



Roger León
Superintendent

Newark Board of Education

Where Passion Meets Progress

Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting Tuesday, November 21, 2023

President Hasani Council convened the meeting at 6:15 p.m. The meeting was held at Elliott Street Elementary School, 721 Summer Avenue, Newark, NJ 07104 with audio and video access provided to members of the Board and the public.

I. Call to Order (Reading of Statement) Ms. Valerie Wilson

In accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 et seq., adequate notice of this meeting has been provided by advertising in the Star-Ledger, Haiti Progress, Luso Americano and La Voz newspapers and by distribution to administrative offices of the Newark Public Schools. Electronic notice was provided by posting on the Newark Board of Education website. A copy of this meeting notice was forwarded to City Hall for posting.

II. Flag Salute

III. Roll Call

Board Members Present:

Ms. Garcia, Mr. Gonzalez, Ms. Haynes, Ms. James-Frison, Ms. Murray-Thomas, Ms. Santana, Ms. Williams, and Mr. Council

Student Representative Present:

Malachi Gwyn

Administrative Staff Present:

Mr. Roger León, Superintendent
Ms. Valerie Wilson, Board Secretary
Ms. Brenda Liss, General Counsel
Ms. Nancy Deering, Director of Board Relations

IV. Greetings from Principal

Principal Andres Barquin welcomed the Board, the Superintendent, and the public to Elliott Street Elementary School. The choir and dance team performed for the Board and public. The principal shared the school serves over 900 students ranging from Pre-K 3 – 8th grade. Over 93% of the students identify as Hispanic, of which 25% are in the top tier Bilingual Education Program, and 10% attend the Special Education Program. Principal Barquin spoke about the At Promise Initiative and introduced Noah Rodriguez, a sophomore at Newark School of Fashion Institute & Design, who excelled after being placed in his correct grade. The students presented the Superintendent and Board Members with a pinky promise key chain. Principal Barquin thanked his team for their dedicated hard work and commitment.

V. Recognitions

Superintendent León recognized the following students:

- Malcolm Bernard HBCU College Fair
- YES National Business Plan Challenge
 - West Side High School – 1st Place
- News12 Sounds of the Season Competition
 - Hawkins Street School
- Artificial Intelligence in Schools
 - First Avenue School
- NJISA North II Group I Football Sectional Champions
 - Malcolm X Shabazz High School

VI. Committee Chairperson's Report

Board Operations – Ms. Garcia

Ms. Garcia reported that the following items were discussed at the Board Operations Committee meeting:

- Pupil Transportation
- Safety & Security
- Facilities Management
- Miscellaneous items

Finance & Operations – Mr. Gonzalez

Mr. Gonzalez reported that the following items were discussed at the Finance Committee meeting:

- Monthly Financial Reports
- District Travel Resolution
- Joint Transportation Agreement Ewing Public Schools
- Parent Engagement Professional Development Contract
- 23-24 School Quarter 1 Forecast
- Miscellaneous items

Instruction & Program – Ms. Murray-Thomas

Ms. Murray-Thomas reported that the following items were discussed at the Instruction & Programs meeting:

- District Plan to Improve Science Achievement
- Updates on Summer Planning

Parent Engagement & Student Life – Ms. Haynes

Ms. Haynes reported that the following items were discussed at the Parent Engagement & Student Life Committee meeting:

- Welcomed new Student Representative Malachi Gwyn
- Parent Engagement Tour
- Annual Title 1 Parent Conference
- HIB
- Safety Matters Facilitator Training
- NBOE Pre-College Fair
- Quarter 1 Academic Conference
- Attendance

Ms. Haynes answered the board members’ questions.

Personnel –Mr. Council

Mr. Council reported that the following items were discussed at the Personnel Committee meeting:

- Staffing Updates
- Personnel Voting Actions
- Resignations/Retirements
- TCNJ
- Labor & Negotiations
- Benefits and Payroll updates
- Recruitment and retention efforts

Superintendent León answered the board members’ questions.

Board Development and Governance Committee – Ms. Santana

Ms. Santana reported that the following items were discussed at the Board Development and Governance Committee meeting:

- Board Vacancy
- Newark Enrolls
- Budget- SY 2024-25
- Communications with Vendors Policy

VII. Approval of Committee Reports

There was motion made by Ms. Santana, seconded by Mr. Gonzalez to approve the Committee Minutes.

Moved: Ms. Santana

Seconded: Mr. Gonzalez

Roll call vote:

Yeas: Ms. Garcia, Mr. Gonzalez, Ms. Haynes, Ms. James-Frison, Ms. Murray-Thomas
Ms. Santana, Ms. Williams, and Mr. Council 8

Nays: None 0

Abstentions: None 0

Motion carried by roll call vote.

There was a motion made by Ms. Garcia, seconded by Ms. Haynes to approve the minutes of the Regular Board Meeting and the Executive Minutes held on October 30, 2023.

Moved: Ms. Garcia

Seconded: Ms. Haynes

Roll call vote:

Yeas: Ms. Garcia, Mr. Gonzalez, Ms. Haynes, Ms. James-Frison, Ms. Murray-Thomas
Ms. Santana, Ms. Williams, and Mr. Council 8

Nays: None 0

Abstentions: None 0

Motion carried by roll call vote.

VIII. Student Representative's Report

Student Representative Malachi Gwyn reported to the Board on the following:

- Commitment to connect with his peers within the district
- Create an environment where students feel safe, excited, comfortable
- Team up with his mother to host a workshop engaging students in conversation and activities before the holiday break

IX. Board President's Report

President Council reported on the following:

- Thanked Principal Barquin of Elliott Street School
- Celebrity Chef Lyana Blount event hosted by Newark Vocational High School
- All Schools Fair
- Newark Enrolls
- Open House Sessions
- 37th Annual Title I Parent Conference
- Community Roundtable
- Opening of Nelson Mandela Elementary School
- Technology High School awarded Blue Ribbon Status

X. Superintendent's Report

The Superintendent reported to the Board on the following:

- Attendance: October 2023
- The Next Decade: 2020-30 Strategic Plan
 - Year 4, Quarter 1 Highlights
- Financial Quarterly Highlights
- Middle States Accreditation
- Newark Enrolls
- Saturday School

Superintendent León answered the board members' questions.

XI. Public Participation

Ms. Wilson reviewed the guidelines for the public participation. The comments of the following speakers can be found on the Newark Board of Education's website under Board Meeting video archives:

- Lyndon Brown
- Cassandra Dock

XII. Finance & Operations

There was motion made by Mr. Gonzalez, seconded by Ms. Haynes, to approve Finance & Operations items 12.1 – 12.22.

Moved: Mr. Gonzalez

Seconded: Ms. Haynes

Roll call vote:

Yeas: Ms. Garcia, Mr. Gonzalez, Ms. Haynes, Ms. James-Frison, Ms. Murray-Thomas
Ms. Santana, Ms. Williams, and Mr. Council 8

Nays: None 0

Abstentions: None 0

Motion carried by roll call vote.

XIII. Personnel Votes

There was a motion made by Ms. Garcia, seconded by Ms. Haynes, to approve Personnel items 14-1 – 14.7.

Moved: Ms. Garcia

Seconded: Ms. Haynes

Roll call vote:

Yeas: Ms. Garcia, Mr. Gonzalez, Ms. Haynes, Ms. James-Frison, Ms. Murray-Thomas
Ms. Santana, Ms. Williams, and Mr. Council 8

Nays: None 0

Abstentions: None 0

Motion carried by roll call vote.

XIV. Instruction & Programs – Votes

There was a motion made by Ms. Murray-Thomas, seconded by Ms. Garcia, to approve Instruction and Programs items 16.1 – 16.7.

Moved: Ms. Murray-Thomas

Seconded: Ms. Garcia

Roll call vote:

Yeas: Ms. Garcia, Mr. Gonzalez, Ms. Haynes, Ms. James-Frison, Ms. Murray-Thomas
Ms. Santana, Ms. Williams, and Mr. Council 8

Nays: None 0

Abstentions: None 0

Motion carried by roll call vote.

XV. Adjournment

There was a motion made by Mr. Gonzalez, seconded by Ms. Garcia to adjourn the meeting.

Moved: Mr. Gonzalez

Seconded: Ms. Garcia

Voice vote:

Yeas: Ms. Garcia, Mr. Gonzalez, Ms. Haynes, Ms. James-Frison, Ms. Murray-Thomas
Ms. Santana, Ms. Williams, and Mr. Council 8

Nays: None 0

Abstentions: None 0

Motion Carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:18 pm.

Submitted by:

Ms. La Shon Blake, Board Relations

Reviewed by:

Ms. Valerie Wilson, Board Secretary

Approved by:

Mr. Roger León, Superintendent