President-Absent
 Dr. Steven LoCascio, Vice President-Present
 Mrs. Amanda Haber-Present
 Mr. Raj Mehta-Absent
 Mr. Theodore Skopak -Present

Also present: Mrs. Michelle V. Gadaleta, Superintendent/Principal; Mr. Steven J. Lella, Business Administrator/Board Secretary; and 54 members of the public.

III. Flag Salute

- The Board Vice President led the salute to the flag.

IV. Public Comment on Agenda Items Only

- None

V. President’s Report

- None

VI. Superintendent’s Report

- Mrs. Gadaleta reported that we are preparing for ESY and the start of our new Buildings and Ground staff member.
- A pre-school refund will be discussed further.
- The Road Forward Committee will be put together based on guidance from the DOE.
- Mrs. Gadaleta noted that a State provided mediator would be involved with negotiations on June 10th. Mrs. Gadaleta addressed an emailed question from Mr. Dionisio.
- Mrs. Gadaleta noted that the district is preparing for End of Year activities.
- Mrs. Gadaleta wished everyone a happy Memorial Day Weekend.

VII. Superintendents Resolutions

RESOLVED that the Board of Education approves Superintendent Resolutions #01 – 05

- 1. RESOLVED** that the Board of Education accepts and approves, as recommended by the Superintendent, the payment of the following travel related expenses in accordance with the travel policy 6471 for Professional Development:

Staff Member(s): Marco Pannullo
Event: Unmanned Aircraft General Exam
Location: Lincoln Park Airport
Date: 4/30/21
Cost: \$173.00

Staff Member(s): Michelle Barshay
Event: Challenging the Deficit Model
Location: Virtual
Date: 4/22/21
Cost: \$0.00

Staff Member(s): Kristen Kowalski
Event: Cutting-Edge Strategies for 3rd Grade
Location: Virtual
Date: 5/6/21
Cost: \$279.00

Staff Member(s): Nicole Criscione
Event: Strengthening Writing 6-12
Location: Virtual
Date: 5/12/21
Cost: \$149.00

Staff Member(s): Jaclyn Franzi
Event: Strengthening Your Students' Writing Skills by Teaching Smarter
Not Harder
Location: Virtual
Date: 5/17/21
Cost: \$149.00

Staff Member(s): Tracie Wieczorek
Event: Wilson
Location: Virtual
Date: 6/3/21
Cost: \$0.00

Staff Member(s): Monica Craveiro
Event: Maximize the Power of Google Classroom
Location: Virtual
Date: TBD
Cost: \$279.00

Staff Member(s): Deana Hromoko
Event: Co-Teaching in Inclusive Classrooms: Effective Whole Group
Structures and Strategies
Location: Virtual
Date: TBD
Cost: \$149.00

Moved by: Mrs. Haber

Seconded by: Mr. Skopak

Ayes: 3

Nays: 0

2. **RESOLVED** that the Board of Education approves bills and claims for May in the amounts of **\$153,504.10** as certified by the Business Administrator/Board Secretary; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Education approves the payroll for April as certified by the Business Administrator and approved by the Superintendent and Board President in the total amount of \$375,845.66, including \$350,163.60 for the gross payroll, \$5,770.62 for the Board’s share of FICA/Medicare and \$19,911.44 for the State’s share of FICA/Medicare.

Moved by: Mrs. Haber

Seconded by: Mr. Skopak

Ayes: 3

Nays: 0

3. **WHEREAS**, the Board of Education has received the Reports of the Board Secretary (Secretary) and the Custodian of School Monies (Treasurer) for the Month of March;

WHEREAS, in compliance with N.J.A.C.6A:23-2.11(c)3, the Secretary has certified that as of the date of the reports, no budgetary line-item account, in accordance with the minimum chart of accounts as established by the New Jersey Department of Education, has obligations and payments which in total exceed the amount appropriated by the Board of Education;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that in compliance with N.J.A.C.6A:23-2.11(c)4, the Board of Education certifies that, after review of the Secretary’s monthly financial report, and upon consultation with the appropriate district officials, to the best of its knowledge, no major account or fund has been over expended in violation of N.J.A.C.6A:23-2.11(c)4, and that sufficient funds are available to meet the district’s financial obligations for the remainder of the year; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that pursuant to P.L. 2004 C73, the Board certifies that after review of the Secretary’s monthly financial report and certification, that there are no budgetary transfers that cumulatively exceed 10% that would require the approval of the Commissioner of Education; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the financial reports for the months be accepted and shall become a part of the official minutes of this meeting.

Moved by: Mrs. Haber

Seconded by: Mr. Skopak

Ayes: 3

Nays: 0

4. **RESOLVED** that the Board of Education approves the transfer of funds for the month of April as certified by the Business Administrator and authorized by the Superintendent of Schools.

Moved by: Mrs. Haber

Seconded by: Mr. Skopak

Ayes: 3

Nays: 0

5. **RESOLVED** that the Board of Education accepts and approves, the submission of Alyssa’s Law School Security Grant application and that any costs in excess of the grant will be covered by local funds.

Moved by: Mrs. Haber

Seconded by: Mr. Skopak

Ayes: 3

Nays: 0

X. Old Business / Board Discussion

- Mrs. Gadaleta provided an update to the fully remote program. Currently there are 2 families in Educere and 2 remote with EFS. There are meetings every Friday or as needed. The Educere program will finish before the EFS year, then those families will enter the EFS remote program.
- There is no update to the traffic study.

XI. New Business / Board Discussion

- Tiny Treasures has inquired as to EFS interest for 2021-22. The Board feels it should be offered.
- Mrs. Gadaleta reported on NJ School covid guidelines. The CDC and NJ are lifting masking however this does not pertain to school districts. We will wait until further updates from the Health Department.
- There will be no June 2nd workshop added.

XII. Public Comment

- Mrs. Brutman made the following statement on behalf of the EFTA regarding negotiations:

“I’d like to make a statement on behalf of the teachers’ association: While we are disappointed that we were unable to come to an agreement on a fair contract during negotiations, we are hopeful that we will be successful in mediation. In September, the teachers were able to work together with the Board of Education, the administration and the community to return students to a safe learning environment. We appreciate the community’s support at this time. Despite the current situation, we will continue to go above and beyond every day for our students.”

- Mrs. Maggie Rowan asked to reconsider outdoor K graduation, even if modified.
- Mrs. Lisa Massaroni agreed with a request for a modified outdoor K graduation if possible.
- Mrs. Gadaleta responded that she will be meeting with the K team to discuss further.

XIII. Resolution to Enter Executive Session

The Board convened in Executive Session at 7:50 P.M. to discuss legal matters, negotiations and the School Business Administrator’s contract. The items discussed in Executive Session will be disclosed to the public when the need to maintain their confidentiality no longer exists.

Moved by: Mr. Skopak

Seconded by: Mrs. Haber

Ayes: 3

Nays: 0

XIV. Adjournment

At 9:30 P.M. the Board of Education made a motion to adjourn. The next Regular Meeting of the Board of Education will be held on Wednesday, **June 16, 2021 at 7:30 P.M.** virtually.

Moved by: Dr. LoCascio

Seconded by: Mr. Skopak

Ayes: 5

Nays: 0

Respectfully Submitted,

Mr. Steven J. Lella
Business Administrator/
Board Secretary