

The Board of Education of the Borough of Essex Fells, in the County of Essex, New Jersey, convened in a Workshop Meeting held in the Media Center on September 7, 2022. The meeting was called to order by the Board President, Mrs. Amanda Haber, at 7:30 P.M. Mrs. Haber 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 August 29th, 2022. Agendas were mailed to the Clerk of the Borough of Essex Fells, the Progress, and the Star Ledger.

I. Call to Order – 7:30 P.M.

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

II. Roll Call

Mrs. Amanda Haber, President_Present
 Mr. John Toth, Vice-President-Present
 Mrs. Kris Huegel-Absent
 Mr. Raj Mehta-Present
 Mr. Theodore Skopak-Present

Also present: Dr. Michelle V. Gadaleta, Superintendent/Principal; Mr. Steven J. Lella, Business Administrator/Board Secretary and (1) Staff Member

III. Flag Salute

- The Board President led the salute to the flag.

IV. President's Report

Good Evening,

Welcome to all of those joining us tonight. The beginning of the school year has always been a special time. It is as exciting as it is nerve-wracking. As we come together on the eve of the first day of school for our students, we have to acknowledge the work that it takes to make Essex Fells School function. Our teachers and staff have been well-trained and preparing the learning environments; parents have been back to school shopping and writing out the busy September calendar and our students have been completing summer assignments and getting back on schedule. Our PTA has been hard at work getting volunteers lined up to ensure a successful school start. The Essex Fells Foundation for Educational Excellence has been mapping out their year and creating opportunities for the children. The community helpers are prepared to step up and help as much as possible. It takes the whole machine to work. Without all these integral parts we simply would not be as successful as we have been.

As the Board of Education we are responsible for setting the policies, goals and objectives for the district and ensuring that they are being carried out. We have developed the following goals for this school year:

1. Review, update, evaluate, and enforce Bylaws/Policy Manual to fit the specific needs of the Essex Fells School District.
2. Implement the updated EFS long-range facility plan.
3. Provide necessary resources to support the health, safety, social emotional needs, and security of the students, staff, and school.
4. Support the administration and teaching staff through professional development and resources necessary to enhance programming for the 2022-2023 school year.
5. Remain committed to offering an outstanding education while maintaining fiscal responsibility.

We are committed to preparing our students to become responsible and successful citizens. We continue to follow the guiding principles of strong character and excellence as we plan and prepare. It is important to recognize that, as we start the year, we will continue to put first things first, which is our children.

On behalf of the Board, we wish everyone a safe and happy start to their new school year.

V. Public Comment on Agenda Items Only

- None

VI. Superintendent’s Report

- Dr. Gadaleta reported that she is super excited for the 1st day of school tomorrow. Dr. Gadaleta noted how instrumental the summer staff was to getting the buildings ready to open. The buildings are very clean, the district has a new ADA compliant website and the last 2 days provided PD for the staff, from Stronge, to CPR/AED First Aid and SEL Training.
- There will be a PM Spirit Meeting tomorrow in the gymnasium. Back to School Night will be September 14th, School Picture Day will be the 19th, and we currently have 151 families and 247 students enrolled for the 2022-23 school year.
- The Safe Return Committee met last week and Dr. Gadaleta provided plan updates. Mr. Mehta asked about test to return, and Dr. Gadaleta noted there will be no testing requirements, however the district will still have our CLEA license for testing if needed. Mr. Skopak asked if we return on day 6 with a mask, can the mask be removed on day 8 with 2 negative tests. Dr. Gadaleta confirmed. Dr. Gadaleta also noted the Emergency Remote Plan for submission.
- Dr. Gadaleta congratulated the newly tenured staff, Ms. Rory Duarte, Ms. Rebecca Santin and Ms. Tracie Wiczorek.
- Dr. Gadaleta referred to Supt. Resolution #2, the appointment of Mr. James Wallace as the part time Art Teacher, and how thrilled she was that he accepted the position and is very pleased with the hire. Dr. Gadaleta also noted the rescinding of the Ms. Jenna Pattison approval, as the state is not accepting her as properly certified.

VII. Superintendents Resolutions

RESOLVED that the Board of Education approves Superintendent Resolutions #01 –04.

- 1. RESOLVED** that the Board of Education accepts and approves, as recommended by the Superintendent, the rescission of Jenna Pattison, Art Teacher, MA Step 1 (.4), at the pro-rated salary of \$25,014, for the 2022-23 school year.

Moved by: Mr. Skopak

Seconded by: Mr. Toth

Ayes: 4

Nays: 0

- 2. RESOLVED** that the Board of Education accepts and approves, as recommended by the Superintendent, the appointment of James Wallace, Part-time Art Teacher, BA +30, Step 10, (.4), at the salary of \$28,614, for the 2022-23 school year, pending the usual criminal history and background check for new hires.

Moved by: Mr. Skopak

Seconded by: Mr. Toth

Ayes: 4

Nays: 0

3. **RESOLVED** that the Board of Education accepts and approves, as recommended by the Superintendent, the Use of Facilities Request extension for the following:

6th Grade Parent Meeting
 9/9/22 – 6:00pm-7:30pm
 Media Center

Moved by: Mr. Skopak

Seconded by: Mr. Toth

Ayes: 4

Nays: 0

4. **RESOLVED** that the Board of Education accepts and approves, as recommended by the Superintendent, the Essex Fells School Full-School Remote Learning Plan for the school year 2022-2023.

Moved by: Mr. Skopak

Seconded by: Mr. Toth

Ayes: 4

Nays: 0

VII. Buildings & Grounds

- Dr. Gadaleta and Mr. Lella provided an update on the roofing project. We are still waiting for the slip/bottom metal to be delivered, which is anticipated to be this week or next. Once arrived work will continue after school hours until dark. Gutters will be installed after the metal is up. Clean up and landscaping ruts are being addressed, as well as a leak in the Media Center. An opening was found in the corner flashing and was re-sealed. The sky light is 10-15 days out. The porta john and lull will be moved to out of site locations on the property.

VIII. Curriculum & Instruction

- Dr. Gadaleta noted that a timeline will be developed for Curriculum revision, which was last done in 2017. The BOE discussed.
- Dr. Gadaleta provided information on the SEL presentation.

IX. Finance

- Mr. Lella noted that he will begin preparing for the 2021-22 Audit.

X. Personnel

- Dr. Gadaleta reported that we will need to hire a Kindergarten Special Education teacher.

XII. Policy

- The Board reviewed and discussed policy and it will be finalized at our next meeting.

XIII. Old Business / Board Discussion

- Mr. Lella noted that the NJSBA training, that had initially been scheduled right as the pandemic began, will be at our February 1st workshop.

XIV. New Business / Board Discussion

- None

XV. Public Comment

- None

XVI. Resolution to Enter Executive Session

At 8:19 P.M. the Board made a motion to enter into Executive Session discuss personnel and legal matters. 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. Toth

Seconded by: Mr. Skopak

Ayes: 4

Nays: 0

XVII. Adjournment

At 8:28 P. M. the Board made a motion to adjourn. The next meeting of the Board of Education will be held on **Wednesday, September 21, 2022 at 7:30 P.M.** in the Media Center.

Moved by: Mr. Skopak

Seconded by: Mr. Toth

Ayes: 4

Nays: 0

Respectfully Submitted,

Mr. Steven J. Lella
Business Administrator/