

Minutes of **Wednesday March 8, 2023, Public Meeting** of the Orange Board of Education held at 6:00 pm.

**Shawneque Johnson is presiding over tonight's Meeting.**

Ms. Sueann Gravesande

Mr. Derrick Henry

Ms. Samantha Crockett

Ms. Fatimah Turner, Ph.D.

Mr. Siaka Sherif (absent)

Ms. Shawneque Johnson, President

Mr. Jeffrey Wingfield

Mr. David Armstrong

Mr. Tyrone Tarver

**ROLL CALL (7) PRESENT (2) ABSENT**

**ALSO PRESENT:**

- Dr. Gerald Fitzhugh II, Superintendent of Schools
- Mr. Jason Ballard, School Business Administrator/Board Secretary
- Mr. Lamont Zachary, Assistant Business Administrator/Board Secretary
- Ms. Jessika Kleen, School Board Attorney with the firm of Machado Law Group

**FLAG SALUTE**

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

**Moved by Mr. Armstrong Seconded by Ms. Crockett**

**ROLL CALL (8) YEA (0) NAY (0) ABSTAIN**

Ms. Johnson communicates that the district's student representative Ms. Sukanya Salmon will not be joining the board meeting tonight.

**Superintendent's Report**

Dr. Fitzhugh communicates to the community February's STAR students.

Dr. Fitzhugh communicates to the community the district's scholarships update.

Dr. Fitzhugh communicates that the scholarship totals for the Orange High School and STEM Innovation Academy of the Oranges. As shared previously, I will report out on scholarships, so the community and Board of Education are very much aware of information in real time. OHS - \$8,157,864, and STEM - \$9,097,208, total as of March 6, \$17, 255.072.

Dr. Fitzhugh introduces Mr. Scutari to discuss the importance of aligning the district goals to that of the Strategic plan we always report out on data right and so this month we did it in curriculum committee, but we felt it was so important to share the findings with the community and with that being said.

Mr. Scutari communicates to the Winter 2022-2023 community Diagnostic and Interim data for the areas of mathematics and science.

Mr. Scutari communicates assessments throughout the year so we start with Diagnostics in the fall then have the first diagnostic was given in September the second one was at the end of December and then we gave an interim assessment in January.

Mr. Scutari communicates grades k through eight and as you track across we start it basically assess the students on their grade level whether they're on grade level below grade level so have you so you start from the right and move to the left at the right we have our students who are on or above grade level and then we have students that are early on grade level and provides the community with percentages for grades K-8.

Mr. Scutari communicates the winter data and percentages for science grades K-8.

Mr. Scutari introduces Ms. Harris to discuss English Language Arts winter data for 2022-2023.

Ms. Harris communicates aware that we have two new assessments this year we have a new assessment in our K2 grade band and then a new assessment in our grades three through eight grade band we are basing those assessments on the science of reading which tells us that there is a simple view of reading you must have word recognition and language comprehension so you will notice in our younger grade levels K to 2<sup>nd</sup> .

Ms. Harris communicates that the district assess word recognition and all of the breakdown within that area and as we move up in grade level we assess and with that said our K2 data speaks to the definition of Benchmark being students are ready for the next phase or the prerequisite skills for reading.

Ms. Harris communicates the benchmark goals within Acadience.

Ms. Harris communicates the components that the district looks at: in kindergarten is first sound fluency being able to differentiate the first sound of a word being able to identify that sound so our kindergartners in the beginning of the year were assessed on first sound fluency and then again in December this is a three-month period a time span between the two and so you can see that we have some areas to grow the beauty of doing this new assessment gives us Direction and we become more precise and in the areas that we want to support or that we need to support our students in second grade in first grade you're noticing that we're focusing on nonsense word fluency we use nonsense words fluency to ascertain if kids can if students can decode and so you'll notice that in the beginning of the year we had a percentage of students that were ready for that phase of the of recognizing first sound fluency and then as we move to December we lost a few really important to note the state I'm going to speak to it when we finish and we the K2 span we move on to second grade and in second grade we are working on oral reading fluency specifically words correct how many words in a series did the students read accurately foreign

Ms. Harris communicates grades K-2 next steps for the district and goes over the districts reading growth measures for grades 3-8.

Ms. Harris provides the community with the districts next steps for grades 3-8 and its emphasis on language comprehension. extremely important for teachers to see that connection across the span because this is a reading assessment the Benchmark is reading and writing and reading and writing one is inhaling and the other

is exhaling so we have to pay attention to the connection between the two we focused our coaching cycles and worked with teachers one-on-one not just in modeling but talking through the planning to move students and we readjusted our pacing guides.

Ms. Harris communicates to the community grades 9-12 data and its next step on moving forward.

Ms. Harris communicates how teachers dig deeper using the growth measure platform such as View class breakdown - to identify students in buckets based upon reading and language sub scores (create groupings), Go to the Standards Report to select specific standards level performance by grade and anchor standard (some are broken down to the sub skill level) Identify students to see where they were successful and where they stumbled. Review the Skills Breakdown for the module to further attack student deficits at the sub skill level.

Ms. Harris communicates the districts benchmark data from module 2 for each grade level and what students were able to accomplish. Most students were able to identify how the main character responds to her circumstances in both passages. Identify how the main character functions within her society in both passages and some students struggled to identify and support their claim with specific details from each passage and write a fully elaborated essay that provides insight and commentary on each character's circumstances.

Ms. Harris turns the presentation back to Dr. Fitzhugh.

Dr. Fitzhugh communicates attendance presentation for the month of February. Categories low chronic absences zero to 4.99 days modest chronic 5 to 7.99 days significant chronic 8 to 10.99 days and finally High chronic absences 11 days or more our graph the majority of our students fall within the low chronic to modest chronic right so between 0 to 4.99 days to five to seven point nine days.

Dr. Fitzhugh communicates the importance of attending school every day.

Dr. Fitzhugh introduces Mr. Vasquez to go over facilities update throughout the district.

Mr. Vasquez communicates that Thorough Cleaning Daily and Disinfecting of all touch points in the building (examples include but are not limited to Door handles, bathrooms, entrances, exits, and handrails). Walk-through of all school district facilities. PCI and District Meetings based on Updates related to COVID-19 mandates and expectations. Facility projects continued so we can Ensure a safe and clean learning environment for our children and staff.

Ms. Vasquez communicates that Oakwood has brought to the facilities team's attention that the tile in room 3 was damaged and became a trip hazard. Under the direction of the facilities team, we removed the broken tiles and replaced them with new tiles. The following slides will show you what was done over the winter break. The team decided not to just replace the broken tiles but the whole section of room 3. The Facilities team took advantage of the winter break and addressed the issue in the classroom restroom. The floor in the bathroom was damaged and the floor was extremely weak. The following slide will show what was completed.

Mr. Vasquez provides the community with before and after pictures of the repairs.

Mr. Vasquez communicates Lincoln Avenue School; had several issues with our heating and cooling systems. The facilities team invested time in troubleshooting and fixing the problem. With the help of the vendor TRANE, we are moving in the right direction. During the winter break, Trane was onsite replacing the unit on the roof that controls the gymnasium and repairing the issues with the chiller.

Mr. Vasquez communicates to the community that the team and him will continue to make sure that there is progress related to the Construction at the Orange High School renovation project.

Dr. Fitzhugh communicates the community with district updates. Page Turners has returned I know this is one of the initiatives from the office of humanity so if you have not begun the challenge begin the challenge already just as a reminder.

Dr. Fitzhugh communicates The Orange Public Schools is pleased to announce the "early" launch of our application for our 2023 Summer Programming opportunities for STAFF. Our programs provide summer school teaching, professional development, curriculum and assessment writing employment opportunities for teachers, support staff, paraprofessionals, and interns districtwide. Please visit the 2023 Summer Programming website at <https://sites.google.com/orange.k12.nj.us/summer2023/> to get more information about school and district summer programs.

Dr. Fitzhugh communicates Orange Public Schools is pleased to announce the launch of our 2023 Summer School application. Our programs provide remediation, enrichment, credit recovery, and extended learning opportunities for students, ensuring a diverse and comprehensive array of offerings districtwide. Applications are due March 10! Send questions to reopeningofschools@orange.k12.nj.us.

Dr. Fitzhugh communicates parent teacher conference dates and times.

This concludes the superintendent's report.

Ms. Johnson motions to approve February 15, 2023, closed meeting minutes.

**Moved by Ms. Turner Seconded by Ms. Crockett**

**ROLL CALL (7) YEA (1) NAY (0)ABSTAIN**

**Facilities Meeting:** Mr. Armstrong communicates that the committee convened public announcements and reminders and reviews with facilities meeting discussion norm. discussion was how are we going to facility use requests at forestry Community School facilities repair and Redevelopment projects a brief update the continuous custodian maintenance Endeavor was presented as you all know Mr. Vasquez just gave an excellent presentation on those updates and does not want to repeat the same thing.

**Public Relations:** Dr. Turner arts off by saying happy women's history month and day thank you.

Wednesday March 1st at 4 pm We Begin the meeting as we always do with Mr. Devon providing an update on covid-19 protocols. Mr. Davone advised us that he placed an additional order of a thousand covid-19 kits and that the kits will continue to be provided to staff and students to per household kits will be distributed within two days of notification by the school nurse we asked Mr. Devon how were parents being notified he said that notifications go out to parents staff and students in their backpacks and also notifications are available on the school website in addition to Kits being provided he also let us know that we are still offering in-person testing by JL Hudson Holdings and there's also a banner on the school website where staff and students can sign up to be tested he also advised us that there is an average of 200 to 300 tests per month. Mr. Devon went over some highlights from the month of February I won't name them all but I will mention a few we went over the black history recognitions including one by Miss Perkins our district information officer we highlighted parent University which included health and wellness the Workforce Development Academy Cisco networking event and as part of our Orange Page Turner initiative as it stands the page Turners have read 400to 4029 830 books pages read 400,000 and lastly we highlighted the virtual book club reading of uh Finding Me by Viola Davis which was an awesome segue into Women's History Month and our young women's Leadership Summit which is coming up which we are super excited to see a few other highlights was National School counseling day we celebrated the hundred days of school the Rosa Parks Winter Dance the black history bowl at Forest Street School African print day the yes we can black history program the game night which I loved and the arch the art show at the board of education and the black boss ball I encourage you all to log into our Public Relations Committee meetings as they are extremely informative and engaging thanks to Mr. Devon.

**Curriculum Meeting:** Ms. Crockett communicates that curriculum meeting that took place we actually just went over them on the slides went over all the data points I did want to highlight a few things that came out of our conversation I think one was just how we're using the data in the district to drive instructions and um and just updates to the pacing guide to ensure the teachers are able to just re-teach or just I'll just hold it and then the other part remember we spoke about as well was attendance incentives to ensure that students are coming for their tests I think we're giving out widgets for like their Crocs but again just some of the conversations that came out of curriculum outside of just those slides that we went over today and that is all thank you Miss Karen.

**Public Comments:** Tisa Singleton, community member, and staff, communicates that she is very disappointed the current state of our board as a union member that utilizes the opportunities to attend various conferences throughout the U.S therefore I mean a diverse group of people uh surprisingly at a recent conference it was told they're interested in watching our board meetings with popcorn as a parent I might allow my children to argue at home but they should never openly show their decision in front of others lastly from a voter's perspective we are interested in what you all have to say

however before January the board used to be a family and everyone had their turn to openly speak presently we have become privy to disagreements between amongst you all that should be resolved during closed session so tonight I am asking to all board members so please be heard because we voted for you all our children are depending on your collaboration thank you.

**This concludes public comments.**

Ms. Johnson motions to approve a consent agenda removing J1.

Ms. Johnson asks Mr. Taver if there is anything he would like to discuss.

Mr. Taver communicates that he has questions regarding J5 budget transfer number 6282. No description as why this money is being transferred. What was the correct amount asked for and appropriated when the board first approved this and why is this invoice still outstanding.

Mr. Zachary communicates that this is related to Medical Services that are needed for students throughout the district for drug testing so what happened was this was an invoice that was old and previous that I guess got sent and it wasn't paid so we had to transfer money to that particular account so that we would make sure that the expenditure came from the correct account so that's why this transfer that's what it's for going forward we will make sure that the transfer is more descriptive in what it's for.

Mr. Tavar inquires about transfer 6289 description is also miscellaneous items.

Mr. Zachary communicates that this particular transfer is for graduation, and the various items that is needed for graduation, and that actual account is named the miscellaneous expenditures by the New Jersey chart of accounts. The justification for this one is for a field trip so the money is being used to cover the actual admission fees for the field trip.

Ms. Johnson makes Mr. Tavar aware that the comment section it explains what the transfer is for and if the document is pulled up all clarifications will be listed on there.

Mr. Tavar inquires about transfer 6290 transfer concerning contracted services.

Mr. Zachary responds to Mr. Tavar the 500 line it just needed to be appropriated to the 512 line for the actual buses for the field trip and on the 890 line for the admissions for the field trip and I believe this is a senior field trip for the Orange High School so contractor services but for bus services. Transportation line that's what's given to us by the new by the state of New Jersey.

Mr. Tavar communicates that agenda item N1 as I stated at last month's meeting I do not agree with the district policy uh that seems contrary to state law state law says that a member of the public only has to wait seven days before the district who illegally has to provide responsive records or documents to the member of the public that requested him this amendment to our district policy now states that a board member can be made to wait up to 10 days before documents are provided to them um I don't like this change it doesn't make sense to me or a board member has to wait for district documents longer than the member of the public.

Ms. Martinez board attorney communicates to Mr. Tavar that this policy amendment is legal and if he would like to explain in detail privately, she can do so.

**Moved by Dr. Turner Seconded by Mr. Armstrong**

**ROLL CALL (6) YEA (0) NAY (1) ABSTAIN (1) ABSENT**

## **BOARD RESOLUTIONS**

Ms. Johnson motions to approve J1.

**Moved by Mr. Wingfield Seconded by Dr. Turner**

**ROLL CALL (5) YEA (0) NAY (2) ABSTAIN (1) ABSENT**

Ms. Johnson motions to approve Human Resources agenda.

**Moved by Mr. Armstrong Seconded by Mr. Wingfield**

**ROLL CALL (7) YEA (0) NAY (0) ABSTAIN (1) ABSENT**

Mrs. Crockett makes the district aware of the scheduled meetings.

The curriculum virtual meeting will be held on March 28 at 3:30pm

The facility virtual meeting will be held on April 10 at 3:30pm

Public Relations virtual meeting will be held on April 12 at 4:00 pm

The financing committee virtual meeting will be held on March 2 at 5:30pm

Orange Board of Education public meeting will be held on April 19 at 7:30pm at OPA.

Policy Committee virtual meeting will be held on April 13 at 4:00pm.

Human Resource committee virtual meeting Monday April 17th at 5 30 pm.

## **Board Comments**

Ms. Johnson asks Mr. Tavar if he would like to make a comment tonight.

Mr. Tavar states that the only comment he has is that in January I believe the budget calendar was approved I still haven't heard any updates concerning the budget process for this year there were two finance committee meetings where the budget was supposed to be discussed I haven't heard any updates in the committee reports or on the finance meeting reports concerning the budget also on the budget calendar the board was supposed to vote to approve this budget I believe at a meeting on the 15th that's not on the calendar right now so at some point I would like an update.

Ms. Johnson asks Mr. Ballard to speak on Mr. Tavar's inquiry.

Mr. Ballard communicates that the governor just did the budget address for the state and when he provided the uh budget address for the state he also provided state aid that additional state aid or reduction of state aid was passed out to districts last week Thursday and Friday so as a district we are now working and reworking the numbers that we had previously put together for our budget as customary we will continue to update the full board as well as the finance committee on those changes so that we can have our public meetings and then ultimately we'll bring that budget to you all for a final vote.

Mr. Tavar asks Mr. Ballard if the calendar will be staying the same because the 15th and the budget is supposed to be submitted to the state on the 20<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Ballard communicates that our timelines are impacted by what the state does so if the state just pushes that information out we in turn then have to do what we need to do in order to finalize the budget and that's what we're currently working on.

Ms. Johnson communicates that everyone will get updated on April 25<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Ballard communicates that we are on target to reach our Milestones which is submitting the budget in a timely manner.

Mr. Tavar communicates that the full board was supposed to meet on the budget on March 15th right now there's no meeting scheduled on the calendar so when is the board going to have the opportunity to meet on the budget before it's submitted to the state by the March 20th deadline.

Mr. Zachary communicates that the board meetings were switched. we just got the information from the governor so we're currently we work in the budget as Mr. Ballard stated there will be a meeting with the finance committee regarding the budget and I believe we also will meet with other various members of the board separately to discuss it then we bring it to the board where we do our public hearing on April 25th and that is when we present and the budget is voted on the board is supposed to vote.

Mr. Tavar asks is that something statutory because yes I can send the paperwork over if you would like me to send that yeah please because personally I don't think only the facility commit excuse me personally I do not believe only the finance committee members should have the opportunity to comment on the budget before it's submitted to the state.

Mr. Ballard communicates the process on how the budget is approved and submitted to the state and will provide the correct documentation when available.

Ms. Kleen communicates that personnel questions cannot be discussed privately.

Ms. Johnson communicates that Mr. Ballard will send an email with an updated calendar that was approved because we just got the money last week so they must do what they have to do first he will send us an email with an update to the calendar.

Ms. Johnson moves to have meeting adjourned.

**Moved by Unable to detect Seconded by Unable to detect.**  
**ROLL CALL (8) YEA (0) NAY (1) ABSTAIN (0) ABSENT**