

**MINUTES OF THE PATERSON BOARD OF EDUCATION
BOARD GOVERNANCE TRAINING/RETREAT**

September 24, 2022 – 9:30 a.m.
Remote Meeting (via Zoom)

Presiding: Comm. Kenneth Simmons, 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. Emanuel Capers
Comm. Oshin Castillo-Cruz
Comm. Jonathan Hodges

Comm. Dania Martinez
Comm. Nakima Redmon, Vice President
Comm. Corey Teague

Absent:

Comm. Vincent Arrington
Comm. Manuel Martinez

Comm. Simmons 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:

**Board Retreat
September 24, 2022 at 9:30 a.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.

OPENING REMARKS

What keeps the Board centered? What is the moral imperative of the Board in view of the challenges and obstacles?

- Board members shared their personal experiences/reasons for joining the Board. These experiences motivated them to get involved and try to effect some positive change.

- It's imperative to foster parental involvement and create opportunities for students to voice their concerns.
- Some Board members feel frustrated that the quality of education that Paterson students are receiving does not equip them to compete with students from other districts.

Discussion of 'Why? How? and Why?' (Sinek's Golden Circle)

What is the 'water', or the pervasive environment, that Board finds itself swimming in?

- There is a culture of misinformation in the community and of using politics in a negative way to gain leverage.
- The scope of work can be overwhelming and the slow movement of progress can be discouraging.
- Parents undermine the work of the school district by not demanding high standards for their own children.
- It can be overwhelming to handle all the issues that arise simultaneously.
- The only way to change the 'water' is to get outside of it and see what needs to be done differently.

What is Ethics?

- Core activities related to Board service
- Why do Board members behave unethically?
- Ethics Principles Discussion -
 - Board members expressed the need to achieve the right viewpoint of wielding authority and power. There is a need to advocate within the given set of rules.
 - It was suggested that the Board have a meeting to educate the public about Board ethics.
 - Board members in the past have taken aggressive action and acted outside of the scope of their authority, albeit with good intentions and to fix some of the mismanagement that they perceived was going on in the district.

LUNCH BREAK

SYSTEMS THINKING AND STRATEGIC ACTION

- Food service area is an area where there is a need of improvement and expansion. Board members want to weigh in, but not overstep their position.
- Although individual Board members may be passionate about pursuing a certain issue, the perspective of the entire Board needs to be considered.

BREAKOUT GROUPS EXERCISE:

Ethics for School Board members

Group 1 – Policies

- The district and the Board were united in their need to implement multiple policies for COVID.

Group 2 – Oversight and Accountability

- The Board does proper planning, but needs to pay more attention to monitoring the implementation and follow through.
- Also preplanning and research beforehand is important.

Group 3 – Planning

- Board needs to ensure that the administration puts regulations in place once policies are created. In the planning stage, the feasibility of the plan needs to be considered. Logistics, sustainability, and long-term cost of the plan should also be considered.

Group 4 – Accountability and Oversight

- The Board monitors what's going on in the district, but is not responsible to run the district.
- It is the Board's job to ensure that programs are performing a useful function for the students and challenge the administration to prove that these programs are increasing student achievement.

BREAKOUT GROUPS EXERCISE:

How do you See Your Role in Engaging with Internal and External Stakeholders?

- **Group 1** – Communication within district is good. Board members utilize committees to receive and relay information to administration and Superintendent. External communication can be more challenging.
- **Group 2** - When matters are handled properly, rather than through social media, the communication level has improved between the community and the district.
- **Group 3** – Concerns brought to the attention of the Board by the community should be redirected to the administration. There is a chain of command within the district that the community must recognize and abide by.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

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

REFLECTION AND ADJOURNMENT

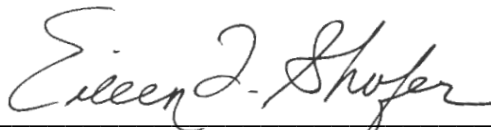
Board is appreciative of the training provided. They see the need to continue their education and look for ways to sharpen their skills.

We don't realize how far we've come until we look at where we were. The Board and district should feel a sense of fulfillment for what has been accomplished in the last two and a half years.

The Board should put greater pressure on the administration to improve the performance of students. They have to convey a sense of urgency to the staff. If this is not done, they will be content with the level of progress and won't work as hard as they should.

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

The meeting was adjourned at 2:16 p.m.

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

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