

**Board of Education of East Newark, Hudson County, NJ**  
**Regular Meeting Minutes January 25, 2021**

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Board President Brigitte Goncalves called the Regular Virtual Meeting of the East Newark Board of Education to order on Monday January 25, 2021 at 6:15 p.m., led the Board in the Salute to the Flag and read the following Opening Statement:

**OPENING STATEMENT**

In accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 et seq., adequate notification of this meeting has been provided by advertising in the Jersey Journal and posted at the Borough Clerk's Office

**ROLL CALL**

**Present:** Ms. Goncalves, President  
Mr. Balsam, Jr., Vice President  
Ms. Slattery  
Ms. Fernandes

**Absent:** Ms. Lopez

**Also Present:** Dr. Richard Corbett, Superintendent  
R. Paul Vizzuso, Business Administrator/Board Secretary

**INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION – 6:16 PM**

Ms. Goncalves read the following statement:

Be It Resolved, that the East Newark Board of Education hereby adjourns to Executive Session in compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 et seq., for the reason(s) identified below. The minutes of the discussion during Executive Session will be available to the public when such minutes have been approved by the Board of Education pursuant to N.J.S.A. 47:1A-1.1 and the need for confidentiality no longer exists.

- Matters rendered confidential by Federal Law, State Law, or Court Rule
- Attorney-client privilege

Motion by: Mr. Balsam, Jr.

Seconded by: Ms. Slattery

***All in favor***

**OUT OF EXECUTIVE SESSION BACK INTO PUBLIC SESSION – 6:24 PM**

Motion by: Mr. Balsam, Jr.

Seconded by: Ms. Slattery

***All in favor***

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

- EN resident Jackie Cadate on behalf of her mother asked a question concerning the parking lot adjacent to the EN school building, her mother received a letter from Borough Hall to relinquish her parking space
- Dr. Corbett deferred to answer the question at the end of the Board meeting

**THE REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT**

- The Reopening Committee met today, January 25, 2021 to discuss and update our plan for re-opening school. As of January 16, the New Jersey Department of Public Health and the CDC have identified the activity level in North East New Jersey as “High.” The committee has, therefore,

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unanimously recommended that the schools remain closed and the situation be reassessed next month. The Reopening Committee will meet again the week of February 22.

- Our new home for grades 5 to 8 at Holy Cross is ready to accommodate students. Classrooms have been thoroughly cleaned, Wi-Fi and phones are in place, the building HVAC has been tuned up, front exterior doors have been replaced with new locks making the building safe and secure for students. I have relocated my office to the third floor of Holy Cross. I am excited about our new location and I think you too will appreciate these new accommodations for learning. Please visit anytime!
- On January 18, to commemorate Martin Luther King Day, students in grades 5 to 8 participated in a day of service. Five of our students gave up their morning to clean up the grounds surrounding our school at Holy Cross. Following the cleanup, the students toured the school to see their future classrooms. It was a rewarding and fulfilling day for all.
- The agenda includes a resolution to approve *The Agreement* between the East Newark Board of Education and the East Newark Education Association. I am grateful to both the board negotiation committee and the union leadership for their efforts to reach an equitable agreement.
- Now that the *New Year* has begun, I would like to provide an update on our District Goals. These goals were approved by the Board prior to the start of the school year and as such, become our litmus test for success. However, as stated in the introduction, “the [current] uncertainties directly impact district goals.” Particularly since “it is difficult to measure academic success when mixed and blended learning are becoming the norm and the future of standardized assessments is questionable.”
  - The first goal measures academic success using *i-ready*. Although this platform is virtual, after providing the benchmark diagnostic assessment in September, we found our students scoring well above grade level. The most likely conclusion is that students are receiving help from parents, making the scores invalid. I-Ready, as administered at home cannot be a valid measure of academic growth.
  - The second goal pertains to the climate and culture of East Newark School, particularly regarding HIB. There have been no incidents of (cyber) bullying this year, and no suspensions. Of course, with no students in school these results are expected.
  - Our third goal intends to increase parent involvement and community engagement. This too has been adversely impacted by the pandemic.
  - Finally, after successfully completing the bathroom renovations, we are looking forward to renewing the building envelope. Although this project certainly has an aesthetic impact, it is vitally important since in its current state with loose and falling bricks, our school building could potentially harm students.
  - We have successfully organized all district documents. This was a major task that included perusing all documents and refiling some and shredding others, as allowable by statute.

**CONSENT AGENDA FOR BOARD COMMENT R-1-875-886-21**

Motion by: Ms. Slattery

Seconded by: Mr. Balsam, Jr

**ROLL CALL: YES 4 NO 0**

**BOARD COMMENT**

Ms. Fernandes requested that 1-883-21 be voted on separately

**RESOLUTION BY BLOCK VOTE R-1-875-886-21 (excluding 1-883-21)**

Motion by: Mr. Balsam, Jr

Seconded by: Ms. Slattery

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**ROLL CALL: YES 4 NO 0**

- 1-875-21** Be It Resolved, that the East Newark Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approves the following minutes as submitted: December 21, 2020 Regular Meeting Minutes .
- 1-876-21** Be It Resolved, that the East Newark Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, accepts the financial reports as submitted, which include the monthly Board Secretary's report and the Treasurer of School Monies report for the month ended December 31, 2020. The Board notes that the Secretary's and Treasurer's reports are in balance for the cash receipts and disbursements for the month ended December 31, 2020 and BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-16.10 (c), I, R. Paul Vizzuso, Board Secretary, certify that as of December 31, 2020 no budgetary line item account has obligations and payments which in total exceed the amount appropriated by the District Board of Education pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:22-8 and 18A:22-8.1, and that the District financial accounts have been reconciled and are in balance, and BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that through the adoption of this resolution, we, the East Newark Board of Education, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-16.10, certify that as of December 31, 2020 after review of the Board Secretary's monthly financial report (appropriation section) and upon consultation with the appropriate district officials, that to the best of our knowledge no major account or fund has been over expended in violation of N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-16.10 and that sufficient funds are available to meet the district's financial obligations for the remainder of the fiscal year.
- 1-877-21** Be It Resolved, that the East Newark Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approves the Monthly Transfer Reports as submitted for the month ended December 31, 2020.
- 1-878-21** Be It Resolved, that the East Newark Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approves the Bill List as submitted in the amount of \$ 644,233.00 for January 25, 2021 is hereby approved and payment authorized as funds of the board are made available following this meeting.
- 1-879-21** Be It Resolved, that the East Newark Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approves the employment of Nathaly Vera, full time social worker, M.A. Step 2 (\$46,807) with single benefits, effective February 1, 2021
- 1-880-21** Be It Resolved, that the East Newark Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approves maternity leave for Isabella Luniewski (revised).  
East Newark Board of Education, 501 North 3rd St., East Newark, N. J. 07029 3
- 1-881-21** Be It Resolved, that the East Newark Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approves use Speedway Superfleet MasterCard to be used exclusively to fuel two school buses owned by the East Newark Board of Education.
- 1-882-21** Be It Resolved, that the East Newark Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, acknowledges resignation of Silvia Rainho.

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**1-884-21** Be It Resolved, that the East Newark Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approves Brandon Fronjian Basketball coach; stipend (\$869.76) as per the ENEA agreement.

**1-885-21** WHEREAS, the East Newark Board of Education maintains a collective negotiations agreement between this Board and the East Newark Education Association (“ENEA”) pursuant to NJSA 34:13A1 et seq.; and WHEREAS, the current Collective Negotiations Agreement expired June 30, 2019; and WHEREAS, this Board was notified by the ENEA that it was interested in beginning negotiations for a successor collective negotiations agreement; and WHEREAS, this Board and the ENEA collectively negotiated new terms and conditions of employment for the members of the ENEA for the term July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2024 and East Newark Board of Education, 501 North 3rd St., East Newark, N. J. 07029 4 have memorialized these new terms and conditions of employment in a written document; and WHEREAS, this Board has been advised that the ENEA has approved the new Collective Negotiations Agreement. NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that this Board accepts the Collective Negotiations Agreement between this Board and the ENEA for the term July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2024 as attached. BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Board authorizes the Board President to execute this Agreement and authorizes the Board Secretary to acknowledge the signature of Board President.

**1-886-21** Be It Resolved, that the East Newark Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, approves job description for full-time social worker.

**RESOLUTION VOTE 1-883-21**

Motion by: Mr. Balsam, Jr

Seconded by: Ms. Slattery

**ROLL CALL: YES 2 ABSTAIN 2**

***Resolution 1-883-21 passed since the two abstention are not “NO” votes***

**1-883-21** WHEREAS, an administrative matter was filed against Brigitte Goncalves, in her official capacity as a Board Member; and WHEREAS, NJSA 18A:12-20 requires this Board to indemnify and hold harmless Board Member Goncalves from any financial loss and requires this Board to defray all costs of defending this action, including reasonable counsel fees for such administrative matters; and

WHEREAS, this Board has inquired of its insurance carrier for coverage and representation of Board Member Goncalves and said coverage and representation was denied; and

WHEREAS, David Rubin, Esq., of Metuchen, New Jersey, has the requisite knowledge and experience to provide Board Member Goncalves representation in

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the matter; and WHEREAS, NJSA 18A:18A-5(a)(1) provides that this Board may appoint an attorney without the need for public bidding.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that this Board appoints David Rubin, Esq. for the sole purpose of representing Board Member Goncalves in the administrative

matter filed against her. BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Board agrees to pay the hourly rate of \$300.00 per hour and a not to exceed amount of \$20,000.00, which will be billed on an hourly basis. BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Board authorizes the Board Vice-President to execute the attached retainer agreement.

**OLD BUSINESS**

None

**NEW BUSINESS**

None

**PUBLIC COMMENT/QUESTIONS**

- Dr. Corbett addressed Ms. Cadate's previous question concerning the parking lot adjacent to the school building. We are currently assessing our options on what to do with that portion of the lot that belongs to the EN School District. For the now we will not be doing anything until we get professional input. Things should stay as they are at least until June 2020.
- Dina Grilo – EN Mayor stated that the Borough received a letter on December 1<sup>st</sup> from the EN BOE to remove all vehicles from the ten parking spots and that is what we are doing. Also mentioned that she would welcome a further discussion with Ms. Cadate concerning the letter.
- Dr. Corbett stated that the cease-and-desist letter sent to the Borough was to re-claim the parking lot portion that belongs to the EN School District. Nothing in the letter stated that the residents were to leave their parking spots.
- Ms. Fernandes asked why the Board Trustees did not receive a copy of the letter that went to the Borough.
- Dr. Corbett answered it was an administrative decision.

**BOARD COMMENTS**

None

**ADJOURNMENT**

Motion by: Mr. Balsam, Jr

Seconded by: Ms. Goncalves

BE IT RESOLVED, that with no further business to come before the East Newark Board of Education, the meeting adjourned at 6:44 p.m., all in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,



R. Paul Vizzuso  
Business Administrator/Board Secretary