

**MINUTES OF THE PATERSON BOARD OF EDUCATION
SPECIAL MEETING**

March 18, 2024 – 6:31 p.m.
Central Office (First Floor)

Presiding: Comm. Manuel Martinez, President

Present:

Dr. Laurie W. Newell, Superintendent of Schools
Dr. Rodney Henderson, Deputy Superintendent
Khalifah Shabazz-Charles, Esq., General Counsel

Comm. Oshin Castillo-Cruz
*Comm. Valerie Freeman
Comm. Eddie Gonzalez
Comm. Della McCall

Comm. Joel Ramirez
Comm. Mohammed Rashid
Comm. Kenneth Simmons, Vice President

Absent:

Comm. Nakima Redmon

The Salute to the Flag was led by Comm. Martinez.

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
March 18, 2024 at 6:00 p.m.
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.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

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

PRESENTATION OF THE 2024-2025 SCHOOL DISTRICT PRELIMINARY BUDGET

Dr. Newell: Good evening, everyone. It's nice to see you all. As you know, Mr. Matthews, our School Business Administrator, shared a detailed presentation on the 2024-2025 budget at the workshop meeting last week, Wednesday, the 13th. During the presentation, we received several questions and many of them were answered. You have before you today the full budget that was sent electronically. I also provided an unofficial table of contents to assist in navigating through the document, which is over 160 pages. In connection with the presentation, I shared my list of budget priorities with the Board last week. As a reminder, I will briefly mention what these priorities are. They are Gifted & Talented to expand the program. Expand Fine & Performing Arts. We did discuss the Restorative Middle School Program. Our district does not have a professional development department. I talked briefly about special education hubs, and English as a Second Language hubs. We also talked about after school programs, which were academic, and Eastside High School science labs. We also have a pervasive teacher vacancy situation that we're trying to address. We talked about a cosmetology dry room, as well as a mobile crisis unit. We have no numbers yet and some of these have been added since the meeting. Also, a public safety program was added since the meeting. I've also received suggestions on items that could be included as priorities for the budget. I did mention the enhanced academic after-school program, artificial intelligence, and e-sports. I will be incorporating these items in the coming fiscal year as funding permits. Additionally, it was requested that I provide figures for the priorities that I have. After the Board meeting last week, I met with a few key staff members and together we were able to come up with preliminary figures, which are included in the presentation that you have been provided. I'd like to stress that the numbers are only preliminary. There are quite a few processes that we have to go through before we can get finalized numbers. Those definite numbers will be provided once we go through the process. I want to thank especially my team members, Ms. Joanna Tsimpedes, Ms. Cheryl Coy, Mr. Neil Mapp, Dr. Rodney Henderson, and others on the team who were able to provide some of these numbers that you have before you. That is the end of my report.

Mr. Richard Matthews: Thank you, Comm. Martinez and Superintendent Dr. Newell. As she said, you have the presentation before you. I have a little snippet of that presentation tonight. Before I go into the slides, I want to thank my budget team for all they have done to get us to this point, working around the clock and making all these entries into the software. You have the major DOE budget as well, over 600 pages. My team has put that all together to make sure that it was done correctly.

Comm. Simmons: I just want to piggyback on what the Superintendent said. I know there were requests to give numbers for items for the priorities. To clarify, many of those services or if it's software, we will have to go out to bid for so we wouldn't have those numbers. Keep that in mind when we're asking for numbers for those priorities. That's a whole different process.

*Comm. Freeman enters the meeting at 6:39 p.m.

Mr. Matthews: Thank you, Comm. Simmons. The revenues for the year state sources are \$589,574,424. That number is up \$54 million over prior year. Federal sources for

2024-2025 are \$18 million. That number is up \$850,000. The tax levy for fiscal year 2024-2025 is \$76,826,789. That number is up \$3.6 million. That's a 5% increase. Other sources are miscellaneous revenue. They're at \$5.8 million. That number is up 2.3%. Budgeted fund balance comprised of \$35 million of excess surplus and a \$4 million withdrawal out of capital reserve. Total revenues for the year are \$730,429,370. That number is up \$73 million over prior year. On the expenditure side, salaries and benefits are \$369 million. That's up \$15 million. Charter school contribution is \$147 million. That's up \$24 million. Non-salary is \$15 million. Central office is \$197 million. That's up \$32 million. Total expenditures for the year are \$730,429,370. You revenues and expenditures match, which is a balanced budget. The last slide that I have is what you saw last week, the state aid over the last five years. For seven years, we were told we'd be fully funded. At the end of fiscal year 2024-2025, our total state aid is \$583,574,424, which was an additional \$54 million in state aid. That's the end of my presentation.

Comm. Martinez: Are there any questions?

RESOLUTIONS FOR A VOTE AT THE WORKSHOP MEETING

Resolution No. 1

WHEREAS, the preliminary budget submitted by the Superintendent of Schools, be affirmed, and approved by the Board of Education for the 2024-2025 school year; and the School Business Administrator/Board Secretary be authorized to submit the preliminary budget to the Executive County Superintendent of Schools for approval in accordance with the statutory deadline; and

WHEREAS, the 2024-2025 preliminary budget was prepared consistent with the district fiscal Policy 6220 addressing budget preparation, with primary consideration given to educational priorities identified by the Board and Dr. Laurienne W. Newell, Superintendent of Schools; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Education recognizes school staff and Board members will incur travel expenses related to and within the scope of their current responsibilities and further recognizes travel that promotes the delivery of instruction or furthers the efficient operation of the school district; and N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-7.1 et seq, requires the Board of Education to establish by resolution a maximum travel expenditure amount for the budget year, which the school district shall not exceed; and

WHEREAS, the travel expenditure maximum resolution was approved on January 3, 2024, with an annual maximum amount per employee of \$1,500 for regular business travel pursuant to the provisions of N.J.A.C 6A:23A-7.3(b); and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Education hereby establishes a maximum travel expenditure amount of \$250,000, for all staff and board members for the school year 2024-2025, with an annual maximum amount per employee of \$1,500 for regular business travel and related expense reimbursements; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board of Education approve the 2024-2025 Preliminary budget submitted by Dr. Laurienne W. Newell, Superintendent of Schools, which reflects an increase in the local tax levy and use of CAP adjustment increase SDA district local share available for 2024-2025 to support the general fund as reflected herein; and the School Business Administrator/Board Secretary be authorized to submit the preliminary budget to the Executive County Superintendent of Schools for approval

in accordance with the statutory deadline; and to advertise said preliminary budget in the Herald News in accordance with the form suggested by the State Department of Education and according to law.

	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Local Tax Levy included</u>
<u>General Fund Revenue</u>		
Local Sources	\$ 82,061,244	\$ 76,223,039
State Sources	\$ 589,574,424	\$
Federal Sources	\$ 1,708,902	\$
Budgeted Fund Balance	\$ 35,350,265	
Withdrawal from Cap Reserve	\$ 4,304,949	
Total General Fund	<u>\$ 712,999,784</u>	<u>\$ 76,223,039</u>
<u>Special Revenue Fund (net of operating budget transfers)</u>		<u>Local Tax Levy included</u>
Local Sources	\$ 900,218	\$
State Sources	\$ 57,085,576	\$
Federal Aid	\$ 34,034,134	\$
Transfer from Operation Fund:		
Pre-K Special Education	\$ 3,367,329	\$
Total Special Revenue Fund	<u>\$ 95,387,257</u>	<u>\$</u>
<u>Debt Service -Fund 40</u>		<u>Local Tax Levy included</u>
\$ 603,750	\$ 603,750	
Grand Total Revenues	<u>\$ 808,990,791</u>	<u>\$ 76,826,789</u>

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a public hearing be held at the District Administrative Office, 90 Delaware Avenue, Paterson, New Jersey on Tuesday, May 7, 2024, for the purpose of conducting a public hearing on the budget for the 2024-2025 school year; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that this resolution shall take effect upon its adoption.

It was moved by Comm. Simmons, seconded by Comm. Castillo-Cruz that Resolution No. 1 be adopted. On roll call all members voted as follows:

Comm. Castillo-Cruz: Yes.

Comm. Freeman: Yes.

Comm. Gonzalez: No.

Comm. McCall: Pass.

Comm. Ramirez: No.

Comm. Rashid: No.

Comm. Simmons: Yes.

Comm. McCall: Yes.

Comm. Martinez: Yes.

The motion carried.

**Paterson Board of Education
Standing Abstentions**

Comm. Oshin Castillo-Cruz

- Self
- City of Paterson
- Transportation (Bus Companies)
- Downtown Special Improvement District
- Celebrate Paterson
- Passaic County
- Passaic County Board of Social Services

Comm. Valerie Freeman

- Self
- Family
- Paterson Cares, Inc.
- Paterson Community Health Center

Comm. Eddie Gonzalez

- Self
- Family
- New Jersey Community Development Corporation (NJCDC)
- Community Charter School of Paterson

Comm. Manuel Martinez

- Self

Comm. Della McCall

- Self
- City of Paterson

Comm. Joel D. Ramirez

- Self
- City of Paterson
- Passaic County Community College

Comm. Mohammed H. Rashid

- Self

Comm. Nakima Redmon

- Self
- Historic Preservation of the City of Paterson
- County of Passaic

Comm. Kenneth Simmons

- Self
- Family

Resolution No. 2

WHEREAS, the 2024-2025 Preliminary Budget for the Paterson Public School District includes Budgeted Withdrawal from the General Fund Capital Reserve Account for

Excess Cost/Other Capital Projects; and requires a separate statement of purpose in the advertised budget, and

WHEREAS, a withdrawal from the Capital Reserve has been budgeted in the Recap of Balances, and

WHEREAS, a copy of the board resolution must be submitted to the County Office with the budget. Districts should refer to N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-14.1 subsection (h) for specific requirements for capital reserve withdrawals, and

WHEREAS, included in the general fund appropriations, budget line 620 is a withdrawal from Capital Reserve Other Capital Projects in the amount of \$4,304,949 for Other Capital Projects which represents expenditures for construction elements or projects that are in addition to the facilities efficiency standards determined by the Commissioner as necessary to achieve the New Jersey Student Learning Standards, now

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Board of Education approves the withdrawal from Capital Reserve for Other Capital Projects which represents expenditures for construction elements or projects that are in addition to the facilities efficiency standards determined by the Commissioner as necessary to achieve the New Jersey Student Learning Standards, in the amount of \$4,304,949 for the 2024-2025 school year.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, this resolution shall take effect upon adoption.

It was moved by Comm. Simmons, seconded by Comm. Castillo-Cruz that Resolution No. 2 be adopted. On roll call all members voted in the affirmative. The motion carried.

Paterson Board of Education Standing Abstentions

Comm. Oshin Castillo-Cruz

- Self
- City of Paterson
- Transportation (Bus Companies)
- Downtown Special Improvement District
- Celebrate Paterson
- Passaic County
- Passaic County Board of Social Services

Comm. Valerie Freeman

- Self
- Family
- Paterson Cares, Inc.
- Paterson Community Health Center

Comm. Eddie Gonzalez

- Self
- Family
- New Jersey Community Development Corporation (NJCDC)
- Community Charter School of Paterson

Comm. Manuel Martinez

- Self

Comm. Della McCall

- Self
- City of Paterson

Comm. Joel D. Ramirez

- Self
- City of Paterson
- Passaic County Community College

Comm. Mohammed H. Rashid

- Self

Comm. Nakima Redmon

- Self
- Historic Preservation of the City of Paterson
- County of Passaic

Comm. Kenneth Simmons

- Self
- Family

ADJOURNMENT

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

The meeting was adjourned at 6:46 p.m.



Mr. Richard Matthews
Business Administrator/Board Secretary