

The Board of Education of the Borough of Essex Fells, in the County of Essex, New Jersey, convened in a regular session on May 20, 2015, in the Media Center of the Essex Fells School. The meeting was called to order by the Board President, Dr. Steven LoCascio, at 7:55 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 on May 12, 2015. Agendas were mailed to the Clerk of the Borough of Essex Fells, the Progress, the Star Ledger, and posted on the district web-site."

**I. Call to Order – 7:55 P.M.**

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

**II. Roll Call**

Mrs. Carol D'Alessandro, Vice-President – present (arrived at 8:07 P.M.)  
Mrs. Shani Drogin –present  
Mrs. Kris Heugel – present  
Dr. Steven LoCascio, President – present  
Dr. Michele Nitti – present

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

**III. Flag Salute**

- The Board President led the salute to the flag.

**IV. Public Comment on Agenda Items**

- No comment.

**V. President's Report**

- No report.

**VI. Superintendent's Report**

- Mrs. Gadaleta reported that the second round of PARCC testing took place with very few issues. The children filled out a survey regarding the testing along with Mrs. Gadaleta.
- Mrs. Gadaleta stated that we are still awaiting the attorney's response as to the August start date. The NJEA & Board attorney have been discussing this directly. Superintendent Resolution #5 will be tabled.
- Mrs. Gadaleta informed the Board of a staff member requesting a 1 year leave of absence in order for her husband to return to active military duty in Virginia. The Board agrees this is acceptable. A new staff member will need to be hired to take her place while on the leave.
- Mrs. Gadaleta and the Board discussed the End of the Year Party and the concerns regarding the distance of the trip and possible traffic issues. Mrs. Gadaleta reported that survey results show that 17 children will not attend the trip. Mrs. Gadaleta will see if it's possible to have the circus performers come to EFS instead.

At 8:07 Mrs. D'Alessandro arrived.

**VII. Superintendent's Resolutions**

- 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: Steven Lella  
 Event: Annual NJASBO Conference  
 Location: Borgata Hotel – Atlantic City  
 Date: 6/3/15 – 6/5/15  
 Cost: \$150 Fee; \$68.20 mileage; Hotel \$228.00 = \$446.20 total  
 (Tolls and meals/incidentals to follow)

Moved by: Dr. Nitti  
 Ayes: 5  
 Seconded by: Mrs. D'Alessandro  
 Nays: 0

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

Tiny Treasures Extended School Day Program  
 September 2015 to June 2016, 7:15-9:00am and 3:00-6:00pm  
 EFS Classroom: TBA

Moved by: Dr. Nitti  
 Ayes: 5  
 Seconded by: Mrs. D'Alessandro  
 Nays: 0

- 3. RESOLVED** that the Board of Education accepts and approves, as recommended by the Superintendent, the request for a one-year leave of absence for Laura Short, teacher, for the 2015-2016 school year.

Moved by: Dr. Nitti  
 Ayes: 5  
 Seconded by: Mrs. D'Alessandro  
 Nays: 0

- 4. RESOLVED** that the Board of Education accepts and approves, as recommended by the Superintendent, the resignation of Stacey Perry, teacher, effective June 30, 2015.

Moved by: Dr. Nitti  
 Ayes: 5  
 Seconded by: Mrs. D'Alessandro  
 Nays: 0

- 5. RESOLVED** that the Board of Education accepts and approves, as recommended by the Superintendent, the revised 2015-2016 school calendar.

**NOTE:** See attachment

Moved by: Dr. Nitti  
 Ayes: 5  
 Seconded by: Mrs. D'Alessandro  
 Nays: 0

**6. RESOLVED** that the Board of Education accepts and approves, as recommended by the Superintendent, an additional 200 hours for Marco Pannullo, IT Technician, at a salary of \$45/hour, for the 2014-2015 school year.

Moved by: Dr. Nitti	Seconded by: Mrs. D'Alessandro
Ayes: 5	Nays: 0

**7. RESOLVED** that the Board of Education accepts and approves, as recommended by the Superintendent, the services of Richard Kleinmann, M.D. Board Certified, Child and Adult Psychiatry, for the remainder of the 2014-2015 school year and the 2015-2016 school year, for the following evaluations:

Psychiatric Evaluations	<u>\$880.00</u> each
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Moved by: Dr. Nitti	Seconded by: Mrs. D'Alessandro
Ayes: 5	Nays: 0

**8. RESOLVED** that the Board of Education accepts and approves, as recommended by the Superintendent, the services of Marilyn Ruiz, M.D. Board Certified, Neurodevelopmental Pediatrician, for the remainder of the 2014-2015 school year and the 2015-2016 school year, for the following evaluations:

Neurodevelopmental Evaluations	<u>\$665.00</u> each
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Moved by: Dr. Nitti	Seconded by: Mrs. D'Alessandro
Ayes: 5	Nays: 0

**VIII. Business Administrator's Report**

- Mr. Lella provided the Board with a schedule of Legal Fees for the 2014-15 School Year. Mr. Lella explained in addition to negotiations, the district is incurring a very large, unanticipated amount of fees regarding Special Education and an Out of District Placement. Mrs. Gadaleta explained the placement issue.

**IX. Business Resolutions**

**1. RESOLVED** that the Board of Education approves the bills and claims for May in the total amount of \$209,619.65 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 \$300,550.09 including \$280,134.33 for the gross payroll, \$5,202.50 for the Board's share of FICA/Medicare and \$15,213.26 for the State's share of FICA/Medicare.

Moved by: Dr. Nitti	Seconded by: Mrs. D'Alessandro
Ayes: 5	Nays: 0

2. **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: Dr. Nitti  
Ayes: 5

Seconded by: Mrs. D'Alessandro  
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; and

**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: Dr. Nitti  
Ayes: 5

Seconded by: Mrs. D'Alessandro  
Nays: 0

4. **RESOLVED** that the Essex Fells Board of Education hereby approves the submission of a grant application for the 2015 Safety Grant Program through the New Jersey Schools Insurance Group's ERIC NORTH Subfund for the purposes described in the application, in the amount of \$2,500 for the period July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2016.

Moved by: Dr. Nitti  
Ayes: 5

Seconded by: Mrs. D'Alessandro  
Nays: 0

**X. Old Business / Board Discussion**

- Mrs. Gadaleta shared with the Board the parking lot student video made by EFS students. Mrs. Gadaleta will attempt to reschedule her meeting with the Mayor and Chief of Police that was delayed due to the birth of her child.
- Mr. Lella is continuing to obtain quotes for the railing installation. Expiring Banked Cap appropriated in the 2015-16 Budget will be used for the stucco repair and any unanticipated B&G projects that may arise. Funds could also be used to address STEAM. The STEAM project is a 1 year pilot and Mrs. Gadaleta will follow up with the Foundation to see if they would still be willing to fund half of the program.
- Mrs. Gadaleta followed up on the Dual Preschool Program Inquiry. Since the Board would not entertain 1 session preschool and ½ day kindergarten, it was requested by the parent to attend both AM & PM preschool. The Board discussed and agreed it would not be permitted since the PM session would be a repeat of the AM session. Mrs. Gadaleta also added that she was very pleased with the current preschool program.

**XI. New Business / Board Discussion**

- Mrs. Gadaleta informed the Board of the new plantings near the bleachers that were a gift from the Class of 2014. Bushes were removed and grass and small plants were planted. Mrs. Gadaleta was very pleased with the work but was concerned about who would be responsible for watering the area since the district does not have a water supply or hose to reach the area. As Mrs. Gadaleta was attempting to find a solution, she informed the Board she was contacted by the Mayor to have the district water the area. The Board discussed and agreed the district would do what they could to water the area within reason.
- A parent asked Dr. LoCascio about the condition of the baseball fields. The parent commented on the dandelions and weeds and stated they needed to be cut.
- Mrs. Gadaleta explained to the Board that she had received an email request for an out of town resident to attend the EFS Kindergarten program since it is not offered full time in their current town. Mrs. Gadaleta informed the Board that the kindergarten is almost at capacity so she is hesitant. The Board agreed.

**XII. Meeting Open for Public Comment**

- Mrs. Emma expressed how impressed she was with the preschool students and the work the teachers are doing with them. Mrs. Emma stated that the Kindergarten screening showed how well prepared the children are. Mrs. Drogin added that she felt including the preschool students in all school activities is very helpful towards their development.
- A member of the Public asked what STEAM stands for.

**XIII. Resolution to Enter Executive Session**

The Board resolved to enter into Executive Session at 8:43 P.M. to discuss contractual negotiations. The items discussed in Executive Session will be disclosed to the public when the need to maintain confidentiality no longer exists.

Moved by: Mrs. D'Alessandro  
Ayes: 5

Seconded by: Dr. Nitti  
Nays: 0

**XIV. Adjournment**

At 8:50 P.M. the Board of Education came out of Executive Session and made a motion to adjourn. The next Workshop Meeting of the Board of Education scheduled for June 3, 2015, was canceled. The next Regular Meeting will be held on Wednesday, June 14, 2015 in the Media Center.

Moved by: Mrs. D'Alessandro  
Ayes: 5

Seconded by: Mrs. Drogin  
Nays: 0

**Enrollment Count: 2014-2015**

Teacher	Section	Total	M	F
Mrs. Quinn/Ms. Burger	PS/AM	13	8	5
Mrs. Quinn/Ms. Burger	PS/PM	13	4	9
Mrs. Gann	KG	15	9	6
Ms. Mitchell/Mrs. Short	KM/S	13	6	7
Mrs. Brutman/Mrs. Hromoko	1B/H	14	9	5
Mrs. Massaro	1M	14	9	5
Ms. McMahon/Ms. Almeida	2M/A	12	5	7
Mrs. Perry	2P	9	4	5
Ms. Cervino	3C	11	6	5
Mrs. Reynolds/Ms. McLain	3R/M	10	5	5
Mrs. Barshay	4B	13	3	10
Mrs. Hacker/Mrs. Calistri	4H/C	11	3	8
Mrs. Banek/Ms. Belmont	5B/B	11	5	6
Ms. Craveiro	5C	12	7	5
Mrs. Buonomo	6B	19	8	11
Ms. Dalton/Mrs. Whitman	6D/W	20	8	12
Total		210	99	111
Out-of-District		4+		
<b>FINAL TOTALS</b>		<b>214</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>111</b>

+ Total includes 4 out-of-district students

**Fire Drills: 2014-2015**

Month	Fire Drill	Emergency Drill
September	9/8/14	Lockdown 9/16/14
October	10/8/14	Shelter in Place 10/2/14
November	11/12/14	Lockdown 11/19/14
December	12/15/14	Lockdown 12/9/14
January	1/29/15	Lockdown 1/20/15
February	2/25/15	Shelter in Place 2/27/15
March	3/11/15	Lockdown 3/13/15
April	4/15/15	Evacuation to Bleachers 4/22/15
May	5/4/15	
June		

**HIB / V&V Report**

As of Date of BOE Meeting	9/17/14	10/15/14	11/19/14	12/17/14	1/21/15	2/18/15	3/18/15	4/15/15	5/20/15	6/17/15
TOTAL # of Reported Incidents	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	0	0	
Number of Unfounded Incidents	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	0	0	
Number of Founded Incidents	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	

**ESSEX FELLS SCHOOL DISTRICT MISSION STATEMENT**

The Essex Fells School is a very special public elementary school enrolling boys and girls in preschool through the sixth grades. Pupils enjoy small classes and a total school population of approximately two hundred and fifty.

The size of the school is a wonderful asset as it allows a strong sense of community and offers teachers and pupils many opportunities to form bonds of collegiality, identification and support. It also supports the concept that every adult in the school is responsible for every child.

The comparatively small faculty is also a benefit. The faculty as a whole are the decision making body on all questions of teaching and learning. Teachers find it easy to share experiences and act consistently across pupils' entire academic program. The combined efforts of the staff work to support a pupil centered approach to education.

Essex Fells teachers are encouraged to try new ideas, to work collaboratively with colleagues, and to participate fully in all aspects of schooling.

The mission of the school is etched in the mortar of the original schoolhouse with the words Studies Pass Into Character.

The primary goals of an Essex Fells education include:

1. Developing in all pupils the capacity to think critically and communicate effectively through a mastery of written and spoken English.
2. Motivating all pupils to recognize and develop their academic abilities in order to build character and to achieve their full potential.
3. Teaching children to value themselves, their peers and their teachers.
4. Establishing a respect for and a strong sense of responsibility to the physical, social, and aesthetic world around them.
5. Nurturing a love of country and a pride in our American heritage and citizenship.
6. Communicating a love of scholarship and continued interest in life-long learning.
7. Insuring all pupils will achieve the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards at all levels.

To secure these common goals, the Essex Fells staff of professional educators recognizes that the collaborative engagement of the children in the learning process is the key to intellectual development. Dedicated teachers create classrooms that are alive with cooperative learning activities and child-centered problem solving routines. Children are encouraged to explore, to question, to make decisions, and to express opinions in a supportive learning environment. Teachers also model their own commitment to learning by continuing to earn advanced degrees. On-going professional development is acknowledged as the foundation for promoting outstanding pupil achievement.

Respectfully submitted,

Mr. Steven J. Lella  
Business Administrator/  
Board Secretary