

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

October 5, 2023 – 6:38 p.m.
Joseph A. Taub School

Presiding: Comm. Nakima Redmon, President

Present:

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

Comm. Valerie Freeman
Comm. Jonathan Hodges
Comm. Dania Martinez, Vice President

Comm. Della McCall
Comm. Kenneth Simmons

Absent:

Comm. Oshin Castillo-Cruz
Comm. Eddie Gonzalez
Comm. Manuel Martinez

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

Comm. McCall 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:

**Workshop Meeting
October 5, 2023 at 6:00 p.m.
Joseph A. Taub School
202 Union 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.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

It was moved by Comm. Hodges, seconded by Comm. Simmons that the Board goes into Executive Session to discuss issues that warrant confidentiality, as consistent with NJSA 10:4-12 for matters of Attorney/Client Privilege, Contracts, Legal, Litigation, Negotiations, Personnel and Student Matters. The minutes will be made available to the public upon request, when the confidentiality of the

subject is no longer warranted. On roll call all members voted in the affirmative. The motion carried.

The Board went into executive session at 6:41 p.m.

It was moved by Comm. Simmons, seconded by Comm. D. Martinez that the Board reconvenes the meeting. On roll call all members voted in the affirmative. The motion carried.

The Board reconvened the meeting at 8:00 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

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

Ms. Erica Bernard Parker: Good evening, staff, parents, and community. I'm Erica Bernard Parker and I come before you today as a product of Paterson Public Schools and a teacher serving the students of Paterson School No. 21. Soon a request will be coming before you to expand the program that I started last year supporting students who grieve. The program was started after seeing a need in my school with students who are dealing with grief. The expansion is to help now support the students at ATM Academy with therapy dog visits. I received tremendous support from my principal along with Assistant Superintendent Warren. My ultimate goal for the program is to expand it so that all students in the district are able to have access to therapy dog visits and for staff to receive continual professional development. Thursday, November 16 is Child Grief Awareness Day. We will be having a small program at School No. 21. Invitations have been sent to Superintendent Newell, Assistant Superintendents and Board Commissioners. If you are able to attend and be part of the program, we would really appreciate it. Thank you.

Ms. Rosie Grant: Good evening, Madam Chair, Commissioners, Madam Superintendent, staff, and community members. I had the opportunity to go to the SDA meeting yesterday accompanied by Dr. Hodges, Mr. Matthews, Linda Reid of the Paterson Education Fund, and Charles Ferrer from the Paterson Teachers Association. I'm pleased to report that we were well received by the SDA Board. They welcomed us and listened intently. We had their full attention. They reminded us of the work that they've done here that we are thankful for and we reminded them that the court said all facilities. They do have us on their radar, and I'm pleased to report that they mentioned STEAM Academy, which is coming up next, but said that they expected some funds for School No. 3 in the next round. We're thankful for that and I wanted to report that to you. We're putting together our candidates' guide for the School Board election, and I want to encourage the candidates that have not submitted their information to please do so. We will print without you on Friday. We have pulled pictures from public places, and it will just say in large print "Did Not Participate" or "No Information Submitted." I do encourage you to participate. Finally, as Paterson Education Fund, we want to express our condolences to the families who are grieving the loss of loved ones, especially the young people that we have lost over the past week and even today. Thank you so much for this opportunity.

Ms. Ivette Hernandez: Good evening, Board members and Superintendent. I'm here on behalf of the community, parents, students, and staff once again asking, what is the fate of our school? We were told that this was a temporary situation and that repairs on

the school would take five to six months and that we were a cohort, our own school with our own administration within another school building. But there are things in the works that are making it look like it's a little different than what we were told, some things the parents are not aware of. It's been two months. We're now into the third month and nothing has started, as far as I know. At School No. 3 there are no repairs being done. There are rumors on a daily basis of what our fate is and what is happening with the students, the school itself, and the staff. During the meeting an assistant superintendent made some mention that this was known a year ago. I honestly don't know what that was in reference to and what it was that our district and administration knew a year ago. Within that one month after the ceiling collapsed, in two different school buildings permanent ones were built, with painted walls and beautiful doors. There was talk that some of that construction started before the collapse of the ceiling in School No. 3. That collapse happened in one room at School No. 3, but out of an abundance of caution the entire building was closed. That's not the first time that's happened. It happened the previous school year. If not that school year, the year before we walked in in September and one of the second-floor classrooms had a hole in the ceiling. We continued almost as normal. That class was moved to an art room. They fixed the room, sealed it up with a drop ceiling, then they went back into that room and the school year went as normal. Here we are, one room in the building and the whole building had to shut down. This idea of a cohort - the lines of that are getting a little bit blurred. If we're a cohort, we're our own school and we have our own administration, why is it that administration and the supervisor from MLK walked into one of our classrooms and commandeered that teacher for a vacancy that they were about to have? Is it possible I can sign on to speak at the end of the list?

Comm. Redmon: Finish your thought now.

Ms. Hernandez: We have our own administration. How is it that MLK's administration walked into our classroom in order to commandeer that teacher to fill a vacancy that they have? We just got our own vacancy for that position filled this year. If MLK had a vacancy, they can come in and take any of the teachers to fill their vacancies. I thought we were our own school. That's what we were told by the principal, district, and the Board. That's what the parents were told. We are still School No. 3. What is the future of our school? We deserve transparency. We've never had a meeting with district officials to officially speak to the staff about what's happening and what we can expect. We hear it all as rumors. We need transparency. Thank you.

Ms. Greta Mills: Hello, everyone. There is an overcrowding going on at School No. 6. The students are now being sent to School No. 10 and every time I turn around, I get an email saying I'm getting a new student. Why am I getting a new student? Because School No. 6 is overcrowded. I have over 25 students in my room with special needs, IEPs, and pullout replacement services that they're supposed to be receiving and are not. I'm the only one in that classroom with 25 kids. I'm no miracle worker. I have a student who is supposed to have a PA, but he doesn't have it. He's sticking his finger inside the holes of the walls because they still haven't been fixed. I'm only one person. I need for the room to be repaired. I need to have a PA for the student because he's all over the place. I need for them to fix the building. I need for you to hire teachers at a better salary rate so that they can stop leaving. I know teachers at School No. 26 who are leaving. We have teachers at School No. 8 that left. I know teachers who are leaving from School No. 10. If you don't start hiring people and making life better in the classroom for the teachers, they're going to continue to leave because we are overwhelmed. You have math supervisors and other people coming in trying to observe and worrying about a pacing guide and students are failing. This is a failing school. Did anybody look at the scores for the NJSLA? Everybody was in red. Meanwhile we want

to have all these kids piled up into one classroom with one teacher to work a miracle. It's not fair to the students or the teachers. We hire people for SEL and other positions, but they're not in the classroom. The only people who are set to be in the classroom are the teachers. Everybody else sits in a little corner in a cubby hole and when they decided to come out of there, great for them. The teacher is the one left in the room. Resources teachers are being pulled to cover classrooms that teachers are just not coming into anymore. Why? Because they're getting paid better somewhere else. Please put another teacher in that building because there are too many students in that one classroom. Every day I'm sending for another desk to be put in my classroom and it's not safe. Please fix it.

Ms. Kyranisha Williams-Ford: Hello, everybody.

Mr. Ford: Good evening. My daughter is a student at Dale Avenue. She suffers from autism severely. She has communication impairment. Due to the district shortage of speech therapists and other paraprofessionals my child is due compensatory services. My child has been waiting for evaluations for a communication device to aid in her communication. As result of my child's diagnosis and the district's inability to service the high number of students with disabilities, it is causing my child emotional distress as well as educational regression. I have requested an out-of-district placement for my child. We met with the team this morning and we're still in the dark about moving forward with the out-of-district placement. This was requested last year. We sat down with them on the 15th, and we were supposed to hear something back by today. We're still in the dark about that. The same thing come up time and time again, being short staffed. This is a major concern. The lady who just left here spoke about the same thing. This is a major problem. It's sad that we have to send the kids out-of-district when we were raised here. Even the teachers are coming from out-of-district. We do need more teachers that were raised here. They're more familiar with our children than people coming from other towns, especially far away. The neighborhoods are different, so the mindset is different when dealing with our children. It's very imperative to focus on in-house, that way they can relate to our children better.

Ms. Williams-Ford: I'm going to relate to him. This is Kyla Ford's father. The IEP meeting that we had today was supposed to be for out-of-district. When you go there, there's poor communication. They always blame 90 Delaware for everything. I showed them over and over documentation dealing with my daughter losing related services. No one to this day since 2021 could come to me and tell me what my daughter is owed. If I have to send my daughter out-of-district, how long does that process take? This district is really failing our kids. Especially when it comes to special education, these kids are failing. Teachers don't care. Child study teams don't care. You get upset because I'm telling you what my daughter needs. This is why emails go out. Then you get nervous because I'm sending emails out. How would you feel if this was your child? Put yourself here. My daughter should not be lacking anything. My daughter has been in the school for three whole years and she's not talking. That means something is wrong. All of a sudden, since this is her last year at Dale Avenue, she gets the right speech and occupational therapists. But I feel sorry for them because I'm pulling her out to go out-of-district. I was trying to stop it, but as I keep looking, I can't let my daughter stay here and keep failing. Somebody has to take on this matter somewhere else so I can come here to protect my child. The number one thing that I don't like is when it's time for these meetings emails come out. I'm tired of that. Don't send me emails trying to block me from coming here. When it comes down to my daughter, I'm going to speak for her and for everybody else's child too. I have two questions. I sent emails out last week for these bathrooms. I went to back-to-school night and the bathrooms are horrible. Are you going to tell me that if my daughter is sitting on the

toilet and that paint is chipping that my baby is eating that? Her father does construction. Is that lead in the walls? You have administrators walking around this building with maintenance staff. Aren't you guys looking at that when there are kids come into these buildings? This is sad. It's unbelievable. When I look at the log, no maintenance person came to clean the bathrooms. Those bathrooms are straight filthy. Do you sit on nasty toilets? Treat these kids the way you want your child to be treated. Your kids don't go to these districts. You guys can go home and lay down every night and say it's okay. Body language speaks a lot of stuff. You have some on their cell phones and they don't care. You have some writing on a piece of paper. They don't care. How many times do I have to keep coming here as a parent and my daughter isn't getting anything? She's only seven and in the second grade. Do you know how many years I have to go? I have to go a whole lot of years. Please get it done. It's frustrating. I get so nervous when I see my daughter coming home from school and I ask her what she has learned. She tells me someone is talking to her in a high-pitched voice to say, "Don't do that." Who's doing that to my child? Next time I come here, I'm going to lawyer up. That's my next step. Also, the playground is horrible. I don't know who approved that playground at 90 Delaware, but I heard that a person told them to accept this playground or nothing at all.

Ms. Marcella Simadiris: Praise the Lord. First, I want to give my condolences to the Parent of the Year, Michael Taylor. I don't know if you all are aware, but it was his daughter that transitioned on Monday. I do want to say that I'm deeply saddened that there is no sense of obligation from the President or Superintendent to address the violence that is occurring in the city that our students have to deal with. President Redmon, you did this on February 15 in your President's report when you acknowledged being highlighted by Rosa Parks for Black History Month, but you didn't provide the public with any comments regarding the violence that had occurred and the three children that were shot earlier in the week. I couldn't even come to these Board meetings for months after it because I was just so discouraged and saddened by it. I'm saddened again tonight because you failed to respond. A teacher came up and spoke about a program on grief. I want a report. What are these administrators doing in these high schools and schools surrounded by these pockets of violence? Are these children being provided with opportunities to express their grief or anxiety? Is that happening? That's what you should be speaking to the public right now. There's so much I have to cover. Last time I asked the Superintendent for your position on the instructional model. I haven't heard from you on that. I really need to know what your position is because it's my position that that's an inequity driver. It narrows the curriculum and prevents access to quality education and courses. At that meeting I heard discussions about facilities reviews and long-range facility plans. I heard a parent speaking about not knowing of the issues at School No. 3. I'd like to know what happened with those facility plans, and can we have a presentation to the public on where we are in facilities. They should be included in the comprehensive equity plans. That is an indicator of equity. You get equity through facilities. The SDA was created to bring forth equity through facilities so you should be taking those reports, lining them up with your CEPs for the district and showing where the inequities are in facilities and curriculum. That's what needs to be reflected in a comprehensive equity plan so I would appreciate some efforts in doing disproportionality reports. You all know I have a problem with G&T and how this district likes to report it as School No. 28 so it could be a Blue-Ribbon school when you did not turn around School No. 28. You threw out all the neighborhood kids and bused in new kids. Stop. I'm involved in an equity coalition and there were some research papers available for me to take so I took some from you all. I haven't been able to go through all of them. I suggest you start with learning acceleration in segregated schooling in New Jersey. Thank you.

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

PRESENTATIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS

New Jersey Student Learning Assessments (NJSLA)

Ms. Nicole Brown: Good evening, Commissioners and community. Mr. Valentin and I are here to present tonight the 2022-2023 state assessment results. We are going to begin with the New Jersey Student Learning Standards Assessment. This assessment is designed to test students in the areas of English language arts, math, and science. With English language arts we are assessing grades 3-9, for math grade 3-8, and then the course that's taken in grade 9, either algebra I, geometry, or algebra II. In science, we are assessing grades 5, 8, and 11. This is measured in the area of selected constructed response and constructed response items. We are looking at multiple choice assessment questions along with those that are open-ended where students are providing a narrative to explain their reasoning. It's important to note that our students were not assessed in the 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 school years. The New Jersey Student Learning Standards are assessed via this vehicle of the NJSLA, and they indicate how well our students are performing in the standards set forth by the state. In English language arts, we are looking at reading and comprehending text in a range of levels independently and their ability to write effectively when using and analyzing those sources that are there. It is scored in five areas of proficiency with 5 being the greatest level of attainment. In math, we are looking at applying skills and concepts, understanding multistep problems that require some abstract reasoning done with that work, and then modeling real world problems with precision, perseverance, and the use of tools. Just like with ELA, that's scored in a five-level area of proficiency with 5 being our greatest level of attainment. In science, we're looking at focusing on applying skills and concepts, the proficiency of scientific and engineering practices, and an emphasis on data analysis and making arguments from the data that's presented in that scientific model. This is unlike ELA and math in that it's only scored in four areas of proficiency with a 4 being our greatest level of attainment.

Mr. Luis Valentin: Now we're going to go over the NJSLA results starting with English language arts. On the first slide we're looking at English language arts proficiency level of 4 or higher. Level 4 is meeting expectations and level 5 is exceeding expectations. We had a slight growth in ELA 5, 6 and 8. There was no change in ELA 7. For all students tested in grades 3-8 and 6-8 they had a slight positive change as well. Here we're looking at state results side-by-side with district results. You can see that there was growth in ELA 5, 6, 7, and 8. This is the same data represented in the visualization so you can see it side-by-side. When going over our subgroup performance we see that all students tested in grades 3-9 stayed pretty close from year-to-year. We did see a slight increase in our male, Asian, White, and students with disabilities populations. Moving on to math, we're looking at positive changes in math 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, algebra I and geometry. That's also inclusive of our district 3-8 and 3-5 students. They also showed some growth. In comparison to the state, we did notice that in math 7 there was a drop in the state results as well. This is the same information visualized so you can see it quickly. When going over our subgroup performance in math we did see growth in all students tested in grades 3-9. Females, males, African American, Asian, Hispanic, White, students with disabilities, and English language learners all had positive growth. Moving on to science, we're looking at positive growth in science 8 and 11. When you're looking at the district aggregate in the bottom, I'd just like to remind you that the test is only assessed in grades 5, 8, and 11, so when you're looking at grades 6-8 that's

really just the eighth-grade students. When you look at 9-11, those are just the eleventh-grade students that were tested. We're looking at state results next to the district comparison. We had minimal gains in science 8 and 11. When going over our subgroup performance, we did have some growth in our African American population and students with disabilities, but everywhere else there were drops. Now we're going to talk about the DLM.

Ms. Brown: The Dynamic Learning Maps are alternate assessments that are provided to our students with the most significant intellectual disabilities. Just like the NJSLA, they are marking the standards, but they're looking at the areas of English language arts, math, and science as well. It is measuring our overall performance level on the essential element skill statements that are utilized to deliver the instruction for the students in this area.

Mr. Valentin: When looking at this data, it's important to note that DLM is not an assessment given to everyone. The qualification from the state is that it's about 1% of the population. Our district does have a higher population of students take it, but when looking year-to-year it's important to note because those grade levels change. You can have 20 kids that are DLM one year in that grade level and next year you won't have any. When you're looking at these numbers, it's hard to go back and forth. Just so that you're looking at it, in grades 6, 7, and 11 we had a positive change in students who achieved proficiency at target or advanced in DLM. Again, that's assessing the essential elements. With math, we had our fourth, sixth, and seventh grade students show some gains with the DLM. Overall, the district did drop. For science, we had a positive change in grade 5 and overall, the district did go down.

Ms. Brown: As a district there are recommendations that come out of academic services. The first is intervention platforms. We look at how that impacts our student achievement. There's close monitoring of the academic performance through those platforms. Weekly usage reports are pulled at the district level, and they are shared with school administrators. That is made available also to our supervisors who are in the school building on a daily basis. Information from those reports is shared at data meetings with principals. In turn, they share that information with their staff. Those reports are used to help determine small group instruction in the areas of student growth so that we can maximize the student's ability to make instructional gains. Benchmark assessments are a part of those intervention platforms. They are given at a minimum of twice a year with sometimes additional assessments administered based on the program. They give us a secondary check on the growth. It will give us a pulse on how students are progressing in the different content areas. Through consistent use of the programs, students will increase their level of proficiency on assessments. It may not be making it to the next achievement level, but we should see growth within the levels and over time they should advance into a proficiency stage. Full usage of the intervention platforms is emphasized because we don't want it to be used to replace core instruction. It's an additional layer of support for our students. These are some of the interventions and supports that we have in the buildings with Achieve 3,000 being utilized for our bilingual population, Newsela allows teachers to take texts and have multiple levels of that text provided so students can engage in conversation around that material. ALEKS and Success maker are two of the math intervention platforms used for different grade bands. Success Maker is for our children in grade k-5 and ALEKS for our 6-12 population. We have access in literacy to iStation for our k-8 students and Raz Kids aligns to their reading levels. Tutor.com is a resource used now with your approval last month for grades 6-12. They're able to access a live tutor. There are programs that take place after school and in the summertime to help enrich the students as well as our multilingual students. Some of the common trends and challenges that we see are

persistent vacancies and teacher turnover rates, which is not just a Paterson problem. It is a statewide and nationwide problem. We have substitute shortages in the classroom. At times we have students who are mixed in with our other classes to ensure that there's a teacher in front of them. We have been battling student attendance and chronic absenteeism and trying to make parents aware of the importance of being in school on a daily basis and how missing one day does affect the instruction for their children. Then there are limitations on how and when we can offer professional development to our staff. We are working on increasing that this year so that more staff is able to attend professional development sessions and increase student proficiency in the classroom. When we look at our data analysis, we are doing that both by grade level and standards and concepts to see what students are able to master in different grade bands. Professional development implementation is shared with teachers. Learning walks, visitations, and lesson plan reviews are conducted to ensure that they are on pace and able to meet the delivery of the standards at that grade level. We have distribution and analysis of data that takes place in August and September. As that information starts to enter the school system, information is presented and shared as we're doing now in October. Job embedded coaching is done through the work of the school-based supervisors, really sitting and working with teachers to disaggregate some of the data, make instructional decisions, and plan for those lessons. That's followed up through learning walks, visitations, and lesson plan reviews to ensure that we see those interventions built into the lessons that are being delivered. Ultimately, our goal is to make sure that ongoing support provides incremental growth in proficiency and that the collective strategies are being utilized within the classroom. Some of the changes that we made in the previous school year was that there was some increased support to our schools through the hiring of additional ELA and math school-based supervisors. By doing this, this allowed them to have more connection with teachers on a more regular basis in our schools. We saw that our comprehensive schools had increased support over those that were non-categorized. There was really an emphasis on our coaching and data-based instruction, using that data to really drive those lesson plans. Additional support was provided to our novice teachers to ensure that they were able to navigate the curriculum and utilize those resources appropriately. We had data binders, the continued emphasis on that work and using that as a tool to determine the instruction for the students and make progress within the student's unique learning paths. High school student support teams were established to look at multidisciplinary team meetings to ensure that more teachers are aware of what's happening with the students on a collective front and there are preventative measures and individualized supports built in for those students. For our current school year, we are continuing with our inequity issue and ensuring that we have a focus on our multilingual learners. As has been shared in previous meetings, our bilingual population continues to grow, and we need to ensure that all teachers are aware of strategies to support those learners. We have Restorative Practices taking place through the help of PEF within our school buildings to make sure that we're looking at the whole child. There are classroom visitations occurring between our school and district administrators so that there's a greater connection between the work that's done in terms of curriculum development and what that looks like in our classrooms. I spoke about professional development being increased with our teachers. We have data meetings that continue to take place with the administrators and at the school level. Our job-embedded coaching support continues between school-based supervisors and the administrators and teachers to ensure that we have curriculum alignment. Our categorized schools continue to receive additional support. That came this year primarily in the form of our reading specialists and math intervention teachers that we have now in the buildings to work with focused students. An RFP is being finalized and it will sit at your approval level for next week for a high school digital literacy program. Not to replace core instruction, but as an

additional layer for students to practice when they are at home and to support that growth in literacy. We will open for questions.

Comm. Simmons: In ELA and basically across the board from 3-5 we see declines. The declines in 3-4 explain to me the minimal growth at level 5. What do we attribute the declines to?

Ms. Brown: I will tell you that the students in grades 3 and 4 were our youngest learners in kindergarten and first grade during COVID. The ability to really address foundational skills is much different in a virtual setting than it is when students are in front of you. That's the predominant reason for a decline in those grade levels. We did apply for the grant to support students with tutoring specific to those grade levels and it was written to target ELA for grades 3 and 4.

Comm. Simmons: Madam Superintendent, I'm asking the question for a specific reason. Earlier this year I asked for the promotion rate from grade 3 to 4. When I see the decline across the board, I have to question the promotion rate from grade 3 to 4. If we can get some clarity on how that happens or how we determine how we move students forward, I'd appreciate that. If we're not doing what we need to do at grades 1 through 3 and then we see this massive movement to grade 4, there's a huge disconnect. I want to make sure that we get those things addressed. We were told a couple of years ago right before we came back from the pandemic about the intervention programs and how using them were going to help us make movement. We're back to the recommendation of continuing to use these intervention programs. Is there a way for us to monitor the effectiveness of those programs? How do we monitor home usage?

Ms. Brown: There are reports built into those programs that allow us to monitor when students are accessing those programs, whether it be in school or at the home level. It doesn't separate it so that we see it clean, but we can definitely make determinations on where that's being used. I know I've had some conversations with administrators this year where we see some overwhelming use to make sure it's being used appropriately. There are reports that show growth within those platforms as well. That's looking at a second layer on top of the NJSLA results. They may not move from level to level, but if you look at individual student data, we see growth within individual students in those proficiency bands.

Comm. McCall: Comm. Simmons, you took some of what I was going to ask. How is it that we continue to see declines and yet we see a large number of promotions and graduations? That becomes a real concern. Looking at the supports to schools and the plan, I'm going to take what you just said at the end of your comments a little further. When we monitor and we start to look at these programs, how are we measuring whether or not these programs are the best for our children to succeed and get to where they to be? If we continue to see a decline but we keep bringing the same programs back and we keep saying yes to these resolutions that ask us to pay for them, how do we measure our kids' success? We talked about tutoring. We offer tutoring, but is it the right tutoring for our children? Is the tutor on visual communication via the computer? Is that enough for our children to get what they need? Do we need to look at maybe more in-classroom tutoring? Do we develop something with the colleges and universities around us to bring in some interns? I want to be able to measure if the programs that we pay for or get for free are really being helpful to our students. If we continue to decline, then maybe we need to stop trying to give the services and look for the right ones. I see here we talked about categorizing schools and receiving additional support. When we talk about the additional support, do we have enough support within

the district to make sure that it goes to all of the schools? Tonight, we hear from a teacher who says that she's being overloaded with special needs children and there is no assistance in the classrooms. Of course, we're not going to get any growth from that. We're just going to continue to decline. What is our plan B, C, D, E, and F? It looks like we need to have some things in place to make it reasonable for our population of children. I'm very disappointed with the numbers and what the report is telling us about how badly our children are doing. Yet we continue to graduate these children. For me, if they're not ready to move on to different grade levels, that's our fault. I'm taking a whole lot of responsibility tonight after receiving these numbers. What do we do? How do we do it? I would ask that with everything that we have in place some kind of way throughout the year we monitor it in a way where we can see whether it's working. It's okay if it's not working. That means we need to make some changes. Thank you.

Comm. Hodges: You're not going to drag me into the intervention. I'm not going to go there because I've gone there, and it's been very unpleasant. I'm not going to do that tonight. Maybe I will a little bit. You've noted common trends and challenges – persistent vacancies, teacher turnovers, substitute shortages, limitations on how and when we can offer professional development and other support to staff, and student attendance/chronic absenteeism. What's actually happening in the classroom in terms of how successful a teacher is teaching to make sure that the information the children are receiving is in fact understood and mastered? How are we doing that? A lot of these things happen across the country. They're going on now and they're doing better than we are. When we do advance, it's minimal. How are we monitoring what's taught in the classroom? What does that look like? Do our unit assessments truly monitor what is being given to the students and their understanding of it? That's my problem. If they're doing well, then the test scores should be better. If they're being taught, the test scores should be better. The national problem that you've listed in trends and challenges doesn't help me understand how we fix that. By giving them tutoring, mentoring, and all these other instructional aids does not address what's actually being done or not being done in the first place. That's what I need to understand. How do you look at what's being actually taught in the classroom? It doesn't appear to be effective. I need to know how you plan to take a look at that and determine how effective we are in teaching. I've been sitting here for a long time looking at all these results for years and same flavor, same result. There must be a way to get better information about what is transpiring in our classrooms than what we're receiving. I just can't believe that the common trends and challenges are the only answers to why these children aren't doing well. It's just not enough. How do we fix that doing these suggestions on what you do to correct that? Does that get to the actual teaching? They may give the students more opportunities to practice what should be taught or relearn something that hasn't been taught, but I'm not sure it changes the instruction going on in the first place. That's what I'd like to know. Are we doing the job in the first place? Are our tests monitoring that? I've been told the unit exams are catching up to the state level. They're not there yet, but that means we can't see what's happening in the classroom because we're not monitoring it effectively compared to the state. You can't answer me tonight, but somehow, I'd like that discussion to come up.

Comm. Simmons: On the after school, Saturday and summer enrichment programs, is there a point when some of these programs become mandatory?

Ms. Brown: Yes. We went back to a mandatory model for summer school this past summer. We did a much more targeted approach looking at students who were not meeting the level of proficiency to attend a summer program. During COVID we

opened it up to everybody. We did go back to that targeted approach to make sure that we were getting all of our students and providing that additional layer of support.

Comm. Simmons: That's for summer school. Before we get to summer and we notice that students are falling behind, is Saturday enrichment mandatory throughout the year?

Ms. Brown: Saturday enrichment is not mandatory because it's designed to be enrichment and that is open to everybody. There are after-school programs that become mandatory for those students.

Comm. Simmons: Madam Superintendent, if students are falling behind before we get to the point where they have to go to summer school, can we intervene and make some things mandatory throughout the year? We want to be in a space where summer school isn't necessarily mandatory because they don't have to attend. We can be proactive and that would be great.

Comm. Redmon: I remember two years ago prior to COVID we were doing Saturday enrichment programs. Are we still doing those programs for students having difficulties with reading and math?

Ms. Brown: Yes, but that was a multi-tiered program that was open to everybody. We are doing Saturday programs, but they're open to everybody. It's not just for students who are struggling. They're integrated where we have math, science, and literacy being taught in an interdisciplinary approach in that program.

Comm. Redmon: The students that attend those programs on Saturday, have we pulled the data for the targeted group that we need? Are they attending those programs? We can have students that are excelling going to those programs and those who need to be in those programs are not attending. We're not going to see any changes. We need to pull the data to find out if those students are actually attending that particular program.

Comm. Freeman: Just skimming through this is very disheartening. When I look at reports like this and I look at our graduation rate, it doesn't match. If the students are performing at this level, there's a problem. From my understanding, this is from grades 3-11, correct?

Ms. Brown: Grades 3-9 and then 11th grade for science.

Comm. Freeman: At third grade they should be doing a lot of things and it's clear that they're not. Are we testing or seeing what grade level k-2 are at?

Ms. Brown: In terms of a state assessment, there is not one. At the district level there are assessments provided to those students.

Comm. Freeman: Do you see improvement or decline in those grades? It begins there. If they can't do it there, I can't expect them to do it further. Any kind of focus in those grades to make sure they're up to par before they get promoted and moved on to the next grade?

Ms. Brown: Those grade levels look at standards-based report cards. It's a little bit of a different type of measurement than your letter grades that we're using for those students. We're looking at their level of proficiency with the standard over the course of the school year.

Comm. McCall: I want to go back and ask a question based on the programs that we have in place for after-school or Saturday enrichment. What are the tools that we use to measure them? I'm not saying it's happening, but how are we going back to measure these programs to make sure that they are giving us what we need for our students? It could be a good program, but is the substance of the program meeting the needs of the students? If it's not, what role do we play in getting those programs up to speed to meet the needs of our kids? You can have a great program and it's just not efficient for what we need. They may not know what we need to get us where we need to be. What type of evaluations or communication is going forth with those programs so that they can get us what we need for our students?

Ms. Brown: With our summer programs specifically, we look at different resources for the students. Based on what we were trying to achieve in terms of the areas of deficiency we build a curriculum around that. There were assessments provided at the onset and conclusion of the program to see if there was growth maintained by that child over the course of instruction that they had during the summer programming. The same sort of tool will be used in after-school programs, but those were being designed based on student needs at the school level. It's a different assessment, but that data is also collected. It's just not necessarily the same instrument across all of our schools.

Comm. McCall: What happens if you find that the children are not getting the progress that we're looking for or some type of movement in a positive direction? What is the process with that particular program?

Ms. Brown: Often there are additional conversations that we have at the school level to look at what's happening with that student and what additional supports can be provided during the school day to make sure there's student growth happening and then tracking of that growth to determine whether additional interventions are needed.

Comm. Hodges: With the interventions, are you looking to bring the child back to where they should be? Or just incrementally increase their level of performance after the various interventional approaches?

Ms. Brown: My goal is always to get the students to grow. I'm looking at it twofold. I'm looking that there is incremental progress that's made, and the ultimate goal is to get them to proficiency. We need to see is there growth that can be had and that it's not a learning disability that we need to address in a different capacity. We need to continue to work and intervene with that student and ensure that the right supports are in place so that growth can happen.

Comm. Hodges: If a certain intervention causes a significant increase in the student proficiency, do you look at what that program offers that's not being offered in the classroom? I can't get past the classroom when I'm looking at those test scores. We're putting in these interventions to supply some component that the child is not getting. If they have to have this additional component, then why aren't they getting it the first time around in the classroom? That's what I really need the district to focus on. You can't send a child to an interventional program like Credit Recovery and say that we can get you a year's worth of education in four weeks. We do that and that's totally ridiculous. They've not gotten the whole length and breadth of the course. We do that and we lie to those children and to us here. I'm not jumping on you. I'm talking in general. That doesn't add up to me. I don't understand why we're not looking at the original basis for the ineffectiveness of what we're providing these kids. Other districts are doing it. When they leave here, they get up to speed. When School No. 28 students arrive at

that school, they are generally not prepared to function at that level. Over time, the student, when they are in that environment, raise their level of performance so that they can match what's required of them. What's not happening in the regular school is happening in the G&T and it's a new level of performance. It tells me something is not happening in the normal school levels. The kids are still able to do it if they're asked to and if they're in an environment where that performance is expected of them. They're the same Paterson children. Why aren't we asking that of them? Why aren't we challenging them the way G&T does? The G&T teachers have said it. They don't come prepared to do the work when they get there. They don't, but they can. There's some expectation that's not in the regular school that is at G&T and we have to fix that. That's why I look at these interventions and I say they're a Band-Aid, but they don't address the actual injury. The Band-Aid is not the most effective way to heal a wound. That's why I'm looking to find what the difference between the expectation in the public schools and G&T. Why aren't those kids prepared to function at that level? That's what I need to know. My information comes from the teachers themselves. They get new students into their building that don't arrive prepared to work at the level that they're eventually going to have to, but they manage to work through it themselves. We need to find out what that difference is soon because this is disgraceful.

Comm. D. Martinez: It's very sad to see scores like this. I'm a very strong advocate of this district and the programs and services that we have to offer. To what Comm. McCall said, I have requested in the past to assess all these programs that we bring in. As a Board, we approve a lot of programs that we feel are going to be beneficial for our students. I've been on this Board for three years and I've been a supporter of excellent programs that I feel will benefit our students, especially after and during the pandemic. To see these numbers is very sad because I know our teachers and staff truly care about our children and work very hard to support the needs of our students. It's important for us to understand what programs are not working so we revisit and allocate these funds somewhere else. As a district we need to understand and look at things in a different lens as far as environment factors. Our city is going through a lot of things right now and it's getting worse day by day. Your environmental factors are going to affect how you learn in the classroom. I think we need to start addressing those things. Although we have SEL programs and counseling services for our students, is that enough? Are we really addressing the issues that our students are facing? When a student is struggling with areas at home or experiencing violence within the community, we can't expect them to learn at a capacity that we feel is necessary. We're setting up our students for failure if we don't start addressing the social-emotional factors because that's very important when it comes to academic learning and growth. I think that's something we need to consider more. It's not that we have not. I don't want my statement to get misconstrued. But I think it's something that we need to work on more closer. It is a strong factor in the society that we are living in, especially with social media. Our children are tremendously affected by social media. Once we start addressing that factor, I think things will improve. I'm not saying it's going to be a 360, but looking at things in that perspective.

Comm. Redmon: Have we started to look at some of the data from COVID and the challenging things we had to compare them to scores that we see?

Ms. Brown: We did have pre-COVID data to share with you, but we omitted it from this. After COVID, that became our new baseline and we wanted to use our assessments coming back in to see what growth we were making from that point in time.

Comm. Redmon: Because we have new members on this Board, we should have had that pre-data plus the data we're getting tonight. We can then see the effects of what

the pandemic did to our students. The real issues are not being addressed about those effects. We're moving on as if those students never got their issues addressed. Some of those students lost loved ones. Some kept going to school. Our schools were their safe haven. A lot of them are getting adjusted back into the school district. Those things need to be addressed as well, not just the test scores. We see the data, but you're not seeing the side effects of what the data is. You have to show the whole picture. You can't show half of the picture. I know these are the numbers we got from the State, and I understand what it is. But I do task the Superintendent that we get a whole overall review of everything that's going on between the pandemic and what our actions are going to be to move this district forward after the pandemic is over.

Comm. Hodges: There is some conversation down in the State about ending the end-of-year test. I'm wondering what we do then to determine the actual level of our students' performance if there's no countable measure. What do we do then? How do we know where they are and how well they perform? My good friend David Sciarra will fight you because they don't want to use the test as a total assessment of the child. The problem is if we use our test, we have great students because we have A, B, and C students here. But not when it comes to the state test, and that's a problem. If they go ahead and remove that, unless we get a better handle on what the students are actually learning in the classroom, we're going to be way below the performance of other students in this state. We won't know it and we will hand them a graduation diploma that will mean absolutely nothing. We have got to get this done. We have got to find out what's going on in that classroom. What's going on in the regular classroom versus what's going on in G&T? Why is there that step-up, that difference? Many states in the country are getting rid of the end-of-year test, which is why New Jersey is looking at it. It may help some schools, but it's not going to help us. We have got to get a handle on that before this happens, if it does happen.

Comm. Simmons: You asked for data prior to COVID, which might be difficult because the assessments changed like three times. I think you'd have to go too far back where it would actually matter for the students that we have. Literally, I believe the state assessment changed three times.

Comm. Redmon: I understand what you're saying. It would probably be the students that would be juniors and seniors this year. They're gone.

Comm. Simmons: Those students aren't here anymore.

Comm. Redmon: I got it. Are there any more questions or concerns?

RESOLUTIONS FOR A VOTE AT THE WORKSHOP MEETING

Resolution No. 1

Whereas, the Paterson Public School District approves the payment of bills and claims dated through October 5, 2023, beginning with check number 239181 and ending with check number 239318, along with direct deposit number beginning with 1804 and ending with 1827, in the amount of \$12,585,946.81, and wire in the amount of \$10,000,000.00, for a total of \$22,585,946.81;

Be It Resolved, that each claim or demand has been fully itemized, verified and has been duly audited as required by law in accordance with N.J.S.A. 18A:19-2.

It was moved by Comm. McCall, seconded by Comm. Simmons that Resolution No. 1 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
- Downtown Special Improvement District
- Celebrate Paterson

Comm. Valerie Freeman

- Self
- Family

Comm. Eddie Gonzalez

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

Comm. Jonathan Hodges

- Self
- City of Paterson

Comm. Dania Martinez

- Self
- City of Paterson
- Ilearn Schools
- Paterson Arts & Science Charter School

Comm. Manuel Martinez

- Self

Comm. Della McCall

- Self
- City of Paterson

Comm. Nakima Redmon

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

Comm. Kenneth Simmons

- Self
- Family

Resolution No. 2

WHEREAS, Paterson- A Promising Tomorrow Strategic Plan, Goal # 1- Teaching & Learning is to create student-centered learning environment to prepare students for career, college readiness and lifelong learning, and

WHEREAS, "Perkins V," the reauthorization of Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006, is the principal source of federal funding to states for the improvement of secondary and post-secondary career and technical education programs; and

WHEREAS, Perkins defines career and technical education as organized educational activities that offer a sequence of courses that provides students with the academic and technical knowledge and skills the students need to prepare for further education and for the careers in current or emerging employment sectors. Career and technical education includes competency based applied learning that contributes to student's academic knowledge, higher order reasoning, and problem-solving skills, work attitudes, general employability skills, and occupation-specific skills; and

WHEREAS, there is no matching requirement for the Paterson Public Schools for this grant: and

BE IT THEREFORE, RESOLVED, that pending final and full approval from the New Jersey Department of Education, the Paterson Public Schools District Board of Education accepts the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Grant Allocation in the amount of \$128,413 for the grant period July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024 for the purposes stated above.

It was moved by Comm. Hodges, seconded by Comm. D. Martinez 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
- Downtown Special Improvement District
- Celebrate Paterson

Comm. Valerie Freeman

- Self
- Family

Comm. Eddie Gonzalez

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

Comm. Jonathan Hodges

- Self

- City of Paterson

Comm. Dania Martinez

- Self
- City of Paterson
- Ilearn Schools
- Paterson Arts & Science Charter School

Comm. Manuel Martinez

- Self

Comm. Della McCall

- Self
- City of Paterson

Comm. Nakima Redmon

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

Comm. Kenneth Simmons

- Self
- Family

Resolution No. 3

WHEREAS, the districts' 5 Year Strategic Plan: Paterson- A Promising Tomorrow's Goal 1 is to create a student- centered learning environment to prepare students for career, college readiness and lifelong learning, and;

WHEREAS, field trips afford students a firsthand educational experience that is not available in the classroom, and;

WHEREAS, the Assistant Superintendents have approved/recommended the addition of the attached field trip locations;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the Paterson Board of Education accepts the addition of the attached list of approved destinations as appropriate field trip sites for the students of the Paterson Public Schools for the 2023-2024 school year.

It was moved by Comm. Simmons, seconded by Comm. D. Martinez that Resolution No. 3 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
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- City of Paterson

Comm. Dania Martinez

- Self
- City of Paterson
- Ilearn Schools
- Paterson Arts & Science Charter School

Comm. Manuel Martinez

- Self

Comm. Della McCall

- Self
- City of Paterson

Comm. Nakima Redmon

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

Comm. Kenneth Simmons

- Self
- Family

Resolution No. 4

WHEREAS, on March 15, 2007, the State of New Jersey adopted P.L.2007, c.53, *An Act Concerning School District Accountability*, also known as Assembly Bill 5 (A5), and

WHEREAS, Bill A5, N.J.S.A. 18A:11-12(3)f, requires that conferences/workshops have prior approval by a majority of the full voting membership of the board of education, and

WHEREAS, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:11-12(2)s, an employee or member of the board of education who travels in violation of the school district's policy or this section shall be required to reimburse the school district in an amount equal to three times the cost associated with attending the event, now therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education approves attendance of conferences/workshops for the dates and amounts listed for staff members and/or Board members on the attached and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that final authorization for attendance at conferences/ workshops will be confirmed at the time a purchase order is issued.

CONFERENCE/WORKSHOP REQUESTS

STAFF MEMBER	CONFERENCE	DATE	AMOUNT
*Melissa Jaikissoon	MSU Seminar in PIRS Practices	October 3, 2023 March 14, 2024	\$1,100.00 (registration)
Preschool Intervention and Referral Specialist	Montclair, NJ		
*Martha Llerena-Farfan	MSU Seminar in PIRS Practices	October 3, 2023 March 14, 2024	\$1,100.00 (registration)
Preschool Intervention and Referral Specialist	Montclair, NJ		
Boris Zaydel	Hot Topics in Special Ed. Law 2023	October 11, 2023	\$215.00 (registration) (Previously approved on 9/20/23; registration increased)
District Counsel	Virtual		
Dalton Price	NJSBA Workshop 2023	October 22-26, 2023	\$565.50 (transportation & meals)
Director of Security & Emergency Preparedness	Atlantic City, NJ		
Valerie Freeman	NABSE 51 st Annual Conference	November 28- December 3, 2023	\$5,350.00 (registration, transportation, lodging, meals)
Board Member	New Orleans, LA		
Eddie Gonzalez	NABSE 51 st Annual Conference	November 28- December 3, 2023	\$5,598.00 (registration, transportation, lodging, meals)
Board Member	New Orleans, LA		
Dania Martinez	NABSE 51 st Annual Conference	November 28- December 3, 2023	\$5,301.00 (registration, transportation, lodging, meals)
Board Vice President	New Orleans, LA		
Della McCall	NABSE 51 st Annual Conference	November 28- December 3, 2023	\$5,352.00 (registration, transportation, lodging, meals)
Board Member	New Orleans, LA		
Nakima Redmon	NABSE 51 st Annual Conference	November 28- December 3, 2023	\$5,352.00 (registration, transportation, lodging, meals)
Board President	New Orleans, LA		
Kenneth L. Simmons	NABSE 51 st Annual Conference	November 28- December 3, 2023	\$5,572.00 (registration, transportation, lodging, meals)
Board Member	New Orleans, LA		

Patricia Keppler	Rutgers Center for Literacy Development 2023-2024	December 6, 2023 February 7, 2024 April 17, 2024 May 21, 2024	\$870.62 (registration, transportation)
Reading Specialist/School 15	Piscataway, NJ		
Carla Propersi	Rutgers Center for Literacy Development 2023-2024	December 6, 2023 February 7, 2024 April 17, 2024 May 21, 2024	\$895.44 (registration, transportation)
Reading Specialist/School 5	Piscataway, NJ		
Dayna-Marie Zisa	Rutgers Center for Literacy Development 2023-2024	December 6, 2023 February 7, 2024 April 17, 2024 May 21, 2024	\$904.46 (registration, transportation)
Reading Specialist/School 5	Piscataway, NJ		
Boris Zaydel	Ethical Concerns in Risk Management 2023	December 8, 2023	\$200.00 (registration) (Previously approved on September 20, 2023/registration increased)
District Counsel	Virtual		

*FOR RATIFICATION

Total Number of Conferences: 14

Total Cost: \$38,376.02

It was moved by Comm. Hodges, seconded by Comm. D. Martinez that Resolution No. 4 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
- Downtown Special Improvement District
- Celebrate Paterson

Comm. Valerie Freeman

- Self
- Family

Comm. Eddie Gonzalez

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

Comm. Jonathan Hodges

- Self

- City of Paterson

Comm. Dania Martinez

- Self
- City of Paterson
- Ilearn Schools
- Paterson Arts & Science Charter School

Comm. Manuel Martinez

- Self

Comm. Della McCall

- Self
- City of Paterson

Comm. Nakima Redmon

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

Comm. Kenneth Simmons

- Self
- Family

Resolution No. 5

PURPOSE: Resolution of the School District of the City of Paterson, County of Passaic, State of New Jersey, to extend the contract for an Executive Search Consultant, RFP-435-23 for the 2023-2024 school year.

WHEREAS, at the board of education meeting of June 23, 2022, resolution number #15, a contract was approved by the board, for a one-year term awarding a contract to Hazard, Young, Attea & Associates (HYA) for Executive Superintendent Search, RFP-435-23; and

WHEREAS, the District requires additional support from HYA in the hiring of leadership level positions. HYA shall consult with the Office of the Superintendent to facilitate the placement of qualified candidates into high level leadership positions; and

WHEREAS, the District Administration has deemed the services from the vendor to be "effective and efficient" as required for extension under 18A:18A-42 and that it has also been considered necessary to continue the contracted services by the vendor; and

WHEREAS, HYA has agreed to extend the contract with the District with no increase in price. There will be no changes to the terms and conditions of the contract and an allowance was made in the RFP specifications for an extension of this contract; and

WHEREAS, the awarding of these contracts is in line with the Five-Year Strategic Plan 2019-2024, Goal Area # 3: Communications & Connections; now

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education approves the one-year contract extension to Hazard, Young, Attea & Associates for the 2023-2024 school year, for the not-to-exceed amount of \$49,500.00 annually.

It was moved by Comm. McCall, seconded by Comm. Simmons that Resolution No. 5 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
- Downtown Special Improvement District
- Celebrate Paterson

Comm. Valerie Freeman

- Self
- Family

Comm. Eddie Gonzalez

- Self
- Family
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- Community Charter School of Paterson

Comm. Jonathan Hodges

- Self
- City of Paterson

Comm. Dania Martinez

- Self
- City of Paterson
- Ilearn Schools
- Paterson Arts & Science Charter School

Comm. Manuel Martinez

- Self

Comm. Della McCall

- Self
- City of Paterson

Comm. Nakima Redmon

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

Comm. Kenneth Simmons

- Self
- Family

GENERAL BUSINESS

Items Requiring a Vote

Instruction and Program

Comm. Hodges: We met but I don't have that report.

Comm. Redmon: Will you have the report for the regular meeting?

Comm. Hodges: Yes.

Operations

Comm. D. Martinez: Operations met today. Present were myself and Comm. Gonzalez. We discussed the items that were on the agenda. There were some changes to our routes due to companies not being able to fill the routes. That's the reason for the changes. Comm. Gonzalez asked whether we're continuing with the checks of bus drivers and aides. Right now we're transitioning and hiring new staff because the person who was doing that resigned. We're in the process of getting a new person. That's all we discussed.

Comm. Freeman: We're getting a new person to...?

Comm. D. Martinez: The person who was doing the checks resigned.

Comm. Freeman: The checks for the buses? They're not being checked?

Comm. D. Martinez: I don't remember. I'll get back to you.

Fiscal Management

Comm. Simmons: Fiscal management met Tuesday. We discussed many of the items that are on the agenda. In particular, we discussed the exhaustion of our ESSER II funding. I was glad to hear that because the deadline was this past Saturday. I wanted to make sure we didn't have to send any money back, but we did exhaust it. There's an expenditure report that is in the Google Drive and I'll make sure all the Board members receive that report on the expenditures from the ESSER II funding. We also talked about the budget forums that the BA has been doing. There are some additional scheduled. He did talk about the PTO budget forum that took place on the 27th, which was well-attended. There were some recommendations and ideas received from the public and the PTO membership that the BA will be taking into consideration. All that information will be shared with the rest of the Board.

Personnel

Comm. Redmon: Personnel met on Monday. We talked about the vacancy list, which is still at 155. We talked about increasing our budget to do more advertising to try to get teachers here. We talked about our virtual job fairs. We talked about the last job fair we had where we recruited 5 that are actually here. We talked about positions at the school level and one administration position. The personnel agenda is up. Please review it and if you have any questions, please let us know. Thank you.

Governance

Comm. Simmons: We did meet. I don't have the report, but we talked about current litigation and that will most likely be discussed in an executive session at the next meeting.

Committee Report

Facilities

Comm. Redmon: Dr. Hodges, I know that we have a report coming up in facilities. We wanted to discuss the issues with School No. 3 and your trip to Trenton. You were going to give us a detailed summary. When we discuss that in committee, I want to make sure that all members have their concerns and questions answered. We meet next week in facilities about that plan and hopefully we can give direction to the Superintendent with regards to School No. 3 so she can give the information to the public that they're waiting for.

Family & Community Engagement

Comm. D. Martinez: We're scheduled to meet this Monday so I'll report at the regular meeting.

Comm. Redmon: Family and Community Engagement will have an event at Kennedy High School on Saturday from 9:00 to 3:00. Please come out and support.

Policy

Comm. Simmons: Policy is scheduled to meet next week. Members of that committee have received the latest policy alert. Please review it and be prepared to discuss those recommendations thoroughly.

Technology

Comm. Simmons: Technology met yesterday. We had a pretty extensive discussion. Many of the things we discussed were technical in nature. I don't want you all mad at me, but I would like to go over a couple of things that we discussed. We had an extensive discussion on the compendium. The reason it is apropos at this point is because we just heard about all the programs that we approve and use regularly but we don't get an assessment of. We don't know if they work or if they're effective. Just so folks understand what a compendium is it's a searchable database which would include all of the programs and contracts that the Board has to approve. Within that, it would have information on whether or not those programs and vendors are effective or failing so we know these things when it's time for us to reapprove. It's a way for us to gather that information and have it in a database so Board members can search it and look at that information prior to us approving programs or contracts for vendors that are ineffective.

Comm. Hodges: It's also good for the administration to monitor where they are and make judgments about why we're doing this. If you have two schools that are doing the same thing with two different programs, which ones are we using and why? Are there 10 schools doing one and 9 doing the other? Find one that really works and get a

bargain on the price. That's part of what you get from a compendium. It's just another management tool.

Comm. Redmon: Dr. Hodges, you should be happy. I think I heard that word often since my tenure here.

Comm. Hodges: Yes, but it's not here yet.

Comm. McCall: We also talked about Board Docs.

Comm. Simmons: We talked about our student engagement in terms of, and it's something we have been talking about for a while, having a program where we're teaching students computer repair. Mr. Saleh is going to look into some opportunities out there in terms of students becoming members of some of the professional organizations and then maybe bringing in some training. Finding a space in the district is the biggest part of it, so we can teach students how to repair some of our Chromebooks. We have a large amount of Chromebooks and devices that students use so we want to be able to train our students to do those types of things in-house so that we don't have to necessarily send them out for repair. Lastly, because in our retreat we talked about Board members having access to information, one of the things I mentioned was Board Docs. It's good for the Board and the administration, but it allows Cheryl to build the agenda online. It has all of the resolutions and supporting documents for resolutions in one place. You wouldn't have to necessarily search the Google Drive and I know Comm. Freeman hates that. It puts it in one place for the Board members to search and get all the information really quickly. We wanted to recommend that we look into that. It came up in fiscal as well. I know we looked at this a few years ago, but I'm not sure what happened.

Comm. Redmon: We just had a discussion, but never a presentation on it.

Comm. Simmons: This is part of the process of us becoming paperless and that helps with that. DocuSign was the other program, since we're talking about becoming paperless. It helps to create workflow. When folks are talking about PTFs, right now they are signed manually. They have to go from office to office. DocuSign creates a form so once that form is signed it automatically goes to the next person for their signature. That helps with making sure paperwork is moving efficiently and we're not getting resolutions at the last minute because something was sitting on someone's desk and they didn't get an opportunity to sign it or maybe they were on vacation and they couldn't sign it. Those are two pieces of software that we are asking the district to look into so that we can become a little more efficient and paperless.

OTHER BUSINESS

Comm. Redmon: Just before we adjourn the meeting, I would like to thank all the Board members who attended the retreat on Saturday. It was a long, but fruitful retreat. I know we're going to be looking into some more dates because the person who facilitated the retreat wants to meet with us on a quarterly basis and I think it's a good thing for us. She would like to meet with the Board on a quarterly basis just to touch base and see how we're progressing as a Board. I think it's much needed. Thank you for your time because I know you could have been anywhere else. I'm glad you came and we definitely enjoyed the presentation.

Comm. Hodges: We went to Chicago and one of the breakout sessions talked about reviewing of data quarterly so that you can see the progress, monitor how things are going, raise questions about what we're not doing, and get explanations. It encourages vigilance in terms of response to data. If you have to explain the data between month one versus month three and we're not seeing progress, then we need to ask what we are or are not doing. So, it's a consideration I thought should be brought here to the attention as a possibility. It a lot of work in terms of data operation, but it should be something that's already being done anyway. It's just a matter of bringing it to the Board.

Comm. Redmon: The school district you're talking about is Ferguson.

Comm. Freeman: I want to make a motion to bring back a discussion to combine athletic programs in this district. I know that was talked about when I wasn't here. It didn't get far, but I'd like to make a motion to bring that conversation back up please.

Comm. Simmons: This has been a discussion that has been going on for a long time, maybe 10 years. There was documentation on the impact. It may help if we can gather that documentation so we can have it for the discussion. I'm for it, but it's one of those things where we get a lot of pushback. It just makes sense. If we can gather all that information, it will help with the discussion.

Comm. Freeman: When you think about the surrounding areas and you look at the size of Eastside's and Kennedy's teams, god forbid if one of Kennedy's players gets hurt. It's going to be very hard to replace them and then you forfeit the game because he can't play. I think it's time for Paterson to really be put on the map. I know there are several districts in other cities that don't want to see the Paterson athletics programs combined and I can understand why. There's a lot of talent here. They don't like powerhouses and I don't want to say that, but we can meet them just where they are. Our children here are very talented, and I think some of them are being shortchanged. We need to have that discussion.

Comm. Redmon: I'll make sure we get it to a committee so we can have that fruitful discussion.

Comm. Freeman: We need to invite some people at some point. There are a couple of different people I need in the room.

Comm. Redmon: For the people that you want to see in the room, just give us a request so we can have them come in and address your questions while they're there.

Comm. McCall: I would like to request a report from the company that was helping us get students back from other sources of education. I would like to know what those numbers look like. We are in October, and I know that there was supposed to be a cutoff this month that we would get our reimbursement for those children. I would like to get a very comprehensive report because I would like to see if this program was effective for us and if not, measuring the goals and giving them some expectations on our part.

Comm. Redmon: Every Commissioner here has gotten their monthly report about the SAIR. Please check your email. They went out yesterday. You can check the data to see the incidents that we have gotten.

ADJOURNMENT

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

The meeting was adjourned at 9:42 p.m.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "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