



Wednesday, January 10, 2024
Regular Public Board Meeting
Orange Board of Education
Administration Building
Roll Call 6:00 p.m.

Minutes of **Wednesday, January 10, 2024, Public Meeting** of the Orange Board of Education held at 6:00 pm.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Shawneque Johnson is presiding over tonight's Meeting.

- Ms. Shawneque Johnson, President
- Mrs. Sueann Gravesande
- Mr. Derrick Henry
- Ms. Samantha Crockett
- Dr. Fatimah Turner
- Mr. Siaka Sherif
- Mr. Jeffrey Wingfield
- Mr. David Armstrong
- Mr. Tyrone Tarver

ROLL CALL (9) PRESENT (0) ABSENT (0) NOT PRESENT AT ROLL CALL

ALSO PRESENT:

- Dr. Gerald Fitzhugh II, Superintendent of Schools
- Mr. Jason Ballard, Business Administrator
- Mr. Lamont Zachary, Assistant Business Administrator
- Ms. Jessika Kleen, School Board Attorney with the firm of Machado Law Group
- Mr. Oluwatitofunmi (Tito) Oshuntolu, Student Representative

2. FLAG SALUTE

A. EXECUTIVE SESSION

1. *Recess Into Executive Session – Closed*

Ms. Johnson motioned to convene into Executive Session. Will Recess until 6:45 pm but no later than 7:30pm.

Motion by David Armstrong, second by Sueann Gravesande.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Yea: Shawneque Johnson, Jeffrey Wingfield, David Armstrong, Samantha Crockett, Sueann Gravesande, Derrick Henry, Siaka Sherif, Fatimah Turner, Tyrone Tarver

ROLL CALL (9) YEA (0) NAY (0) ABSTAIN (0) NOT PRESENT AT VOTE



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2. *Return to Open Session*

Ms. Johnson motions to close the Executive session and move into a public meeting.

Motion by David Armstrong, second by Jeffrey Wingfield.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Yea: Shawneque Johnson, Jeffrey Wingfield, David Armstrong, Samantha Crockett, Sueann Gravesande, Derrick Henry, Siaka Sherif, Fatimah Turner, Tyrone Tarver

ROLL CALL (9) YEA (0) NAY (0) ABSTAIN (0) NOT PRESENT AT VOTE

- **SWEARING IN CEREMONY FOR NEWLY ELECTED BOARD MEMBERS**

Mr. Ballard swore in re-elected board member:

- Samantha Crockett

3. *Recess Into Executive Session – Closed*

Motion to convene into Executive Session. Will Recess until 6:45 pm but no later than 7:30pm.

Motion by David Armstrong, second by Samantha Crockett.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Yea: Shawneque Johnson, Jeffrey Wingfield, David Armstrong, Samantha Crockett, Sueann Gravesande, Derrick Henry, Siaka Sherif, Fatimah Turner, Tyrone Tarver

ROLL CALL (9) YEA (0) NAY (0) ABSTAIN (0) NOT PRESENT AT VOTE

4. *Return to Open Session*

Ms. Johnson motions to close the Executive session and move into a public meeting.

Motion by Fatimah Turner, second by Sueann Gravesande.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Yea: Shawneque Johnson, Jeffrey Wingfield, David Armstrong, Samantha Crockett, Sueann Gravesande, Derrick Henry, Siaka Sherif, Fatimah Turner, Tyrone Tarver

ROLL CALL (9) YEA (0) NAY (0) ABSTAIN (0) NOT PRESENT AT VOTE

B. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT - OLUWATITOFUNMI (TITO) AYODELE OSHUNTOLU

Ms. Johnson introduced Oluwatitofunmi (Tito) Oshuntolu, Student Representative.

Mr. Oshuntolu extended his thanks and stated, "It's a pleasure to stand before you as a student representative ready to embark on a journey of a new academic year filled with possibilities and opportunities as we step into this new chapter. I can't help but feel a sense of excitement for what lies ahead. The start of a new year is like a blank canvas waiting to be painted with our experiences, achievements, and memories. I believe that together as a united community, we can make this year truly memorable. Our Orange District community is known for its diversity,



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talent, and vibrant spirit. It's these qualities that make our school special. I'm committed to being your voice in ensuring that our collective concerns and ideas are heard. Thank you. ”

C. SUPERINTENDENT'S PRESENTATION

Ms. Johnson introduces Dr. Fitzhugh for his Superintendent report.

Superintendent's Report

- Dr. Fitzhugh recognized that January is School Board Appreciation Month, and distributed certificates of appreciation for their service and dedication to the school district students and staff.
- Dr. Fitzhugh highlighted the scholarships received as of January 2024:
 - Orange High School has accrued **\$4,317,500** and we're only in January.
 - STEM Innovation Academy of the Oranges have amassed **\$4,195,280**.
 - **Grand total of over \$8.5 million.**
 - This time last year we had about **\$5 million**.

Dr. Fitzhugh provides the community with a presentation of district highlights such as:

- **STUDENT OF THE MONTH FOR DECEMBER 2023**

Name of School	Student of the Month	Name of School	Student of the Month
Central Elementary School	Austin Lema	Orange High School	Oluwatobi Etuk
Cleveland Street School	Teranique Williams	Orange Preparatory Academy	Ramatulai Sherif
Forest Street Community School	Emily Ramos Lopez	Park Avenue School	Mack Allen Desna
Heywood Avenue School	Cali-Lynn Clark	Rosa Parks Community School	Paola Morocho
Lincoln Avenue School	Janaye Morocho	STEM Innovation Academy of the Oranges	Farah Mostak
Oakwood Avenue Community School	Sabella Jones	The Twilight Program	Andy Mingo-Morocho

- **IMPORTANT UPDATES**

- **School District Closings:** Dr. Fitzhugh reminded everyone that Monday, January 15, 2024, the Orange School District will be closed in observance of Dr. Martin Luther King, Junior's Birthday, and reopen on Tuesday, January 16, 2024. The district will also have the Martin Luther King Invitational starting at 1:00 PM at Orange High School.
- **Communications Officer:** Dr. Fitzhugh introduced Mr. Eshaya Draper as the new Communications Officer for the district.
- **Preschool Registration:** Dr. Fitzhugh highlighted the Preschool registration dates on January 23rd & 30th from 10 AM to 12 PM at Orange Early Childhood Center. Any questions about registration, please email prekindergartenregistration@orange.k12.nj.us.
- **Seal of Biliteracy:** *The Seal Biliteracy is an award given by the New Jersey Department of Education in recognition of students who have studied and attained proficiency in at least one language, in addition to English, by high school graduation. Those students that are part of the syllabi literacy, if they are awarded this prize, it will be on their transcript.*
 - **OHS** - Last year we had 16 students, this year we have 29 students.
 - **STEM** - Last year we had 11 students, this year we have 8 students.



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- **TWILIGHT U** - Last year we had 1 student, this year we have 3 students.
- Our total from last year to this year for OPS, 28 to 40 students. We are seeing improvements holistically.

- **FACILITIES UPDATE**

Mr. Ballard introduced Mr. Vasquez, Manager of Buildings and Grounds. Mr. Vasquez gave the monthly report.

- Thorough cleaning and disinfecting occurs daily for all touch points in the building (Took the opportunity over the winter break to enter every classroom and we do what we call the “high low cleaning”. Disinfected and cleaned everything. We waxed and stripped floors in our high traffic areas, such as the cafeteria hallways in preparation for the new year.)
- Walk-throughs of all district school facilities
- Meetings between the District and PCI are held regularly based on updates related to COVID-19 mandates and expectations
- Facility projects continue so we can ensure a safe and clean learning environment for our children and staff.
- In November and December, we focused on our boilers and getting everything done, making sure that we are maintaining our buildings and we're still doing our renovations.

- **Project Updates**

- **Oakwood Avenue Community School:** During the walkthroughs, the Facilities Team spoke to the administrators, their concern was the fence that was out around the school building that needed to be repaired. The Facilities Team did a walkthrough and we realized it did need some repair. We removed the old fence. The installation of the new fence is completed.
- **John Robert Lewis Early Childhood Center:** The Facilities Team did a walkthrough and removed the old fence. The installation of the new fence is completed.
- **Rosa Parks Community School:** Mr. Vasquez stated, “Rosa Parks, we did some renovations in the boiler room. They're still ongoing. We have three boilers that I stated in previous meetings. And we're moving on to our second boiler. So we're doing our boilers one by one just so we can ensure that we have heat in the building. So these are the old boilers at Rosa Parks and they shouldn't look like that, but in the past we didn't have a preventative maintenance program. But under the new leadership, Mr. Ballard & Mr. Zachary, we do have a maintenance program. So once the new boilers are installed, they're going to last more than the 10 years that these boilers did. One new boiler is completely installed now. Second boiler was removed, new one's being installed now, that'll be completed on Monday on Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.”
 - The Facilities Team did a walkthrough and removed the old fence. The installation of the new fence is completed.
- **Orange High School:** in collaboration with the Athletic Department and Administration and Dr. Fitzhugh, we needed to redo our gym floor and construction of the new building. The gym became a storage area. The floor was basically destroyed and needed a face lift. So we collaborated together to showcase the new gymnasium floor. There is a new tornado logo.



- **Brightly System:** Work orders are being entered into Brightly (work order reporting system), from classroom lights being out to steam pipes breaking. The team and I, under the guidance of Mr. Ballard, will continue to address all issues as they are entered into the system. In doing so, we can ensure that we have a safe and clean learning environment for our children and staff.
 - The Facilities Team, under the direction of Mr. Ballard and Mr. Zachary, will continue to meet with the Schools Development Authority and Terminal Construction to make sure that there is progress related to the Construction at the Orange High School Punch-list items, the Cleveland Street School Project, and the OPA-II renovation in the gym that's about to start happening. We have work going on in the OPA-II auditorium. New sound system lighting.
 - Mr. Vasquez, Mr. Armstrong and the SDA did a walkthrough of the new Cleveland School, and the old building is unrecognizable. The project is moving along and going to be a beautiful building. The district is going to be on time for completion, and Mr. Vasquez will present new photos and the progress at the next board meeting. Hopefully in warmer months they will do another walkthrough with the Facilities Team to see the progress.
 - The Facilities Team will keep everybody abreast of what's going on and be transparent of what work we're doing and how we're completing it. Our goal is to meet our timelines and we've done so so far.

● **ATTENDANCE PRESENTATION FROM THE MONTH OF DECEMBER 2023**

Mrs. Lisa Spottswood-Brown, Manager of Data & District Homeless Liaison, gave the Attendance Presentation.

Absences Category	Cumulative Days Absent for the Month of December 2023
Low Chronic Absences	0 to 2.99 days
Modest Chronic Absences	3 to 4.99 days
Significant Chronic Absences	5 to 6.99 days
High Chronic Absences	7 days or more

*Students are chronically absent when excused or unexcused absences are equal to or greater than 10% of the total number of days enrolled in the school year.

Ms. Spottswood-Brown reported on the overview of our district-wide allotments.

- Low Chronic Absences = 42% of our students fit into that category.
- Modest chronic Absences = 26% of our students fit into that category.
- Significant Chronic Absences = 15% of our students fit into that category.
- High Chronic Absences = 16% of our students fit into that category, that's good.
- Overall our students are, 68% of our students are absent less than 4.99 days.
- Given all the challenges that we have now with Covid and the flu, our students are doing a great job at all levels.



Ms. Spottswood-Brown reported on the overview of the early childhood programs cumulative absences.

- Grades 3F and 4F display a balance across all attendance categories. As our early learners become acclimated with the daily attendance expectations of the school environment. Those numbers are about fair for what our students deal with at Grades 3F and 4F.

Ms. Spottswood-Brown reported on the overview of the kindergarten to grade seven cumulative absences.

- 60% of our students in K to seven have been absent less than 4.99 days.

Ms. Spottswood-Brown reported on the overview of the grades eight to grade 12 cumulative absences.

- 80% of our students in 8th to 12th grade fall into the low or modest categories.
- This year Twilight U is doing really well.

Ms. Spottswood-Brown reported on the overview of the district-wide cumulative absences for December 2023.

- There is a trend from 3F, which are the highest chronic absences at 43%. They descend to the grade 12 level to 8%. As our students get more acclimated into their education, they develop the routine of being present.

Ms. Spottswood-Brown reported on the overview of the district-wide daily percentage of the daily attendance for December 2023.

- For the month of December, the district had a total of 96% with the state average of 95%. So once again, we rose above that number.
- Ms. Spottswood-Brown thanked the faculty, the teachers, the attendance teams in the schools, which helped to make this report what it is to display and to show all of this information. It takes a team, it takes all of us.

Mr. Ballard noted on behalf of Dr. Fitzhugh the conclusion of the Superintendent's report.

D. BOARD MINUTES

Ms. Johnson motions to approve December 13, 2023, public meeting minutes.

Motion by David Armstrong, second by Derrick Henry.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Yea: Shawneque Johnson, Jeffrey Wingfield, David Armstrong, Samantha Crockett, Derrick Henry, Siaka Sherif, Fatimah Turner

Abstain: Sueann Gravesande, Tyrone Tarver

ROLL CALL (7) YEA (0) NAY (2) ABSTAIN (0) NOT PRESENT AT VOTE

Ms. Johnson motions to approve December 13, 2023, closed meeting minutes.

Motion by Jeffrey Wingfield, second by Derrick Henry.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Yea: Shawneque Johnson, Jeffrey Wingfield, David Armstrong, Samantha Crockett, Derrick Henry, Siaka Sherif, Fatimah Turner

Abstain: Sueann Gravesande, Tyrone Tarver

ROLL CALL (7) YEA (0) NAY (2) ABSTAIN (0) NOT PRESENT AT VOTE



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E. COMMITTEE REPORTS

Ms. Crockett reported on the Curriculum Committee which met on December 19, 2023 at 3:30 PM:

- One of the topics discussed was the Menzel Violin Donation that was donated to the district that would help benefit the ongoing strings program that we have within the district. Some instruments were donated, which is wonderful.
- Another topic was the Orange cohort, Bilingual TESOL Certification. There is a bilingual program that is on the agenda to implement. This will help ensure that 15 teachers within our district will go through a cohort model to support a bilingual certificate and certification. They will do this at Kean University, and the goal will be for this to happen either in the summer or starting in the fall, depending on the 15 teachers chosen to be a part of this program, it will be funded via tuition reimbursement. This is wonderful, just knowing that we'll have 15 teachers who are certified within the district through this program.
- They also discussed our French grades 3 to 5 curriculum, which took considerable work. She thanked everyone who put the project together to update our French curriculum, grades 3 to 5. This will begin to be implemented this month. This will also be aligned to the new French Language Curriculum that we have through Vista. The World Language Curricular Resources will go hand in hand with that, both the online and hard copy capabilities along with professional development.

Dr. Turner reported on the Public Relations Committee which met on January 3, 2024:

- Dr. Turner stated, "I often get people coming to me and saying what we are or what we are not doing in the district...it's at this meeting that we talk about all the things that we do in the district. The meeting is pretty lengthy and it's pretty descriptive. The people who are responsible for putting the meetings together, they take a lot of time to take pictures, to give us in detail all of the programs that we do throughout the district. So I urge you all to tune in to our meetings because they're informative...the district is doing its due diligence to keep everyone informed. If the information is there, you have to look at it. We can put the information out. But if you don't look at it, then you won't know."
- *Topics that were highlighted included:*
 - University of Orange
 - Collaboration with Ebenezer and Rosa Parks
 - 50 years of Hip-Hop Event
 - Superintendent Weekly Updates
 - Verizon Collaboration
 - Honors College
 - Congratulations to all the teachers who were nominated and who won the Governor's Educators of the Year.
 - All the students that applied for New Jersey City University were accepted
 - The Young Women's Leadership Summit on January 11, 2024.

Dr. Turner encourages everyone to attend the meetings or at the very least, email your questions to publicrelations@orange.k12.nj.us, so that we can address them.



Mr. Sherif reported on the Finance Committee which met on January 4, 2024 at 5:30 PM:

Mr. Sherif highlighted that the Finance Committee discussed a few issues with respect to finance. He stated, "I want for everybody to know the district is doing good with finance. We are repairing things. We're taking action immediately with STEM. Yesterday there was no light. Anything. Today it is back on and students are going to school. So we are there for the case and we're making sure that things are working. We have a few facilities requests, one from our old football player. He is requesting to use the field for training. He is going to also give us some token and some fees. So that brings some finance also to the district. We always meet to review the finances of the district."

"We are getting into business with all our accounts being very nice. We have all the time we meet to discuss, make recommendations to the entire board for approval. So we are recommending six items on the agenda today for approval as a resolution. And those agenda items are on tonight for approval. We are trying to make sure that things are working for the district, all the requests for facilities are working. Last meeting we discussed that some payment was not being made to the district for facilities requests, but everything is on pause. Now according to the BA, everything is working. We are getting the money for use of our facility. We are doing well. Budget is coming soon and we are waiting for the Governor to give his announcement. And if the announcement is done and we know where we stand, I hope we can be standing in a very pretty place that will help our district."

F. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Ms. Johnson requests for a motion to open public comments.

Motion by Derrick Henry, second by David Armstrong.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Yea: Shawneque Johnson, Jeffrey Wingfield, David Armstrong, Samantha Crockett, Sueann Gravesande, Derrick Henry, Siaka Sherif, Fatimah Turner, Tyrone Tarver

ROLL CALL (9) YEA (0) NAY (0) ABSTAIN (0) NOT PRESENT AT VOTE

- **Ms. Singleton - 467 Fairview Avenue, Orange, NJ**
 - Ms. Singleton stated, "It's not really a question for a board member or anything, it's just a general urge to parents to please update those telephone numbers inside of Genesis. Email Addresses. Because children should not be sitting outside the school for over two hours because you didn't get the message. We have ClassDojo, we have email, we have text messages, we have phone blasts. You need to update your information."

Dr. Fitzhugh stated, "One of the most important pieces is that if you decline the call or you put it on a block, you won't get the information. So I urge our parents to please unblock because there's too much information that goes out there that is important. I know we have social media and we have the Orange App and we have the website, et cetera, the blasts. But in addition, we have to make sure that holistically you're getting the information. You get the information by making sure that your number is not blocked. So for those that have blocked their numbers, I'm



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going to give you a strategy and ask you to please unblock tonight. That is my urge. I know from my office, but I'm certain the board agrees. Please unblock your numbers."

Ms. Johnson motions to close public comments.

Motion by Siaka Sherif, second by Samantha Crockett.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Yea: Shawneque Johnson, Jeffrey Wingfield, David Armstrong, Samantha Crockett, Sueann Gravesande, Derrick Henry, Siaka Sherif, Fatimah Turner, Tyrone Tarver

ROLL CALL (9) YEA (0) NAY (0) ABSTAIN (0) NOT PRESENT AT VOTE

G. BOARD RESOLUTIONS

Ms. Johnson motions to approve the consent agenda including all agenda items, HR agenda and HIB cases.

Ms. Crockett highlighted two items on the agenda for approval tonight.

- The Bob Bynum Match Point Tennis Program that will bring a certified elite professional coach to facilitate tennis and programming at Orange High School.
- The other is the \$11,000 payment for the use of Bell Stadium. She thinks it is really creative to be able to get payments for use of the facilities and donations. They are filming a movie there and they agree to pay \$11,000 plus a donation collectively for that project.

Mr. Ballard commended his team on both the operations and finance side. He would not be able to do all the things that we do without them. It's a team effort and he values and appreciates all that they do and will continue to do.

Mr. Tarver had a question about the monthly transfer report. He stated, "Just so everyone here knows. Each year there's a certain amount of money appropriated to different categories within the district. What state law says is once the board approves those numbers appropriated for each category, the state has a limit on how much we can transfer out and a limited 10% of the original budget. But I'm noticing one item here that I didn't need a finance report or a public relations report comment on. For general administration, we are above that 10% limit. So if either the BA or Superintendent can address the reason for us being over the 10% limit and also if we've gotten permission from the state to exceed that amount."

- Mr. Ballard noted, "So just one quick point of clarification, we are able to transfer an excess of the 10%. If you go above the 10%, you have to seek county approval."
- Mr. Zahary stated, "I don't have the information in front of me right now for what you're asking, but I can get that to you tomorrow. But again, anytime we do go over that 10%, we send a document to the county that's signed, letting them know that we went over. But I'll get that to you tomorrow. Just let me know exactly which account you want the information for."
- Mr. Ballard noted, "you have to do that before you do the transfer, which is one of the reasons why when we made the switch over to Genesis, it's much more user friendly and it's very transparent. So when the transfers go in and out, everyone can see where they are. We try to really push for a



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robust budget process when we do the budgeting season, and I'm looking at my colleagues out in the audience, they know that Mrs. Zachary, myself and Dr. Fitzhugh, were very meticulous in how we budget, where we pretty much break things out in every single line item almost to the penny."

- Mr. Ballard also noted that with Budgeting, "There could be some things that change or some deviations that occurred during the year, but whenever that does occur, we make sure we follow the proper protocols. Ms. Gravesande, it's actually one of her pet peeves on the finance committee that we go through those transfers and we make sure that we clearly articulate what happens. I'm happy to report that after we've made the switch to the new system, we've reduced drastically the amount of transfers that we have on a monthly basis. So coming into the home stretch with graduations and field trips and all that stuff, you may see some savings in certain categories where the teachers and the principals want to do other field trips and things of that nature. So there are likely to be some additional transfers that are coming up for those particular items. But overall, we're getting ready to close the budget so it'll be capped on certain things that happen because we're going into that budget season."
- Mr. Tarver stated, "looking over the report, I would see the previous year, maybe anywhere between \$10k and \$15k worth of transfers, which total amount came nowhere near the 10%. But this year some of these categories are over \$200,000 in transfers. We're still not near our limit in those other categories, but it is a drastic increase from the amount of transfers that occurred last year."
- Mr. Ballard noted, "We're going to get that information for you so we can let you know exactly what those transfers relate to. But we try to put things in a catchall type of category so that it's easier to transfer in and out. So it's easy to be justifiable. We don't want to put line items on items like textbooks and things of that nature. So we try to put in a miscellaneous category or administrative category. So when we transfer money to and from and we have the supporting documentation, it's easier to point to. It's more transparent."
- Vice President Gravesande abstained from anything related to Jeremy Gravesande.

Vice President Gravesande abstained from anything related to Jeremy Gravesande.

Mr. Wingfield abstained from anything related to Montclair State University.

Motion by Jeffrey Wingfield, second by Samantha Crockett.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Yea: Shawneque Johnson, Jeffrey Wingfield, David Armstrong, Samantha Crockett, Sueann Gravesande, Derrick Henry, Siaka Sherif, Fatimah Turner

Abstain: Tyrone Tarver

ROLL CALL (8) YEA (0) NAY (1) ABSTAIN (0) NOT PRESENT AT VOTE



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H. BOARD COMMENTS

Ms. Johnson asked Dr. Turner to announce the upcoming District Meeting dates.

District Meetings - Public

1. Public Relations Committee Virtual Meeting - Wednesday, February 7, 2024, at 4:00 pm
2. Orange Board Education Public Board Meeting - Tuesday, February 13, 2024 at 7:30 p.m., held at Orange Board Of Education, Administrative Building, Board Conference Room, 451 Lincoln Avenue, Orange, NJ, 07050. Will Recess until 6:45pm, but no later than 7:30pm

District Meetings - Closed

1. Curriculum Committee Virtual Meeting - Tuesday, January 30, 2023 at 3:30pm
2. Facilities Committee Virtual Meeting - Monday, February 5, 2024 at 3:30pm
3. Special Education Committee Virtual Meeting - Tuesday, February 6, 2024, 3:30pm
4. Policy Committee Virtual Meeting - Thursday, February 8, 2024, at 4pm
5. Finance Committee Virtual Meeting - Thursday, February 8, 2024, at 5:30pm
6. Human Resource Committee Virtual Meeting - Monday, February 12, 2024, at 4:00pm

Ms. Johnson asked the board to make a comment.

- Mr. Tarver wished everyone a Happy Holiday.
- Mr. Henry implored parents and professionals to update their contact information. That way in case something happens to their children, the district does not have to guess the best way to contact them.
- Mr. Armstrong stated that he is looking forward to a fantastic 2024 school year. He thanked all of his board colleagues, and gave a special our very own Student Rep. (Tito) who comes to every meeting. Tito is setting up to be our next elected board member real soon.
- Dr. Turner emphasized the importance of showing grace to one another. She urged people to bear with each other and to be understanding. Dr. Turner noted that everyone is dealing with something, whether it's colleagues or family members. She encouraged people to ask for permission before unloading their problems onto someone else. People should check if the other person has the capacity to handle what they are about to share. Dr. Turner highlighted that mental and emotional health is crucial, especially after the holidays and the new year. People are trying to cope, and urged everyone to give each other space and grace.
- Mr. Wingfield gave his thanks and kudos to the faculty, staff, administration and our student representative.
- Mrs. Gravesande expressed her gratitude to Dr. Fitzhugh for recognizing the team's efforts. She mentioned her love for the job, despite not being compensated, and her desire to enhance the district's sports



program. She emphasized the importance of supporting students' extracurricular activities and ensuring coaches have the necessary resources. She then addressed Tito, encouraging him to come up with tangible suggestions to support students. Mrs. Gravesande also expressed pride in the STEM students receiving scholarships, including her own son. She urged for more collaboration between the two high schools, particularly in sports activities. Lastly, Ms. Gravesande thanked the public, students, and staff for their contributions. She acknowledged that the board cannot succeed without their support and will take that into consideration for the rest of the year.

- Ms. Crockett wished everyone a Happy Holiday.
- Mr. Sherif thanked everyone for their presence and expressed his excitement for a fruitful collaboration with the board members and a productive working relationship with the administration and the board. He gave special recognition to the outstanding work of the board attorney, Ms. Kleen, in defending the board members in the district. He commended the administrations for their excellent work, stating that it feels good to hear about the progress and learning of his kids in the district. As a parent with kids in the district, he is thrilled when they are recognized for their achievements.
- Mr. Sherif emphasized the importance of education, stating that it is the most valuable asset that children can receive. He promised to do everything in his power to ensure that the children receive a proper education. He acknowledged that money and property are essential, but education is what empowers children to succeed in any society. He reminded everyone that the children are the future and will carry on after they are gone. Therefore, it is crucial to provide them with the best education possible. Mr. Sherif concluded by expressing his gratitude and promising to do his best for the children's education.
- Ms. Johnson expressed gratitude to Dr. Fitzhugh for his dedication and hard work despite being sick. She also thanked the staff for their tireless efforts and acknowledged the challenges faced by board members, emphasizing the need for appreciation and support. She emphasized the demanding nature of the board member role and the lack of compensation, highlighting the importance of feeling valued and supported. Ms. Johnson also stressed the love and commitment of the board members to the children and staff, while also expressing the need for recognition and understanding of the sacrifices made.
- Ms. Johnson urged Dr. Fitzhugh to prioritize his health and family, emphasizing the importance of self-care. She also publicly thanked Mr. Zachary for his exceptional work and dedication, acknowledging his significant contributions to the school district. Additionally, she expressed appreciation for the Executive Director Team and Ms. Singleton, recognizing their hard work and valuable contributions to the board and the school district.
- Mr. Ballard gave his recognition to Mr. Zachary by stating, "I just want to say again, and I've said this on record many times, I got the best Assistant BA in the state and I would say that through and through he and I, we go at it. You know what I'm saying? Because we want to make sure we do the best, but he is the brains behind a lot of the operations that we have. So I will publicly thank him as well."



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Ms. Johnson moves to have the meeting adjourned.

Motion by Derrick Henry, second by Samantha Crockett.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Yea: Shawneque Johnson, Jeffrey Wingfield, David Armstrong, Samantha Crockett, Sueann Gravesande, Derrick Henry, Siaka Sherif, Fatimah Turner, Tyrone Tarver

ROLL CALL (9) YEA (0) NAY (0) ABSTAIN (0) NOT PRESENT AT VOTE