

The Board of Education of the Borough of Essex Fells, in the County of Essex, New Jersey, convened in a workshop meeting on October 7 2015, in the Superintendent's Office of the Essex Fells School. The meeting was called to order by Board President Dr. Steven LoCascio at 7:30 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 September 18, 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 – 7:33 P.M.

II. Roll Call

Mrs. Carol D'Alessandro, Vice-President – absent
Mrs. Shani Drogin – present
Mrs. Kris Huegel – 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; and 3 community members.

III. Flag Salute

The President led the flag salute.

IV. Public Comment

- Three (3) parents in attendance voiced their concern regarding the dress code policy. Parent 1 felt that the BOE is violating the district's policy on HIB, and she did not feel her child was breaking the dress code policy. Parents 2 & 3 discussed their daughter's dresses, which they felt were appropriate.
- Dr. LoCascio confirmed with the parents that the district policy is acceptable, just the manner in which the policy is being enforced can be reviewed. Dr. LoCascio stated that the Board will visit protocol on how the policy is being enforced.
- Dr. Nitti stated that the Board prefers a vague policy, however she agreed that the way the policy is interpreted and enforced could be reviewed.
- Parent 1 stated her daughter was called out during lunch which made the situation more obvious. Dr. Nitti reaffirmed that the Board policy is not intended to humiliate the child. The parents stated they felt their children's outfits were appropriate for picture day. Dr. Nitti mentioned that a possible survey could be sent to the town.
- Mrs. Gadaleta discussed what she sees on a day to day basis, and stated that the policy must be fair based on the child's body type. She also stated that she wants a policy that the parents like and make the children feel comfortable.
- Parent 2 asked to not have the child singled out, and perhaps the parent could be contacted. Mrs. Gadaleta informed the parents that the staff member who addresses the situation has been informed on how to handle the child and she follows the procedure properly. Everyone agreed the policy is acceptable and that just the manner in which a situation is handled could be revised. The Board agreed the parent should also be notified rather than just singling the child out. Dr. LoCascio stated the Board will define what is appropriate based on the community response to the survey. Parent 1 restated that she didn't agree how the situation was handled as it embarrassed her daughter. The Board agreed the procedure of the policy would be reviewed and the staff will also be informed on how to handle future situations.
- The 3 members of the public left the meeting at 8:10 pm.

V. Superintendent's Report

- Mrs. Gadaleta explained the resolution for the Business Office Assistant salary adjustment.
- Mrs. Gadaleta also noted that the Genesis portal for parents is moving forward and that an alert now would be sent out. If the roll out works well, the report cards will follow. Mrs. Gadaleta explained what information the portal would show to the parents.

VI. Superintendents Resolutions

1. RESOLVED that the Board of Education accepts and approves, as recommended by the Superintendent, the Out-of-District Program Costs at Livingston Public School (Student 260256) for the 2015-2016 school year, at the following daily/yearly rates:

Estimated 180 days at \$304.21/day for:

- September 1, 2015 through June 30, 2016

Total school year cost not to exceed: \$54,758

Moved by: Dr. Nitti
Ayes: 4

Seconded by: Mrs. Drogin
Nays: 0

2. RESOLVED that the Board of Education accepts and approves, as recommended by the Superintendent, the following addition to the list of Field Trips for the 2015-2016 school year:

Montclair Art Museum

Moved by: Dr. Nitti
Ayes: 4

Seconded by: Mrs. Drogin
Nays: 0

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

PTA – Outdoor Movie Night – Fields
6:00-9:00pm – Friday: 10/16/15 (rain date: 10/23/15)

EF Recreation Department – Basketball Program for Grades 3-6 – Gym
4:30-7:45pm – Monday-Friday: 11/30/15 – 3/4/16

Daisy Troop 20466 – Grade 1 – Gym (*Media Center)
3:10-4:15pm – Fridays: 10/23/15*, 12/18/15, 1/22/16, 2/19/16, 4/29/16, 5/20/16, 6/10/16

EFFEE Enrichment Classes on Tuesdays:

Ceramics for Grades 4-6 – Art Room
3:05-4:30pm – 10/20/15, 10/27/15, 11/10/15, 11/17/15, 12/1/15, 12/8/15

Magic with Joe Fischer for Grades 1-4 – Media Center (*Mrs. Hacker's #Room 104)
3:05-4:30pm – 10/20/15, 10/27/15, 11/10/15, 11/17/15, 12/1/15*, 12/8/15

Silly Sports for Grades 1-3, Gym
3:05-4:30pm – 10/20/15, 10/27/15, 11/10/15, 11/17/15, 12/1/15, 12/8/15

EFFEE Enrichment Classes on Wednesdays:

Cooking Class "Chef It Up" for Grades K-2, Science Room #105
3:05-4:30pm – 10/21/15, 10/28/15, 11/11/15, 11/18/15, 12/2/15, 12/9/15

Yoga for Grades K-3, Gym

3:05-4:30pm – 10/21/15, 10/28/15, 11/11/15, 11/18/15, 12/2/15, 12/9/15

Moved by: Dr. Nitti

Ayes: 4

Seconded by: Mrs. Drogin

Nays: 0

4. **RESOLVED** that the Board of Education accepts and approves, as recommended by the Superintendent, Jackie Castellano for technology input/infrastructure during the summer of 2015 at \$50/hour for an additional 31 hours.

Moved by: Dr. Nitti

Ayes: 4

Seconded by: Mrs. Drogin

Nays: 0

5. **RESOLVED** that the Board of Education accepts and approves, as recommended by the Superintendent, the revised appointment of Karen Sarto, Administrative Assistant to the Business Office, at the prorated salary of \$51,250 from on or about August 1, 2015 through June 30, 2016.

Moved by: Dr. Nitti

Ayes: 4

Seconded by: Mrs. Drogin

Nays: 0

VII. **Buildings & Grounds**

- Mr. Lella updated the Board as to the status of the boiler project. He stated he is just waiting for minor punch list items to be completed and close out documents and warranty information to be sent to his attention.

VIII. **Curriculum & Instruction**

- Mrs. Gadaleta informed the Board that October 5-9, 2015, is recognized as the Week of Respect during Anti-Bullying Prevention Month and it will be addressed at the upcoming Spirit Meeting.
- Mrs. Gadaleta informed the Board that October is Fire Prevention Month and that the Essex Fells Fire Department will speak to the children about fire prevention.
- Mrs. Gadaleta informed the Board that she attended a conference regarding how PARCC results will be received by districts and how to disseminate the information.

Dr. Nitti stepped out of the workshop at 8:29 pm and returned at 8:33 pm.

IX. **Finance**

- Mr. Lella informed the Board that audit was moving along and that the auditors had 1-2 days remaining of in district field work. He also informed the Board of GASB 68, which is information all auditors for all districts are waiting on from the Department of Treasury. This information is needed to complete all audits and the release of this information has been delayed.

X. **Policy**

- Policy 5511 regarding Dress and Grooming was reviewed and discussed during the public comment. The Board briefly discussed the points mentioned in the earlier conversation.

XI. **Old Business/Board Discussion**

- Mr. Lella informed the Board that a former staff member had filed an appeal of her unemployment claim that had been denied. A hearing was set for October 19th.
- Mrs. Gadaleta informed the Board that Creative Speech had denied the settlement that they proposed to the district, that the district had accepted. The Board Attorney is awaiting response from the Creative Speech's Attorney on how they would like to proceed.

- Mrs. Gadaleta informed the Board that the BOE had won the Emergent Relive regarding the EFTA Calendar Case, however the case is still be heard at a later date in attempt to recoup the 1 day. The EFTA had no knowledge of the status of the case. The case has cost the district \$5,000 in legal fees through July & August.
- Mrs. Gadaleta updated the Board that the ongoing out of district case had been placed in the Livingston district. Mrs. Gadaleta further explained that the father had filed for due process and that his attorney would no longer be representing him. The claim will not be heard but the case will still cost the district in legal fees.

XII. New Business / Board Discussion

- Mrs. Gadaleta discussed summer hours for teaching staff and that going forward the summer hours will be capped and will not exceed the initially approved amount.

XIII. Adjournment

At 9:37 P.M. the Board of Education made a motion to adjourn.

Moved by: Dr. Nitti
Ayes: 4

Seconded by: Mrs. Drogin
Nays: 0

Respectfully submitted,

Mr. Steven J. Lella
Business Administrator/
Board Secretary