

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

April 20, 2023 – 6:00 p.m.
Remote - Zoom

Presiding: Comm. Dania Martinez, Vice President

Present:

Ms. Eileen F. Shafer, Superintendent of Schools
Dr. Susana Peron, Deputy Superintendent
Khalifah Shabazz-Charles, Esq., General Counsel
Boris Zaydel, Esq., Board Counsel

Comm. Valerie Freeman
Comm. Eddie Gonzalez
Comm. Jonathan Hodges

Comm. Manuel Martinez
Comm. Della McCall
Comm. Kenneth Simmons

Absent:

Comm. Oshin Castillo-Cruz
Comm. Nakima Redmon, President

Comm. D. 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
April 20, 2023 at 6:00 p.m.
Virtual
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.

Comm. D. Martinez: We'll proceed with the Discussion on the 2023-2024 School District Budget. Mr. Matthews, you'll be holding this discussion, is that correct?

DISCUSSION ON THE 2023-2024 SCHOOL DISTRICT BUDGET

Mr. Richard Matthews: Good evening, Commissioners. I will be talking about the 2023-2024 budget. I have three quick points to go through and I'll take questions. We met on March 17 to go through the preliminary budget that was submitted to the County on

Monday, March 20. Typically, a turnaround time is about three weeks. We got our budget back approved by the County on Thursday, March 6. There are no items in question from the County. All items were approved without question. We submitted pretty much a perfect budget. After we submitted the budget on March 20, we made ourselves available to the public for any questions and concerns. We scheduled meetings with the Commissioners to answer any questions from them. I believe those meetings were fruitful. The next step is the public hearing on Tuesday, April 25. At that time, we'll have a resolution for the Board to adopt the 2023-2024 budget. That's pretty much it. I'll take any questions you guys may have. Nothing has changed since the preliminary budget. It's been approved by the County.

Comm. D. Martinez: Do any Commissioners have any questions?

Comm. Hodges: There were some concerns about some personnel shortages. Where are we with those?

Mr. Matthews: Some of those things came to us after the budget was approved. For instance, the music and the art came to us. Ms. Shafer addressed that last night. There are 18 positions between music and art. We've already had meetings to do that for this year. Nine positions are going to be put into the ESSER funds for the upcoming fiscal year 2023-2024. The final positions will be put into the budget for 2024-2025. The 2024-2025 budget is already in motion. Those are going to be addressed through ESSER and through the local budget in 2024-2025. Is there something else you were talking about as far as positions?

Comm. Hodges: No, those are in part. I think she mentioned that there was going to be 17...

Mr. Matthews: There are 18 total positions. We're going to do nine right away and nine for next year. I have all my people already engaged to make that happen.

Comm. Hodges: In the schools that you're opening that have pathways for high school restructuring, are those all being led by people who have experience in their fields?

Mr. Matthews: I can't speak to every position, but a lot of them that I've seen come through the answer is positively yes. For example, construction trades, not to go too much into the weeds, but when we do the concession stand over at Bauerle Field we're actually going to be working with construction trades people over at Kennedy to hire some of the students to do the work with our team over there. John Sebastian is a great guy to head that up, as well as some of the guys we've hired for culinary and some of the other trades. I don't know them all. From what I've seen, there have been some highly expert people leading those pathways.

Comm. Hodges: Are they involved in the design of the curriculum since they have the expertise?

Mr. Matthews: Dr. Peron, you may want to tackle that piece.

Dr. Peron: I'm not sure that Assistant Superintendent Tsimpedes is on the call, but we share the curriculum. We have a partnership with carpentry association. When that curriculum was established and developed, they served as advisory. They helped us with the different skills that were needed for the different types of construction trades. There are going to be different levels of construction trades that the students are going to be studying. Yes, they served as an advisor. We have a teacher coordinator, the

teacher of construction trades who has an engineer background, a carpentry background, and he's also a teacher. He did a lot of that heavy lift and you can definitely see the curriculum. It's available and accessible on the website.

Comm. Hodges: We have written curricula in the past that have not really served the purpose that they were aimed at – I'll put it that way – in terms of the themes of the academies. I don't want to repeat that issue.

Dr. Peron: That was in the past. In 2014 we took on the initiative of rewriting curriculum. We deleted courses in the high schools. We wrote curriculum to the tune of 400 courses, and everything was revamped and that was the idea around high school restructuring, that everything was aligned and purposeful and it begins in freshman seminar. That was one of the main components of developing and creating curricula. We went to the field, experts, and teachers as well who spent a lot of hours and time creating and developing curriculum around the different pathways. We have great pathway associate supervisors with backgrounds. The one pathway associate supervisor with specific background in computer science and science and engineering, that's what they're focused on. We have another pathway supervisor who has experience in business and marketing and that person is focused on leading that pathway. We really tried to match the expertise and knowledge to the programs and the pathways.

Comm. Hodges: The professional development of the teachers, do we have adequate amount of time for them to come up to speed with the course? That's always been a problem.

Comm. D. Martinez: Commissioner, I'm sorry. Moving forward, can we keep the questions related to the budget? Now we're going into instruction and programming, and I just want to stay focused.

Comm. Hodges: That is a question because you have to pay for the professional development. I want to make sure there is adequate funding to do that. That's why I'm raising the issue.

Comm. D. Martinez: I know, but you're asking about the programming, and it's not related to funding.

Comm. Hodges: This is about the funding for professional development. That's the issue.

Ms. Shafer: Cheryl or Boris, can you please let Joanna in as a panelist?

Dr. Peron: There is money slated in professional development under academic services. I know that there is money budgeted for that and for different types of professional development. We also have professional development that is grant-funded as well. There has been adequate planning around professional development from pre-K through 12. Ms. Tsimpedes, if you want to take it from here.

Ms. Joanna Tsimpedes: I apologize. I've been waiting to be admitted. We do have people who are knowledgeable within the area that they are writing the curriculum for, obviously automotive, cosmetology, communications, and culinary. We have experienced people within the field that are writing the curriculum, as well as us going out and partnering with other local high schools that have these programs to see what's happening at their schools and how to stay competitive. That is one thing we have

done this year. Our Director of Secondary Education has gone to various sites across the state to look at the programs they have in place. The second part to your question was regarding professional development. We do have professional development within our budget planned for. We do have days allocated for professional development, as per the district calendar that was approved at the March meeting. Moneys have been allocated. We know that there are specific areas that teachers have to be professionally developed on within the different pathways. We are looking at partnering with other high schools that have similar programs to create that level of collaboration among teachers also, so they have others who are within that field area to share ideas as well. That's something that we are moving forward with as we're going into the true first year of the students going into their pathways as a sophomore.

Comm. Hodges: Thank you.

Comm. Simmons: When we put positions using ESSER funds, can you explain what happens after that? What will happen during the next year's budget for those new positions?

Mr. Matthews: We had three target dates that we had to make sure we spent the ESSER money on. ESSER 1 was the CARES Act money. We have positions in that. The positions in ESSER 2 expire in September 2023. For ESSER 3, the money expires in September 2024. As each of those grants expire and we exhaust all the funds, any positions that are in the grant get rolled over into the local budget. There weren't a lot of positions in the CARES Act that we had to roll over. In ESSER 2 and 3, we've been rolling over positions as those grants expire. ESSER 2 expires this September 2023, meaning that we'd have to liquidate and spend all the money by 2023. Anything that we had in ESSER 2 for positions has already been rolled over for July 1, 2023, into the local budget. Positions for ESSER 3, the money expires in September 2024, meaning that it has to be fully liquidated by September 2024. Those positions are going to get rolled over into the budget in 2024-2025. We've targeted the positions that have to be sustained and those that have to be sustained get rolled into the budget as the money expires and we spend the grant money. You want to spend the grant money first so that's what we're doing. I'll give you an example. We had positions in the TIES program. Those positions are now into the local budget for 2024-2025 because that money was being used for ESSER 2. We can't use ESSER 2 past September 2023, so they've been rolled over into the local budget. For these nine positions, we're going to put them into ESSER 3, which gives us from July through next June to pay for those positions. Come the 2024-2025 budget season, those positions will go into the local budget.

Comm. D. Martinez: Any further questions?

Ms. Shafer: Mr. Matthews, can you give the Board members an opportunity to communicate with you between now and the vote for the final budget, if necessary?

Mr. Matthews: Yes. I'll set up another 5:00 session on Monday to meet with Commissioners. I'll talk to Ms. Williams after this meeting to set it up so we can meet with them at 5:00 on Monday and answer any questions they may have. If that's okay, I'll do it after this meeting.

Ms. Shafer: I would also suggest if any Board Commissioners want to meet with Mr. Matthews, just let him know between now and Monday. You can send him an email, text, or call him and he'll have a meeting on Monday. If that's not convenient and you have any questions over the weekend, we're closed tomorrow. You can send your

questions to him by email, and he'll get back to you. We just want to make sure all questions are answered prior to the vote on Tuesday.

Comm. D. Martinez: Thank you, Mr. Matthews, for the discussion.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

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

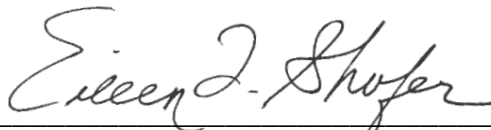
No speakers.

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

ADJOURNMENT

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

The meeting was adjourned at 6:22 p.m.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Eileen F. Shafer", written in black ink. The signature is positioned above a horizontal line.

Ms. Eileen F. Shafer, M.Ed.
Superintendent of Schools/
Board Secretary