

MINUTES OF THE PATERSON BOARD OF EDUCATION SPECIAL MEETING

June 6, 2024 – 5:30 p.m.
Remote Meeting (via Zoom)

Presiding: Comm. Manuel Martinez, President

Present:

Dr. Laurie W. Newell, Superintendent of Schools
Dr. Rodney Henderson, Deputy Superintendent
Bryant Horsley, Esq., Souder, Shabazz & Woolridge, LLP
Boris Zaydel, Esq., Board Counsel

Comm. Oshin Castillo-Cruz
Comm. Valerie Freeman
Comm. Joel Ramirez

Comm. Mohammed Rashid
Comm. Nakima Redmon
Comm. Kenneth Simmons, Vice President

Absent:

Comm. Eddie Gonzalez

Comm. Della McCall

Comm. Martinez read the Open Public Meetings Act:

The New Jersey Open Public Meetings Act was enacted to insure the right of the public to have advance notice of, and to attend the meetings of the Paterson Public School District, as well as other public bodies at which any business affecting the interest of the public is discussed or acted upon.

In accordance with the provisions of this law, the Paterson Public School District has caused adequate and electronic notice of this meeting:

**Special Meeting
June 6, 2024 at 5:30 p.m.
Remote
90 Delaware Avenue
Paterson, New Jersey**

to be published by having the date, time and place posted in the office of the City Clerk of the City of Paterson, at the entrance of the Paterson Public School offices, on the district's website, and by sending notice of the meeting to the Arab Voice, El Diario, the Italian Voice, the North Jersey Herald & News, and The Record.

INTRODUCTIONS AND OVERVIEW

Dr. Laurie Newell: Good evening, Board Commissioners. I'm going to present a quick overview as to how the meeting will flow. We will be hearing from Ms. Kelly Mitchell as well as Ms. Charlene Peterson from New Jersey School Boards. They will be bringing us through the process, the self-evaluation, and the Superintendent's evaluation. Afterwards, I will take you through an overview of the Credit Recovery process that we have been working on and get an update from Hazard, Young, Attea & Associates, Dr.

Sean Joseph, to give us some further insights into the data that's been collected over these past weeks for the work that they have been doing in the school district. This will be covering Goals #1 and #2. Afterwards, Dr. Henderson will be talking about leading us through the Five Levers for Accelerating Achievement here in Paterson, the Paterson Progress Plan. Afterwards, it will be turned back over to President Martinez.

SUPERINTENDENT/CSA AND BOARD EVALUATION PROCESS with NJSBA

Ms. Charlene Peterson: Good evening. I want to thank all the Commissioners for taking the time here tonight. We're going to take you through the process of the Board self-evaluation and the Superintendent's evaluation. I'm wondering if any of the Commissioners have been through this process before. I'm using New Jersey School Boards' tool, so I wonder if any of you have any familiarity with it. I'm going to go through the process. If anyone has questions, you're welcome to ask them at any time. As we talk about the Superintendent's evaluation, we really need to think about it as the opportunity to further strengthen the partnership between the Board and the Superintendent, recognizing that we need to work together as an effective team to help advance student achievement. When we think about the Superintendent's evaluation, this is a way to help us have those conversations and reflect on what we have done in the previous year in terms of how we benefited our students and then what we can do to continue to move forward. We know that we do that working in partnership with the Superintendent to help promote excellence in the school district. The process needs to be considered recognizing that there are some legal requirements that go along with the process. In terms of what's in statute and code, look at the fact that we are required to evaluate the performance of the Superintendent at least once a year. The evaluation has to be in writing. The Board and Superintendent need to meet to discuss it. The evaluation will be based on goals and objectives, responsibilities of the Superintendent, and criteria prescribed by the State Board of Education. We also have a legal deadline that the process needs to be completed by July 1. We have to be done with everything. The last step in the process is the sit-down meeting with Superintendent, that summary conference. When we say July 1, we're recognizing that's the last step. That also needs to be completed by then. Sometimes Board members think it's just the written report, but it's the entire process. It says that it needs to be completed by a majority of the total membership of the Board. It will include areas of strength, areas needing improvement, recommendations for professional growth, tied to how our students are doing, and the last piece is having a sit-down conference with the Superintendent to talk about the evaluation and the progress that was made. It should include a majority of the total membership of the Board. It's just making sure that all voices are heard in this process. One of the things from a Board member's perspective that the School Ethics Commission tells us is that if you have a relative that works in the district, you are prohibited from participating. If you have a relative that works in the district and you're conflicted, you essentially have no more rights than any other member of the public. Recognizing that this is a public presentation of the process, you would be able to participate in that. Should the Board go into executive session to have any conversation or access to the evaluation tool, if you were conflicted you would not be able to be part of that and that's how you help distinguish that difference. One of the things we are asked is, you showed us that the legal deadline was July, what if we don't complete it by then? How is this monitored? A few years ago, when the state made some changes to QSAC, they included the Superintendent evaluation. We can see that there are six points associated with the Board completing this process by July 1. One of the things that has been receiving increased attention by the state has been that it's also required in statute that new Board members within the first six months of taking

office need to be trained in this process. It makes sense that before you do the evaluation you should be trained in it. There are now points associated with that. This is the first year that Boards going through QSAC have been asked for evidence about this. I just wanted to let you know as a group that the way you would demonstrate compliance is that if the Board member has completed governance 1, then that fulfills the compliance here, but also taking the opportunity to have a conversation like this with the entire Board and even just demonstrating in the minutes that the Board did have a training on the Superintendent evaluation process. This flow chart is to show you that the Superintendent's evaluation is not just a once-a-year thing. The process starts in the summer when we set those goals and identifying what those priorities are going to be for the year, and then getting updates and monitoring that progress. When it comes time to start the evaluation, there should be no surprises to the Board in terms of the progress that's been made throughout the year. There should be no surprise to the Superintendent in terms of what the Board's perceptions were. I'm going to take you through what some of these steps look like. We said that the goals are an important part of the evaluation. We saw that's what was in statute, that the evaluation should be based on the goals. We know that's an important way for us as Board members to really exercise our governance responsibilities. If we say that we don't run the district but make sure that it's well run, one of the ways we do that is by helping set the direction. If we think about the fact that there are so many things that the Superintendent's responsible for and so many moving parts to running a school district, how do we identify those four things we think are so important to move the district forward that we're going to hold the Superintendent accountable by putting them in her evaluation? The Board is part of that conversation of identifying what those four things are. It's important that the Superintendent has conferred with her team to make recommendations, but the Board should be part of that final conversation of adopting those goals and that's what should drive the work of the district. We say it should be like a stair step process. These goals should be reflected in what's going on in the buildings and classrooms so that the entire district is working together in alignment. We say the evaluation process starts on July 1. Think about when new Board members come into the fold. You're starting on January 1. Six months have already passed. The goals were set before you got there. How are you able to participate in the evaluation? Even for Board members who have been there the entire time, if we say that we're not running the schools, how do we know what has happened? How do we know what kind of progress is being made? The way that is made available to us is through evidence. The Superintendent provides evidence that would make it clear to you as Commissioners that you understand what took place in terms of the accomplishments of those goals. It's about three or four years since we redid the tool in partnership with the Superintendent's association wanting to make sure that we were better aligned with what the work is that Superintendents are doing these days. The tool is set up so that it goes through two sections, such as those district goals we just talked about. Also, if we need to identify areas of strength or areas for growth, it should be based in leadership standards that are national standards. There are national standards that used to be called ISLLC standards. That is the basis of the leadership standards in the Superintendent's evaluation. One of the things we have been asked in the past is whether we need to use New Jersey School Boards' tool. Do we have other options? What's important is that you be in compliance with statute and code. That's the part that's important and our tool just helps you do that. It makes it clear and easy for you to do that. As we talk about the tool, there are three progressions of it. The first part is everybody being able to log on individually and provide input. What are your thoughts about the performance this past year? Then we say it's important to hear from everybody, but in order for this to be a meaningful document, we need to take that individual input and compile it into one anonymous document that tells us what everyone's responses were. We now have seen what everyone has said, but if we think

about the work that we do as a Board, that work is based on the majority opinion. We need to know what everyone thought so that compiled document that has everyone's opinions in it is essentially the working document for the Board. When you are done filling out the New Jersey School Board's tool, the next step in the process is to extract out of that document of the Board majority. That feedback goes into a template that we provide and that's the Superintendent's actual evaluation. The state refers to it as the annual performance report. That's what's signed by the Board President and the Superintendent. That's what QSAC looks at when they want to make sure that you've completed it by July 1. They're going to ask to see that signed sheet. The process starts with the Superintendent, who is the first one to log into the tool. Your Superintendent just did that today. The Superintendent is first going to provide some basic information for the Board members to see. In 48 hours, she's given a chance to reflect and add anything. Once that 48 hours is up, the New Jersey School Boards will automatically send an email to all the Board members with a link that says the Superintendent has done her part and it's time for you to log in and do your portion of the evaluation. I'm going to show you what that looks like now. The first part of it looks at those district goals. The Superintendent is the one who types in what the goals are. Then we ask the Superintendent to do a self-assessment. Does she think her goal was achieved? Does she think satisfactory progress was made in the goal, or little or no progress? Sometimes we're also seeing that we have more multi-year goals. While we see satisfactory progress made, if it is a multi-year goal, that may be the best we can do at that time because of that fact. Then we want the Superintendent to give us some evidence to help support her writing. She can both provide comments for the Board members to look at and links to a Google document. As a Board member when the evaluation comes to you for you to do your part, the first thing you will see is what the Superintendent put in, what her rating was, and comments or evidence that the Superintendent provided. You then are asked to provide a rating. What do you think? Do you think the goal was achieved? Was satisfactory progress made? Then you are also asked to provide comments or remarks to support your rating. A lot of times I see Board members will direct these comments to the Superintendent. You're actually directing these comments to your fellow Board members. This is going to be a working document for the Board. This is to help the Board say this is why I gave this rating so that when you see that compiled document that has everyone's thoughts in it, I now will have a clearer understanding of what the Board members thought because of that clarity that was added. The next pieces are those standards. The ISLLC standards are 10. We took those 10 and we consolidated and combined them into 6. This is what you will evaluate the Superintendent on. Before we redid the tool, the standards were more based on more functional lines. Now you see that the work of the Superintendent is much more complex than that. We're looking at bigger pictures like mission, vision, and core values, the importance of ethics, the importance of being a community of care and equity, family engagement, building the capacity of your staff. Those are all things that are critical to the job of the Superintendent, so we wanted to make sure that we were evaluating them on those things. I wanted to bring your attention to the rating scale and the last option there says, 'not observed.' That is helpful for new Board members. We would like to allow every Board member who is able to participate as much as you can. Do not feel compelled on something that you have not had the opportunity to see. It's not a negative or a positive in the evaluation. It's strictly just a place mark that says you're not being asked to evaluate something that you don't have the evidence or experience to evaluate. This is a sample of what one of the standards looks like. I just wanted to draw your attention to the definition of what exemplary, proficient, and area for growth means. One of the things we were finding is that two Board members could have the same thought about the Superintendent's performance in a particular area, but to one Board members that equated to 'exemplary' and to another to 'proficient'. We wanted to make sure that we helped by providing definitions of what that could look like

for each standard to help Board members be more consistent in their rating. In the goals we were able to see that the Superintendent was able to do a self-assessment about the achievement. The Superintendent does not do a self-assessment, but you can see that they are able to provide links to evidence. As Board member, you can click on it while you're in the standard so that you can see that evidence that the Superintendent has provided. All of this gives you the opportunity to make this an informed evaluation. The overall goal is to do a rating. At the very bottom you'll see the Board members' assessment of the standard. That's what we're trying to get at. Initially we didn't want you to just jump to the bottom and not give it a lot of thought. We put indicators in there under each standard and then have you put a check in the box to make sure you were thoughtful in reading it just because of the importance of this evaluation process. You'll still be asked at the end to click which box you think represents the overall rating of that standard. Some of it comes down to weighing. There are some things that are more important or have a higher or stronger weight that they might not have somewhere else. Only you would be able to know that. That's why we have you separate the rating for the standard. Similar to the goals where you were able to provide comments for your fellow Board members, you are also able to provide comments for each of the standards. Once the Board is done and all the Board members have filled out their individual evaluations, New Jersey School Boards compiles it into one anonymous document. As soon as the first Board member is done, we start this compiled document. When the second Board member is done, it adds that input. By the time the last Board member is done, the compiled document is ready. Then your field representative sets the flag in the system that says the Paterson Board is done. We will send an email to the Board President with instructions on how to access those compiled reports. Then you will have three reports to see. One of them is the compiled information about the goals, the compiled input about the six standards, and that template that can be used to record the majority opinion that is the actual evaluation. In this district's example, there were eight Board members who were able to fill out the evaluation. You can see that the Superintendent in their self-assessment said that the goal was achieved. Six Board members agreed with the Superintendent. That was their assessment. One Board member thought satisfactory progress was made. One Board member thought little, or no progress was made. Then you can see where the asterisks are under the member comments. There are no names there, but it lets you know that's a different Board member speaking. That's how we take all of the individual input and compile it into one anonymous document. You can see then how this would be an effective working tool for the Board to identify the majority opinion. This is a similar example for a standard. You can see all those indicators that Board members have filled out. You can see what the overall thoughts were in terms of the valuation for that standard. You can see where there could be some area for conversation. Perhaps the majority opinion would appear proficient. You can see that in some of the indicators Board members identified that as an area of growth. That might be something you would share in the comments with the Superintendent in terms of using that to help frame the information that will be shared. Like we said, similar to taking that compiled document that had everyone's opinion and then we break it down and now we need to come to an agreement on what the majority opinion is. Then that can be filed out in the annual performance report template. This usually happens in one of two ways. It needs the Board to get together in some way. Some boards will sit around with a blank slate, see the compiled document, and then give instructions to whoever is going to author the annual performance report. It can be the Board President. It can be their designee. It needs some direction from the Board about what is the majority opinion that they would like to have shared with the Superintendent. Another way to do that would be to come to the meeting with a draft already filled out and then the rest of the Board would provide input in tweaking the draft. What matters is that at the end the evaluation is prepared by a majority of the total membership of the

Board. We want to make sure everyone has had input into what that majority document looks like. Now the Board is ready to reflect. Our tool helps you stay in compliance with statutes and code. This is how that template helps you do that. It will ask you to talk about the accomplishments of the goals. It will ask you to talk about the accomplishments on those six leadership standards. Now that we've looked at what those two parts are, what are those areas of strength? What are those areas for growth? You're also able to identify any overall summative comments that would wrap up the year as a team and have those signature lines for the Board President and the Superintendent. This is what that template looks like. The Board would have conversations using that compiled document that had everyone's opinions. What is the majority opinion in terms of the overall progress of the goals? What comments or information do we want to share with the Superintendent to help reflect what the majority opinion was relative to that rating that we're providing? That same thing would also be true for the standards. For each of the standards, you would give a majority opinion rating and comments to be shared with the Superintendent to help support that rating. If we consider that we want to continue to keep the evaluation focused on the professionalism of this work, based on those six standards, which ones do we think are the Superintendent's strengths and which would require more growth? We can again identify more than one, provide some supporting remarks, and have the opportunity to provide overall summative information that you'd like to share with the Superintendent about the year. The last piece of it is having that annual summary sit-down conference. It had to have a majority of the total membership present. We would suggest that all of the conflicted non-Board members be there. The Superintendent's evaluation reflects the majority opinion, but if you're the holder of the minority opinion, you have a right to be heard. If we look at that goal example that showed in the compiled document where six Board members agreed with the Superintendent that the goal was achieved, one Board member thought that little or no progress was made and one thought satisfactory progress was made. What if I was one of those Board members? The document the Superintendent gets may show that the goal was achieved. This is my chance to say while the evaluation said this, this why I think differently. I was expecting to see this. These are what my thoughts were. Since we never know when someone is going to be the holder of the minority opinion, that's why it is recommended that everyone be there so that voice always has the chance to be heard. We say that you should share the evaluation with the Superintendent a couple days ahead of time so that she can come to that summary conference prepared to have an informed discussion. I've had many Boards say that instead of just handing the document, the president and vice president will sit down with the Superintendent, go through it, and say this is what the Board was thinking, this is what this looks like, so that she can come in better prepared to have that meeting with the full Board. In terms of process, we need to back into it and think about what aligns with whatever Board meetings we have left for the year. Do we need to schedule special meetings to have that summary sit-down conference with the Superintendent? Do we need to schedule meetings for the Board to sit down together and come to a consensus on the majority opinion that's going to be included in the performance report? If that's the case, all the Board members need to be done with their evaluation by this date so that we can have that conversation and sit down with the Superintendent by this date prior to July 1. Take all those steps starting with July 1 and work backwards. Then let that determine when other parts of the process need to be completed. Before I move on to the Board self-evaluation, do any Board members have any questions about the process? I'm going to take you through the next part of this, which is the Board self-evaluation. If we talk about the effectiveness of being able to move the district forward and doing it in partnership with the Superintendent, one of the things that we find is that there have been more and more evidence that high-performing boards can help make a positive impact on student achievement. How do we hold ourselves accountable? We saw that it was in statute and code that the Board

legally has to evaluate the Superintendent. It used to be in QSAC that boards had to do a self-evaluation. About that same time, QSAC made some changes to add the July 1 deadline and one of the things they took out was the requirement that boards had to complete a self-evaluation. Now we say that boards do it because it's a good governance practice. If we are going to hold the rest of the district accountable, we should hold ourselves accountable. How did we do last year as a Board? How well did we work together as a team? How well did we advance on our governance work? The better we get at this, the more that we can help our students. Knowing that's our ultimate goal, let's hold ourselves accountable to being the best we can at our work as well. It needs to be geared towards improvement. I also tell boards that it's important that this becomes part of their culture. This is the way the Paterson Board does things around here. This is the level of accountability that we have for ourselves. When new Commissioners come into the fold, you're showing them this is how we do things. This is what we do. One of the things I found is that as districts went through challenges with COVID, so did boards. Those boards that stayed true to those basics of having training and self-evaluation made a difference in terms of their ability to stay focused on their work. I would encourage your Board to consider this to be an effective tool in that work. You also have a bylaw on it about self-evaluation. It's an important way for you to record your assessments of how you're doing. Your bylaw also says that the results will be discussed at a meeting. That's one of the things that New Jersey School Boards goes through with you and helps you talk through what the Board said about itself and its own performance. Ideally, from the Board's perspective you would consider that information to be a tool to help you reflect and say how you can move forward. There is no timeline. We had a field service department meeting today and we were talking about when boards do the self-evaluation. There really isn't any required or right time. Some boards do it before they reorganize at the end of their year. Some boards do it at the same time they're doing the Superintendent's evaluation to keep the motion flowing. Some boards do it in alignment with a Board retreat. When you're setting goals, you would like to set specific goals separate from the district goals. Some boards have also set goals for themselves in their work. A lot of times the outcome of the board self-evaluation can help inform what you might want to include in those goals. Sometimes that's part of what the timing is. Different from the Superintendent's evaluation, the Board can get started whenever it's ready. It's always on our website and you can just log in whenever you are ready. There are two parts of the tool. There's a part about the Board and about you as the member. We consider your Superintendent and the Board Secretary. If you want them to be a part of the Board's team, they could fill out the top part about the Board. I would say probably there are fewer that do, but it's an option out there because there are important voices in your team. These are the nine standards that the Board self-evaluation is based on. The Board is evaluating itself in each one of these areas. I really need to focus on saying the point that the Board is evaluating itself and its work as a Board team. Sometimes we see boards use this to gripe or say this person did or didn't do this. If we're going to look at our governance work, we do that as a team. When we're doing the Board self-evaluation, that's what should be the focus. It's always available on our website. You click that first green box and begin the Board self-evaluation process. It takes you right into the tool. Your username and password is the same one you use for the Superintendent's evaluation. This is a sample of what it looks like. Similar to the Superintendent's evaluation, each Board member fills it out individually. New Jersey School Boards compiles it into one anonymous document. The Board self-evaluation is based on a 4.0 scale. If every Board member who filled it out said you were commendable in every area, that's how you would get a 4.0 rating. You can see in this standard of planning that the Board's overall score was 2.6. You can look at each one of the indicators to see how the Board scored itself. The next part is about you as the Board member. It's more looking at how you helped contribute to the work of the Board. How did you help the Board in this area? You are able to

provide comments for your fellow Board members to have an understanding. You would do that for each one of those nine standards. This helps the Board identify areas that it's strong in. One of the things that we find is that most of the boards' work is centered around the district's work. Our agendas are very focused. They're very driven. There's not a lot of time to talk about the Board's work. How did we do? Sometimes the Board self-evaluation is just an effective way to put that on the table and a conversation starter. It's a way to draw us all back in. A lot of times boards will say they don't even get a chance to get to know the other fellow Commissioners. This is a way to help do that. In terms of looking at the Board's self-evaluation, using the information to help continue to improve governance work, it really is more meaningful as more Board members contribute. There's no one that would be conflicted from being able to fill out the self-evaluation. Ideally, the entire Board would take it upon itself to do that. It looks like that was the last slide. I'm going to stop sharing and see if anyone had any questions for me about either the Superintendent evaluation or the Board self-evaluation.

Comm. Martinez: Thank you kindly. Appreciate the presentation. At this time, are there any Board members who have any questions? Feel free. Most of the Board members have experienced this and have a decent grasp.

Ms. Peterson: I was thinking it was because I did such a great job explaining.

Comm. Martinez: That too.

Ms. Peterson: Thank you all for your time and attention. I know you have a lot on your agenda tonight. I just want to thank everyone for the opportunity to be part of this tonight and know that we're here to help you in any way throughout this process. Good night.

Credit Recovery Update

Dr. Newell: The Credit Recovery Program gives an opportunity to our students who have lost credits and will not graduate on time unless they do some type of recovery of their credits. Since July of 2023, we began a comprehensive data-based assessment of where all the academic programs were to identify the strengths and areas for potential improvement. Based upon the findings of these assessments early on, I noticed working with the team that we had some areas in the Credit Recovery Program that needed to be strengthened and needed immediate improvement. The restructuring process has been going on to strengthen our Credit Recovery Program here in Paterson so that it can more closely reflect what the state-required recovery process is as dictated by the state. I'm just going to go through it briefly. This is an update to what was presented a few weeks ago to let everyone see where we are. As I mentioned, Credit Recovery is an opportunity for our students to gain lost credits. The goal is to get these high school seniors to graduate with their cohort year. For this year, the target grade levels, we have kids across the entire spectrum that are in need of Credit Recovery, but our targeted grade levels this year were 11th and 12th graders. We have been using Edgenuity as our platform. We have changed some of our requirements for the Credit Recovery. We are now requiring four hours per week per course and the students now have to do their exams in person. We are in our second session now and it runs until June 20. The time requirement is from 3:30 to 5:30. We're in literally the last stretch and trying to make sure that our kids are adhering to what is the requirement. There will be no free movement throughout the course. I know this is an update that has been provided several times. The free movement is to make sure that kids are

working on track as they go through. Students are allowed to take a maximum of four courses per year, whereas in the first session from November 27 to the second week in March they were able to take two courses per year. As we're closing out the second session, they get to take another two courses per year. It was very important that we had fidelity to the program and that we didn't have an exorbitant number of courses being taken because we wanted to make sure that kids were actually showing up and learning. It was very important to the team when we all met to make sure that there was continual parent and student communication. One of the first things that the team did was to make sure that the parents were in contact, making sure we were connecting with parents so that they had an update and knew the status of their student. Robocalls were done to the homes. There were also letters mailed from the district central office as well as the schools. We wanted to make sure that as much communication was delivered so that parents and guardians were aware of the status of their students. There were also Credit Recovery meetings required to be had with the students by the school administration. Finally, social media platforms were used as a way to highlight the need for Credit Recovery. We've been trying to impress upon our students that Credit Recovery folks need to be aware and listen out from the schools, especially if students were in jeopardy of not graduating and Credit Recovery was an opportunity for them to make their credits. We have been monitoring our students' performance in Credit Recovery, the continuation of communication with our parents, as well as with our students to make sure that they are completing their courses. There is consistent communication happening with our high school building principals letting everyone know of the students' progress. We really don't want our students and parents to be surprised regarding where their students are. We're also in the process of doing the postings to select teachers. We are having summer Credit Recovery once we get to the end of their school year. We're making sure students can register. We're trying all angles to make sure that our students register and that they can make up their credits. There was a presentation done with the I&P committee in May to make sure that specific data points pertaining to student progress were discussed and making sure there is a plan of action for students in need of additional courses. We do have some situations where we have to look at case-by-case basis. We know that from last year the graduation rate without Credit Recovery was 61%. We saw an uptick once we had Credit Recovery and/or summer school. The graduation rate now is 67.5%. Obviously, we don't know what the graduation rate will be. We will be able to figure that out a little bit further on after we finish up this last session, which ends in June, and when we have our summer school. That is where we are with Credit Recovery. If there are any questions, I'd be happy to take them now.

Comm. Martinez: If anyone has any questions, please feel free to jump in.

Dr. Newell: The next presentation will be Dr. Joseph from Hazard, Young, Attea & Associates. He will be doing an update on Goal #2. He is here to present tonight the survey results and some of the work that has been ongoing with the organizational audit that has been done across the district.

Internal Stakeholders Insight Report

Dr. Sean Joseph: Thank you, Dr. Newell and Commissioners. It's an honor to be here with you today to present the findings of phase 1 of our stakeholder insight report. You received a copy of this prior to the meeting. That was on me. I just gave it to the district recently and made some revisions. I'll go over it briefly with you, but you should have a copy to look at in depth and know that we will be following up consistently. This will be a theme over the next few months, that we keep coming and giving you the information.

We don't want to overwhelm you with information because there's so much, but this information will be critical as you continue to revise your strategic plan. I'm going to take a moment and just talk about the methodology that we are employing to give you a big picture of where we are going so you're clear about that. This is Phase 1 where internal stakeholders are surveyed to gain collective insight into the current strengths and challenges of Paterson Public Schools. The report that I'm covering tonight and what you have has the information that we gathered from that data. Within the next week, we plan on moving into Phase 2, which is data that we're going to collect from focus groups. Now that we have gotten the initial data from principals, teachers, the Board, support staff, principals and central office leaders, we want to go into focus groups to specifically hone in on areas that we gathered data on from the survey. In Phase 3, we plan on giving a survey to parents, the community, and students. We think it's very important that you hear from your customers and the people that you're working to serve within the Paterson community. Phase 4 will be the strategic plan update validating to align it with the finding. We hope as you're in the process of going through your strategic plan update that the data you gather in terms of strengths and opportunities will be incorporated and will help you refine your key performance indicators, which is Phase 5. The key performance indicators will be adopted by the Board and the district, and the school improvement plans will be aligned to the strategic plan and become the strategies for implementation and realization of your district goals. The survey results contained in this document are based on Hazard, Young, Attea & Associates research. The survey addressed district performance and equity. There are four domains in this particular survey. It was understanding the vision, the leadership's ability to provide a clear and compelling vision for the future, aligning district programs for the broader vision of the district, and upholding high expectations for stakeholders. Area 2 was teaching and learning, the leadership's ability to guide educational programs, making data-driven decisions, and implementing effective instructional change. Area 3 was community engagement, the leadership's ability to be the voice of the district and engage with the community and involve stakeholders in realizing the district's vision. The fourth area was management, the leadership's ability to guide operations, manage resources, recruit and retain highly effective personnel, and create an equitable accountability system for all employees. We had an astounding 1,724 stakeholders complete this survey. Out of those, two-thirds of the respondents were teachers. Teachers represented 64.7% of all the people who took this survey. Nearly a quarter of the respondents identified as support staff. This made up the second most popular stakeholder group with 24%. The third largest participant group was central office administrators, who made up 6% of the respondents. As you look at the strengths of the district as perceived by those individuals, it was shared that technology is integrated in classrooms, that the district engages with diverse racial, cultural, and social economic groups, that teachers personalize instructional strategies to address the learning needs of students, employees are held accountable to high standards, and the district employs effective teachers, administrators, and support staff in positions. These are the perceptions from internal stakeholders. That's not surpassing. People tend to rate themselves highly and think that they're doing a good job from their perspective. In terms of top-rated priorities for the district, there were five that were identified. One was hiring and retaining quality teachers and administrators. Two was preparing students to be ready for the next grade and ultimately college and career readiness. Three was providing a safe environment for students and employees. Four was ensuring a well-rounded experience for all students. Five was addressing students' social and emotional needs. When you look at what the top-rated programs from the district were from internal stakeholder's perspective, first was the physical education and health program. Second was your student services program, guidance counselors, social workers, and nursing. Third was advanced placement and Gifted and Talented programs. Fourth was your English language arts, reading, and writing programs. Fifth

was your social studies history program. Regarding equity efforts, the following statements in the survey received the most 'strongly agree' or 'agree' responses across stakeholders. One, students have at least one trusted adult in the building that they can rely on for help. Two, programs or partnerships exist to feed, clothe, and address the physical and mental health needs of students without these basic needs. Three, minoritized students are encouraged to participate in extracurricular sports activities. Four, the diversity of the student population is represented in the teaching faculty and administration. Lastly, discipline practices that avoid suspension and expulsion are practiced. As you went into the analysis in the second part of the assessment, we asked respondents to give an overall impression of the quality of education that students receive in Paterson Public Schools. They were asked to rate the overall quality of education on a scale of 1-5, with 1 being unsatisfactory and 5 being excellent. The blue dot represents Board members. The yellow dot represents building administrators, the green dot represents the perceptions of central office staff, the orange dot represents the perceptions of support staff, and the purple dot represents the perceptions of teachers. You can see here that at best about 30% of people, which are teachers, rated the overall quality of the education the highest. About 30% rated it good or excellent. The lowest was central office staff, who rated the overall quality less than 20%. This is data that can give you some fodder to reflect upon. Once we add the layer of the community in we can see if there are differences in perceptions and drill down into the why. As we look into the state of the district summary, respondents rated statements related to the state of the district on a scale of 1-5. Each statement corresponds to one of the following constructs – vision, values, teaching and learning, community engagement, and management. Overall results are presented below. When you look at whether people thought the mission and values of the district were clear and strong, building administrators have the greatest perception at about 50%. When you look at teaching and learning, you had your teachers have the strongest belief that the teaching and learning in the district was strong. Only about 50% felt that. As it related to community engagement, you see that 55% of building administrators felt that program was strong. When you look at overall management, you can see that your teachers and Board members have the strongest rating at about 40%. When you move into the priority areas, you can see here that all five groups that participated in the study felt that hiring and retaining quality administrators and teachers should be a focus in the next three to five years. Also, all groups felt that preparing students to be ready for the next grade and be college and career-ready should be a priority for your focus. When you looked at providing a safe environment for students and employees, four groups felt that was one of the strategic areas you should be addressing. Fourth was addressing achievement gaps and opportunity. You see four of the five stakeholder groups that took the assessment felt that should be a priority. That's how we got the areas we thought should definitely be included in your next strategic plan's focus. That's why we will use those four areas as we go into the focus groups to learn more. We know they feel this is an area. We want to ask them advice about what they think we should be doing differently in these areas or what should be the focus as we go in. That will be the focus areas we will move into. The remainder of the assessment breaks down each one of the questions that was given to participants. You'll get an itemized analysis with the percent of respondents selecting a 5 or 4 below. I won't walk us through every single piece, but this will give you areas where you can see by group and collective where people felt strongly that you were doing well. For example, you can see overall the district has a clear and compelling shared vision for the future. 43% of participants either strongly agreed or agreed there. You can see the breakdown across. Building administrators felt that the strongest. That's how you would read that as you went through. You have that data for vision, teaching and learning, community engagement, and management. As we went through and asked respondents to select four statements that best present what they believe the priorities and focus should be for the

Board of Education and the Superintendent for the next three to five years. You can get the specific breakdown by area and group. That's where we captured this information up here. Once again, hiring and retaining high-quality teachers and administrators was the number one area that your internal group thought you should focus on, followed by preparing students to be ready for the next grade and ultimately college and career, followed by providing a safe environment for employees and students, and then addressing achievement and opportunity gaps. That's where that came from as we went through. Also looking at the quality of programming, this will give you clear perceptions as it breaks down specific programs on what the perceptions are for your strongest and most challenging programs. It will allow you to think about action plans and prioritize the strategic plan for the district and the Board's work. The session prior to this presentation with the New Jersey School Boards Association was absolutely excellent. I heard the commitment and the need for the Board and the Superintendent to collaborate and prioritize together to sequence what you're going to do first, second, and third. That requires a lot of communication, collaboration, and focus. I think I said in the last meeting, and I'll say again, large urban districts struggle with the ability to focus on focus. While you have lots of areas, it is incumbent upon the Board and the Superintendent to lock down on those four or five things they really want to do well and prioritize their policy work, budget, and feedback loops on those things to begin to move forward. This work takes time and there is no quick fix. No one in the universe, no matter how good they are, will be able to come into a district with tremendous needs and fix everything in one, two, or even three years. It takes time, focus and resource. Understanding the perceptions will allow you to focus on what our constituency believes is important. As you have the conversations to ultimately develop a Board strategic plan that's aligned to the district's strategic plan, you'll be able to focus your resources, time, and energy to be able to execute. It's broken down into equity for percentages of individuals who selected a 5 to strongly agree or a 4 to agree. You can see those specific results as you go through for all and by each one of the five areas of group members that participated. I'll stop there. I have 15 minutes to answer any questions that you have. Again, the Board has requested a number of reviews. Those reviews are currently under way. As a part of the reviews, we started with Phase 1 of this survey of our internal stakeholders. Phase 1 is completed. Now we will be moving into Phase 2. Next week or the following week at the latest, we will have focus groups of all these five areas that we just discussed to really look at those four areas that they felt we should be prioritizing for us to gather information and insight for them on what they think we should be doing as it relates to human resources and retaining quality teachers. What do they think we should be doing differently to better prepare students to be college-ready? What advice or suggestions do they have? What are some of the challenges related to safety for staff and students? What do they believe we should be doing to focus on the achievement and opportunity gaps that exist within the district? In this way, we will be gathering information from the people closest to the work. When the plans and strategies are developed, we know that this insight has been gathered so people don't feel like work is being done to them. In fact, work is being done with them. You should definitely applaud your staff for actively participating. To have 1,700 employees take time to complete this survey signifies their dedication and commitment and the fact that they want to be heard and be part of the process. I commend Dr. Newell and her team for being adamant about getting that feedback and moving intentionally and clearly so you can get the plans right as you're moving forward with what Dr. Henderson is about to talk about with the five areas of focus. I'll stop there and I'm happy to answer any questions.

Comm. Martinez: Dr. Joseph, thank you. That was a lot of very useful and insightful information. We're in the thick of it. This is where the sleeves are going to be rolled up and we're going to have to dive deep into this work. One of the biggest takeaways is

what you just highlighted, the notion of so many folks engaging in this. It's not easy to get folks to take time out and participate in filling out the surveys. I think that speaks volumes. Take a step back. Take a deep breath. Digest this all. Now the real work begins. If there are any other Commissioners who have any comments or questions, please feel free. If not, we will turn it over to Dr. Henderson so we can get a better understanding about the work that we're about to dive into as it pertains to the five levers.

Comm. Freeman: Dr. Joseph, I will be calling you very soon.

Dr. Joseph: Thank you, Ma'am, looking forward to the conversation.

Paterson Progress Plan – Five Levers for Accelerating Achievement

Dr. Henderson: With that being said, I'm going to begin to share my screen and share the plan that we have created to this point. Just a few weeks ago, we received our final NJSLA results. Quite frankly, it was a sleepless night of reviewing that data. I came in the very next morning and met with Luis Valentin, our Director of Assessment, and we looked even deeper into the data. I asked him to help me figure out which schools had either an entire grade level or content that scored 0%. That means the number of their students who weren't proficient in a given area on NJSLA or in a course. That list was much longer than any of us want it to be. I asked him to expand that list to include any schools that score between 0% and 5%. A sleepless night became a much longer day. I talked to Dr. Newell about what we could do in order to address that particular problem head-on and a plan began to form. I just want to take the next several minutes to tell you about the plan and where we are in terms of the progress that has been made in just a few weeks. There are five levers to this particular plan. They are human resources, staff capacity, principal capacity, data literacy, and parental engagement. The first is human resources. Once we looked at the list of schools that did not fare as well as we wanted them to, it was pretty easy to see that many of those schools had quite long plaguing problems with filling vacancies. Many of the kids who scored lower than what we wish had been taught by substitutes for extended periods of time or other personnel other than what we consider a permanent certificated teacher. We want to attack this head-on. I talked to Mr. Rojas, who is our Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources, and he is committed to doing a couple of things. One, he is going to do an audit to make sure that if a child did not have a permanent teacher that we do everything we can to make sure that they don't have two consecutive years of not having a permanent teacher in front of them. He's also committed to doing a couple of tailored or exclusive hiring events for those particular schools. We want to prioritize those schools to make sure they get staff at levels that they have not had over the previous few years. In terms of turning student achievement around, it's all about a qualified or highly qualified teacher in front of students every single day. We want to attack that particular problem head-on to eliminate those deficiencies that we have been experiencing in those schools. Our next lever is data literacy. One of the things we think we can do to dramatically change the projection of our student achievement in these schools is become more data literate. I've worked with Mr. Valentin, and we've been able to develop four modules of learning that will dramatically increase data literacy for our school leaders. Those are slated to begin in administrative leadership, which will happen when people come back from the summer vacations and we all meet in August. They will go through the first two modules. Our goal is to make sure that all four modules are completed by the end of October. I want to make some clarifications. We are going to take all principals, no matter where they scored, through all the data

modules. You now may be asking what is different for those schools that scored 0-5%. We've created .5 modules. In between module 1 and 2, there's a 1.5, which is uniquely designed for those principals who scored 0%-5%. They're going to get a lot of experts in that space to work with them on their school-specific data. We want to become very familiar in our district with a term called response to data. It is one thing to analyze the data and figure out who's doing well and who's struggling. There's a whole different element that we need to consider when we talk about response to data. After you analyze your data, what are you doing to change the institutional programming in your school to meet the needs of your students? It's a waste of time to analyze data and not make any shifts in your instructional programming in your schools. In those modules we will have data experts and our curriculum people as well. They're going to help us figure out what makes the most sense in order to change or shift as a result of the data that we see coming forth from our students. The 0%-5% schools will get the four modules, but they will also get 1.5, 2.5, and 3.5. It's all about response to data. If you hear your principals talking about RTD, we're talking about response to data. There will be an emphasis on response to data next year. The second is building staff capacity. Ms. Tsimpedes with her staff pored over the NJSLA results as well as Form C, which is our end of the year assessment. Some things began to emerge about what we can do in order to provide tailored professional development to our teachers that would make an impact on student achievement. Some things came to light. We also have a new instructional model. We want to focus on pedagogy. We talked about using data to inform instruction, questioning for engagement, and depth of knowledge. Also overall increasing the rigor so that our students are prepared to take NJSLA next year and that preparation will take place over the entire school year. Specifically, when we talk about skill level beyond standards, what things do we think our students need to work on in ELA? The list is quite simple – main idea, compare and contrast, and characteristics are things that if we get better on, it will give a great return on investment for the PD that we hope to offer. In math, it was numeracy. In grades 3 and 5, it was fractions. In grades 6-8 it was equations. The people that have been assigned to the staff capacity team are really in short time really deep in the work. Because our new instructional model relies heavily on small group instruction next year in both ELA and math, that's going to be our first initial push. We want to make sure that we do small group instruction really well. Those 15 schools are going to get really rigorous consistent PD on small group instruction. We know that small group instruction is also going to filter down in both literacy and math, so it is an excellent place to start. Next is principal capacity. Besides the teacher, the principal plays the biggest part in actually increasing achievement and turning around schools. I've been working with the unit assistant superintendents and next year we want to be very clear about what we coach principals around. We want to be very clear about how they're going to give feedback. We want to be even clearer about the feedback that we give them and the actions that we expect after our visits and have coaching sessions. They're going to get direct coaching and direct feedback in two areas, data literacy and building staff capacity. We can have all the plans in the world, but if principals are not there effectively leading the implementation of our plans, it just simply does not matter. We want to make sure that we have specific tools that will enable unit assistant superintendents to give very actionable and explicit feedback on how to lead data literacy and improve staff capacity in their schools. For instance, in data literacy, we expect that all principals will go through the four models by the end of October. We've already talked about and planned that when we go into schools in November and December, we want to see principals lead data meetings. Those will be our visits to schools. When we see those data meetings, we want to get direct feedback to make sure that they're effective and are running the way we want them to run. Actually, the third data literacy module is for running a data meeting in schools. We want to see principals turnkey that when they go back to their schools and lead their schools in data analysis. Our last lever is parental

support. There are two elements to this. When we looked at the data, we saw that the 15 schools that had the lowest scores are some of our schools with the highest chronic absenteeism or on-time arrival rates in our district. We can have wonderful plans, but if our kids are not there to receive the instruction that we plan, it's just simply not going to matter. Therefore, in overall improving attendance and curbing chronic absenteeism, these schools have some additional measures and bars that they will have to go through in order to make sure that they're on top and monitoring attendance week-to-week. We don't want poor attendance to become a habit in these schools. We want to start strong. We want to make sure that we reward kids for coming to school. We also want to make sure that we're paying attention and following up on children that are having attendance issues early on. The other element of this level is in grades k-2 we want to empower, inform, and prepare parents to enforce what kids are learning in school. Your first teachers are your parents. We want to inform parents of what's going on week-to-week and month-to-month in kindergarten, literacy and math, first grade, and second grade. We're going to empower them and give them the tools to make sure that they follow up and reinforce what has been taught in school. How might we do this? We've talked about a YouTube channel utilizing some of our best and brightest teachers, just simply giving parents tips on exactly how to follow up. What was taught? How can they reinforce and follow up what was just introduced in the classroom that week or the previous week? We have come up with several comprehensive teams to do this work. They're currently meeting. You can see the human resources team. Mr. Rojas is going to add other people to this team. Data literacy is off and running. The modules are pretty much done. They are perfecting that to be able to deliver them as early as August. The staff capacity team, I actually joined that meeting two days ago. They've rolled up their sleeves. They're really deep into the work already and they're excited about the work. Our principal capacity team, you can see the members there. We are critically thinking about the work that we're going to do with principals next year, particularly these 15 principals that we mentioned. You can see the parent support team. The ideas that have come from this group have already been pretty jarring in terms of what impact they may have in schools. They're wonderful ideas and a lot of energy. Again, the work has started. People are really enthusiastic about working in these groups. The goal is to meet every single week and monitor our progress. The groups are fine-tuning their strategies. Their strategies are the adult work. What is the adult work that needs to be executed before we start school next year? I cannot be more pleased with the enthusiasm I see when I go into these meetings. The enthusiasm comes from a place where people want to make an impact with these students. Everyone on these teams feels the urgency. The urgency creates enthusiasm for the work. That is where we are. We feel good about where we are. I want to remind Commissioners that I would like to invite you to some of these team meetings so you can see the work on the ground floor before it gets implemented. Once it gets implemented, we're also going to invite you into some of these spaces so you can actually see it. We're very excited about this work and we believe that it is the right work. We want to attack the problem at a base level. For these schools, we think it's going to make a difference. Are there any questions or comments at this time?

Comm. Martinez: Thank you for your diligence and the team's diligence in compiling all of this. I want to emphasize to everyone on this call right now that we're about to enter the phase of hard work. We're eager and excited for it. We're about to get busy.

Comm. Castillo-Cruz: I want to thank you for the presentation. It was very informative and a very proactive approach. I did appreciate all the information and the planning and bringing everyone in. Count me in on anything you need from us. We'll gladly support this effort with whatever you need from us. I appreciated the presentation and the information.

Dr. Henderson: I definitely appreciate the support. I want to bring Commissioners in so they can see the work as we're building. Thank you very much for the support.

Comm. Ramirez: Dr. Henderson and Dr. Newell, I want to express how hopeful I am to see this conversation moving forward and see this put into an actual plan. I'm hopeful to hear Dr. Henderson say something that I have been saying and I feel strongly about. We have compiled a lot of data throughout the years, and we have done very little with it. I'm looking forward to the bold actions that will come out of these committees. I'm in full support of this. Paterson Public Schools needs to move with data and proven best practices. We are not the only district that has struggled. There are a lot of success stories throughout this country. I'm hopeful that we are going to take a lot of these best practices and bring them to Paterson Public Schools to give our students, district staff, and families what they need. Like Comm. Castillo-Cruz, please count on my support. Reach out. Include us. We need to turn this district around and I'm hopeful with this presentation. Please make sure that we maintain cultural and language-appropriate support for the stakeholders.

Dr. Henderson: Will do.

Comm. Freeman: Dr. Newell and Dr. Henderson, thank you so much. I'm very impressed with the presentation. I'm very curious and excited to see where we go with this. I'm a lot excited because now there will be some sort of accountability for everyone. That's one of the biggest problems in my eyes that I saw in this district. There was no accountability. No one was held accountable for the things that they were not performing and doing. I feel that we're on the right track and I do appreciate it. I'm excited. Some people may not be as happy or excited as I am about it, but it is what it is. We need to get the district where it needs to be. There's no reason why and it's quite embarrassing where we are for so many years when everybody was saying that the district was moving forward when in fact we were not moving forward. I did see an increase in parental involvement, which I love. In reading and math we have to do better. For so many years I've said that we need to focus on the lower grades. For some reason, we just dropped the ball on that. It's imperative that we all work together and respect each other's position and not try to throw a monkey wrench into things. We're going to work together and with the administration, namely Dr. Newell, Dr. Henderson, and cabinet. By no means should we be trying to throw a monkey wrench in it. If you can't do it – and that goes for anyone who works in the district – then you might want to think about moving your employment if you're not going to join in the bandwagon because there's a lot of it. We can sit here and talk about a lot of things that we want to do and see, but when we underhandedly try to do things behind people's back and talk negatively about them, it brings a light to the community that we're not on one accord. We shouldn't operate like that. I thank you again for this presentation. I'm looking forward to working collaboratively with everyone. Dr. Joseph, I'm definitely going to call you because I'm excited about what's about to happen. We should all be excited and thankful that we're getting presentations like this. As Joel said, when we get the data we have to work off of it instead of just throwing the data on a pile of papers and not thinking about it and think that we're going to make a difference when we are not even addressing and looking at the data. Thank you and I appreciate you guys. I know I'm a little rough around the edges, but you have to get used to it. It is what it is.

Comm. Redmon: Dr. Henderson, you talked about inviting the Board to attend some of the sessions. When would that be? I would like to set my schedule so I can be part of it. I want to see what's going on. I want to know when it's going to be available to us.

Dr. Henderson: Each team has a team leader. I will talk to the team leaders so that you receive the schedule of their meetings. Every team has a different meeting schedule. Whatever meeting happens to fit your schedule, we will go ahead and make that happen.

Comm. Redmon: Thank you so much. I appreciate this presentation. I thought it was informative. This is the first time that I've actually seen it put up around the data and making sure that we understood it. Thank you again, Dr. Henderson, for a great presentation.

Dr. Henderson: Thank you.

Comm. Martinez: If any other Commissioners have anything to add, please feel free. I want to take a moment to say that I'm really inspired by the motivation that I'm hearing from the Commissioners, cabinet, Superintendent, and everyone involved. I'll use this opportunity to invite everyone to maintain that enthusiasm because we have some work. I'm not being metaphorical about this. Over the next couple of months, we're going to have some work to do. We're going to have some meetings that we're going to be scheduling and I'm going to get that information out to you guys as soon as possible, possibly by tomorrow. We're going to space the meetings out to still allow for folks to enjoy their summers and weekends, but we're going to have some work to do. We will get you that calendar as early as possible so everyone can make the accommodations. This is really where the rubber is going to start to meet that road. Let's keep this motivation. Let's keep this inspiration. Let's always keep in mind why we're here. We're here to do the work for the students of this district and our city. This is where we really need to buck up and get to work. Thank you all.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

It was moved by Comm. Ramirez, seconded by Comm. Castillo-Cruz that the Public Comments portion of the meeting be opened. On roll call all members voted in the affirmative. The motion carried.

No speakers.

It was moved by Comm. Ramirez, seconded by Comm. Castillo-Cruz that the Public Comments portion of the meeting be closed. On roll call all members voted in the affirmative. The motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT

Comm. Martinez: We really do appreciate you taking the time. Let's keep this motivation. Let's keep this inspiration and keep in mind why we are here and who are we doing it for most importantly.

It was moved by Comm. Ramirez, seconded by Comm. Castillo-Cruz that the meeting be adjourned. On roll call all members voted in the affirmative. The motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:18 p.m.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Richard L. Matthews". The signature is written in a cursive style with a small flourish at the end.

Mr. Richard Matthews
Business Administrator/Board Secretary