

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

March 28, 2022 – 5:30 p.m.
Remote - Zoom

Presiding: Comm. Nakima Redmon, Vice President

Present:

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

Comm. Vincent Arrington
Comm. Emanuel Capers
Comm. Oshin Castillo-Cruz
Comm. Jonathan Hodges

Comm. Dania Martinez
Comm. Manuel Martinez
Comm. Kenneth Simmons, President
Comm. Corey Teague

Comm. Redmon read the Open Public Meetings Act:

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

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

**Special Meeting
March 28, 2022 at 5:30 p.m.
Remote
90 Delaware Avenue
Paterson, New Jersey**

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

**MOTION TO GO INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION
TO DISCUSS PERSONNEL**

It was moved by Comm. Teague, seconded by Comm. D. Martinez that the Board goes into executive session to discuss personnel matters. On roll call all members voted in the affirmative. The motion carried.

The Board went into executive session at 5:36 p.m.

It was moved by Comm. Capers, seconded by Comm. M. 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 6:04 p.m.

PUBLIC HEARING TO DISCUSS THE EXTENDED CONTRACT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

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

Ms. Rosie Grant: Good evening members of the Board, Madam Superintendent, staff and community. First, I ask that someone explain to the public why we're even having this hearing. This is not a search process. You've already conducted an evaluation of the Superintendent. My understanding is that it was positive and there has been no communication to the community otherwise. Selecting a superintendent is one of the most important jobs for a School Board. It's a lengthy process with many moving parts, including ample opportunity for public participation, but I don't think that we are in that process unless I am mistaken. There are 29,000 kids waiting on Paterson Public Schools to make a decision in order for them to thrive. Since Ms. Shafer announced her retirement your choices have been to make a counteroffer, to start a search process or to hire an intern. The decision is yours as an elected Board of Education, not the public. This hearing feels superficial as we came here this evening with no information from you regarding your intentions. School Board action ensuring that Paterson students have an educational leader by July 1 should have happened immediately after Ms. Shafer announced her retirement in December. National Schools Public Relations Association lists leadership, community relations, interpersonal skills, character, and competence as the top five areas for a qualified superintendent. Ms. Shafer has exhibited all of these, and I encourage you to extend her contract if she will have us after the way she's been treated. Please think about our children in your decision-making. Thank you.

Ms. Waheedah Muhammad: Good evening, Commissioners. I wholeheartedly agree with Ms. Rosie because to me we have to finally start thinking about our children and no one cares more about our children than Superintendent Shafer. I think we all need to be on one accord, get behind her instead of us trying to nitpick. Come on and take care of our children because they are who we are supposed to be taking care of right now, not the back deals and this and that. Let's think about our children first, please. Thank you and God bless. Thank you, Comm. Capers.

Mr. Robert Guarasci: Good evening, Commissioners and leadership. I am calling in tonight because of the fact that you are considering having Superintendent Shafer continue in her role. I would like to voice my strong support for keeping Eileen Shafer as our Superintendent of Schools. I advocate in this regard because of the deep ties that Superintendent Shafer has forged with the community at large. As the leader of a non-profit organization in Paterson, the ability to connect with Superintendent Shafer at almost any time of the day or night is crucial to our work among Paterson residents. Superintendent Shafer is probably the most visible Superintendent that I have seen in my 28 years here in Paterson. Her connection to the community is genuine and impactful. In addition, her stewardship of the district during these last two years as the pandemic raged is evidence of a steady hand during a time of enormous uncertainty.

You can't buy that in a leader and that is why I urge the Board to keep Superintendent Shafer in her job for all of us. Thank you.

Mr. Eddie Gonzalez: Hi, to the Commissioners and everyone listening to this meeting. It is very unfortunate that we are even having this meeting. I had spoken the last Board of Education meeting held on Wednesday, March 16 and would like for the record to reflect that I would like those comments added to what I'm going to say now. In summary, we are here to support Eileen Shafer and all that she has done throughout her many years and decades and the many roles that she has played in the City of Paterson leading up to Superintendent. During the pandemic and during many different trying times that the city has had, we had so many accomplishments with her leadership and it will be irresponsible of us as leaders of the community, Commissioners or advocates to not fight for Eileen Shafer's extension. The pandemic is something that we all have felt, know what happened and have gone through together. I believe that with her strong leadership we will continue to fight this battle that we are currently fighting. In addition to that, her success is another reason that we need to continue to have a person with so much leadership and decades of experience that you will not find anywhere else. I really share the sentiment because I do represent many roles and positions in the communality, as president of many organizations, including the Hillcrest Neighborhood Association, and many other ethnic groups and things of that nature. I confidently say that I speak for a large majority of the City of Paterson. In my dealings, talking about the issues happening across the city, whether it's school related or not, we all want Eileen Shafer to stay and that is a very strong statement. With elections coming on, I think it is strong to say that if we are going to talk about keeping kids first and putting Paterson children first, we start by action. You start by voting on her extension and keeping her here so that this district remains stable.

Ms. Carolyn McCombs: I echo what has already been said. I have been privileged to work with Superintendent Shafer over these past couple of years and we have made progress in terms of what we were doing in full-service community schools, as well as a new initiative we implemented called Elevate where we are mentoring students in the classroom and outside. It has been very easy to connect with Superintendent Shafer to bring initiatives that are really having an impact in the lives of our students. This feels like an immediate decision to shift our leadership at a point that is extremely critical. As we are coming out of a pandemic, as we are looking to get back to some form of normalcy, this to me does not seem like the opportune time to change our leadership. I really believe that hopefully this will be taken into consideration. There is one other initiative that Superintendent Shafer has been involved with and that is the Restorative Justice Initiative where Paterson will be awarded \$1 million for the next two years to look at alternatives to incarceration for our young people. She was very much a part of the ideation for that initiative, and we would like to see this come into fruition under her leadership. I think to make, for lack of a better term, a kneejerk decision without thinking of all the ramifications is an injustice to the students and our families. I just wanted to echo my support.

Ms. Inge Spungen: I'm Inge Spungen, Executive Director of the Paterson Alliance, a coalition of 90 non-profits serving our great city, many of which are affiliated and work with the school district. I also live in Paterson. I would like to speak as the others before me have done on behalf of Superintendent Eileen Shafer. While I have only known Ms. Shafer for a few years, she brings a lifetime of knowledge, understanding and insight to her role as Superintendent. I have found her to be responsive to me, to the children and to the families, thinking of children and families ahead of herself. Ms. Shafer's judgement is wise, and her decisions are sound. When COVID arrived in Paterson, Ms. Shafer led the school district in making sure that every student had a

Chromebook, locating funding and distribution resources to make it happen. Without this technology our children would not have been able to participate in the virtual classes. It was not easy for parents even still, but without the Chromebooks it would have been impossible. Ms. Shafer also made sure that families had access to food by setting up food distribution at many of the schools, providing breakfast, lunch and dinner to countless families who would have otherwise gone hungry. At many of those food distributions additional resources were made available including age-appropriate books that were a gift to our students in partnership with a Paterson Education Fund. The last two years have been a difficult time for families in Paterson, but I believe Ms. Shafer's leadership has made life better for many families and especially for our children. I believe we should extend Ms. Shafer's contract so that she can continue to do the good work of the Superintendent. Her deep caring and thoughtful leadership will no doubt continue to improve the lives of our children in Paterson. Thank you.

Ms. Gladys Santiago: Good evening, everybody. My name is Gladys. I am a parent from School No. 2. I have three children that are in the schools at this time, and I just want to say on behalf of Ms. Shafer that she is a great leader. She has been in our district for more than 25 years. She knows our community, our children, and our staff. During COVID she really stepped in. She made sure our children had the Chromebooks. She made sure we had food being provided from the district. It was a very stressful time, and she showed her support to our children and our families. She was a teacher for many years. She knows what we need in the classroom for these children. Her experience and her results speak for itself, and I am hoping that her contract will be renewed. Thank you.

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

RESOLUTIONS FOR A VOTE:

Resolution No. 1

WHEREAS, the Paterson Board of Education ("Board") approved the appointment of Eileen F. Shafer as Superintendent of Schools ("Superintendent") effective December 5, 2018, through June 30, 2022, and

WHEREAS, the Board and Eileen F. Shafer agreed to enter negotiations of a Second Addendum to the Employment Contract of Eileen F. Shafer, and

WHEREAS, the parties agreed to a one-year extension of the Employment Contract, so the new expiration date of the Employment Contract shall be June 30, 2023, and

WHEREAS, upon the full execution of this Second Addendum to the Employment Contract, Superintendent Shafer is deemed to have effectively withdrawn her notice of retirement effective June 30, 2022, and the Board is deemed to have effectively rescinded its acceptance of that notice of retirement, and

WHEREAS, within one day after the full execution of this Second Addendum to the Employment Contract, the Superintendent shall produce to the Board an irrevocable notice of retirement effective at the end of the day on June 30, 2023, and

WHEREAS, consistent with the irrevocable notice of retirement effective at the end of the day on June 30, 2023, within 30 days of the full execution of this Second Addendum

to the Employment Contract, the Board will issue Superintendent Shafer a notice of nonrenewal, and

WHEREAS, the Board deems the extended contract a fiscally sound agreement, and

NOW BE IT RESOLVED, the Board approves extending the contract of Eileen F. Shafer, Superintendent of Schools, at the current base salary of \$267,900, effective July 1, 2022, through June 30, 2023, with all other terms of Articles I and IV remaining in full force and effect.

It was moved by Comm. Teague, seconded by Comm. Capers that Resolution Nos. 1 and 2 be adopted.

Comm. Redmon: Just to clarify to let the public know why we are having the hearing, Ms. Shabazz-Charles, can you clarify legally why we are having this meeting?

Ms. Shabazz-Charles: I did hear some of the members ask about why we are having a public hearing. The statute requires it. It is 18A-1111 and it reads in part, "A board of education shall not renegotiate, extend, amend or otherwise alter the terms of a contract with a superintendent of schools unless the board holds a public hearing and gives the public 10-days' notice of that hearing." A public hearing is an absolute requirement to move forward, so that is why we are having it. It is not an arbitrary decision. It is a requirement.

Comm. M. Martinez: And so, today's meeting, the public portion constitutes or checks that box of having that public meeting.

Ms. Shabazz-Charles: Yes. This meeting's purpose is to allow the public the opportunity to be heard on their opinion as to the Board's consideration of this contract.

Comm. M. Martinez: Then for the sake of timeline, as we were discussing, just for folks to get the pulled back, larger context conversation, from December to when the conversations around Ms. Shafer's retirement until now, let's just walk folks through that timeline. How did we get there? Where did the initial ask come from? How did that conversation get broached? Did we reach out to the Superintendent? Did the Superintendent inquire to us? Just paint that picture for the public so they can understand how this transpired, how we got from December to today.

Ms. Shabazz-Charles: Are you asking that of me?

Comm. M. Martinez: Whoever, whether that's leadership or you, whomever can best answer it.

Comm. Redmon: There was a letter sent to the Board asking for an extension. We had an executive session to discuss the letter.

Comm. M. Martinez: The letter came to the Board from where?

Comm. Redmon: The Superintendent. The letter was discussed in executive session. Members of that executive session discussed the ask of the letter and then we reconvened. There was a consensus of the Board to consider the letter that was provided by the Superintendent. That letter was forwarded to the County Superintendent. The terms of the original contract that was proposed was kicked back

to the Board and a new contract, or current contract that we are voting on right now, was brought back to the Board. This is what we are actually voting on.

Comm. M. Martinez: And that contract that was signed and approved was made available to us on Friday as well as to the public on Friday. From Thursday when we as Board members and as the public received it to today and then we are voting on it today with a couple days to look at it and chew it over.

Comm. Redmon: Correct.

Comm. M. Martinez: And today's meeting satisfies the notion of a public hearing.

Comm. Redmon: It is the public hearing, yes.

Comm. M. Martinez: So, we checked that box.

Comm. Redmon: It was scheduled as a public hearing, correct. So, to give the public the actual process of what happened, the public hearing was scheduled 30 days. We had 10-days' notice which was on the 18th. The public got the notice on the 18th. Today is the hearing for the public notice. The notice that got to the public on Thursday is by the standard statutes that we submit anything to the public or public record for the newspapers, so it went out within the 48-hours' time that is allotted to us. That was done properly.

Comm. M. Martinez: The paperwork that was signed off dated the 18th, obviously that was submitted or looked at or reviewed prior to the 18th. I doubt that would all happen in one day. So that satisfied the 10-day window. So, from the 18th to when it was signed until the next Thursday, that was a couple of days. The 18th was two Fridays ago and then we got it on Thursday. So, it was signed and approved on the 18th, but we as Board members or the public were not made aware of it until the 24th.

Comm. Redmon: That is not correct. What is correct is that the first original contract that was presented to the Board was kicked back from the county. The county presented the current terms of the contract. What you saw is my signature on the 18th to go back to the county for the final approval and that is what happened. So that is why my name, and my signature are on the letter for the 18th. Everything was being done to the Board because it was a consensus of the Board.

Comm. M. Martinez: I don't dispute that, but what I'm saying is that letter was dated the 18th but we didn't see it until the 24th.

Comm. Redmon: Mr. Martinez, I just wanted to make sure that we are clarified. This was not my doing. This was the consensus of the Board.

Comm. M. Martinez: What I'm asking has nothing to do with you or the Board. What I'm asking is the document was signed on the 18th, but then wasn't shared with the Board until the 24th.

Comm. Redmon: Exactly, because that is the exact time that I got it as a Board member, as it being approved by the county.

Comm. M. Martinez: So obviously it went to the county prior to the 18th, and it was signed and dated the 18th.

Comm. Redmon: It went to the county on the 18th. It was submitted back to us the day that you received it. It was approved by the county the day that you received it.

Comm. M. Martinez: But the document was signed on the 18th.

Comm. Redmon: The document was signed on the 18th because they needed my signature in order for me to give it to the County Superintendent for final approval. She was asking for my signature for final approval.

Comm. M. Martinez: So, on the 18th three people signed off on that document and we didn't see it until the 24th.

Comm. Redmon: Correct. Nothing has changed, Mr. Martinez.

Comm. M. Martinez: I'm not implying anything changed. I'm just saying it seems odd that a document would be approved and signed by three individuals and then not shared with any of the public or the Board members until 7 days later. That is where I'm trying to fill in the gap of that timeline. A document was given to the county on the 18th, it was signed off on the 18th by three people and we, the Board members, and they, the public, did not see it until the 24th. That's a big lapse of time. That's 6 days that it just sat there. It was in limbo for 6 days. Nobody saw it for 6 days.

Comm. Redmon: That's not true. We were in our 30-day period from the initial contract going to the county. Everything was within the 30 days that was stated.

Comm. M. Martinez: Again, I'm not implying that anything was out of...

Comm. Redmon: But the way you're implying it as if...

Comm. M. Martinez: I'm simply looking at dates on the calendar. The document that we received was signed and approved on the 18th.

Comm. Redmon: The document that was received by you was received by all Board members once it got the final approval from the county. You got it the same exact...

Comm. M. Martinez: I think we're getting ahead of ourselves. What I'm saying is, the document that we all received on the 24th was signed, approved and dated on the 18th. I'm not making that up. I'm not trying to skew timelines. That's factual. What I'm saying is, if the document that was given to us and shared with the public on the 24th was signed, approved and sent on the 18th, that's 6 days in between. Why did it take 6 days from the time that it was signed, approved and submitted for it to get to the public and Board Commissioners?

Comm. Redmon: I'm giving you the clarification. The first provisions of the Superintendent's contract were taken out. Once those provisions were taken out, we got final approval from the County Superintendent and that was received to the Board on the 25th or the 24th, to be exact.

Comm. M. Martinez: So then where is the amended document? If the document signed on the 18th was changed and then sent to us on the 24th, where is the changed document?

Comm. Capers: What's in this signed document?

Comm. Redmon: It's her current contract that she is operating under now. We are only approving the extension of the year. That's it.

Comm. Capers: Was the Board leadership in contact with all Board members about what was going on?

Comm. Redmon: Correct, yes.

Comm. Capers: Was everybody...

Comm. M. Martinez: You guys got that document prior to the 24th?

Comm. Capers: I didn't cut you off.

Comm. M. Martinez: I'm not trying to cut anyone off. I'm just trying to understand the timeline because I didn't get anything until the 24th. If I'm understanding it, the document was not shared with anyone until the 24th, so that's 6 days.

Comm. Capers: I'm not talking about the document, Manny. I'm pretty fair and straightforward and in this case the Board leadership was very transparent with all Board members in terms of the process of what was going on. I was made aware of when the document was signed and everything that was going on. I was also made aware that the Superintendent in that timeframe you are talking about, that 6- or 7-day time period you're taking about, that the Superintendent's contract remained the same. So even if we all got the document last Friday, it's the same contract that we already had in place.

Comm. M. Martinez: Why is everyone missing the point? The point is...

Comm. Capers: No. You already had the document.

Comm. M. Martinez: It's the same contract. I understand what you're saying. It's the same document, nothing has changed.

Comm. Capers: It's the same thing so what are we talking about?

Comm. M. Martinez: There's a 6-day window of time.

Comm. Capers: Manny, my point is this. You're saying the document took 6 days, but you already knew that the contract was remaining the same.

Comm. M. Martinez: No, I don't know because I hadn't seen the contract. This is an old contract from years and years ago.

Comm. Redmon: That's not true. Let's bring that back. The contract that was being presented to all Board members in executive session had the provisions in it. I will tell you the original provisions that were in her contract. The Superintendent asked for her additional sick days that she accumulated and her additional vacation days that were accumulated. That was kicked out of the contract by the County Superintendent, and it was kicked back to us. The final approval of the contract is only giving the Superintendent the extended year. No other provisions of the contract are being changed. So, that's the reason why we don't have amendments, and that's the reason why everything remained the same. As current Board members, we all have copies of her current contract.

Comm. Capers: That's the whole point. We already had the contract. I'm not understanding, Manny. I'm not following.

Comm. M. Martinez: Maybe I'm just a simple-minded fool who doesn't follow timelines. Perhaps it's me. Again, it's a simple question. I'm not trying to trip anyone up. If it was the same document and it was signed, approved, and delivered on the 18th, why did we wait until conveniently a couple days before we had to satisfy that 48-hour period? If it was signed on the 18th, here you go on the 18th. Why did we wait 6 days? If it was the same old document that we have all been seeing, why did we wait? That's my question. No one has an answer still.

Comm. Teague: Couple of things. Rosie Grant did speak on the need for putting the information out there. The reason why Rosie Grant spoke on that is because she did not see a reason to replace Ms. Shafer in looking at this situation. And let me say this, everybody has a right to look at something and say "Ms. Shafer needs to be here to continue the momentum while we're going to do whatever it is we're going to do in terms of a search process. And as she said, that's a totally different process with a lot of moving parts. Right now, I personally think we need to keep Ms. Shafer in place for that continuity and that's where I'm at with that. I don't know about the 6-day situation. I'm listening to the conversation but as far as I'm concerned, we need to, for the sake of continuity, keep her in place.

Comm. Castillo-Cruz: I think the original conversation, and maybe that's the point we're trying to answer from someone from the public, was that the last public information they received in December was that Ms. Shafer was retiring and here we are in March or April considering a one-year extension. I think that's maybe where Ms. Grant, and not only her, but also additional individuals had that confusion of how we got here and when did we get here. That's whether they agree that Ms. Shafer should stay, or they don't. The feeling about who should be the Superintendent I think has been the question or maybe I'm trying to paraphrase the question. At least what I understood of that schedule or maybe what Comm. Martinez was also trying to explain. We went from a retirement to a consideration, or a contract potentially being voted on today and there was no conversation publicly of what the potential intentions could or could not have been. Now whether we agree with it or not, I think that's the content of the question, of where we were going.

Comm. M. Martinez: That's correct. The position of where we stand as individuals and collectively about returning or not returning, that's the lesser of my concern. My concern is the timeline. We went from in December receiving retirement documents and then everything went radio silent publicly and then here we are voting on a contract extension. We talked about RFP's, we talked about searches, we talked about this, and we talked about that. No action was taken. We just glazed over it every meeting. We didn't really talk about it, so we went from retirement one month, fast forward a couple months, and now here we are considering an extension.

Comm. Redmon: That's not correct. There was a 30-day notice that went out to the public regarding the Superintendent's contract. Let me just clear my thought and then you do have the floor. There was a 30-day notice that went to the public. As soon as the Board made a consensus to send her contract to the county there was a 30-day notice that was sent to the public regarding Ms. Shafer's contract.

Comm. Castillo-Cruz: I didn't even finish.

Comm. Hodges: Well, go ahead and finish.

Comm. Castillo-Cruz: No, go ahead, Dr. Hodges. I'll go after you.

Comm. Hodges: No, go ahead please. I don't want you to be left. Please go ahead and finish.

Comm. Castillo-Cruz: Thank you. I'm trying to at least answer the questions. As Ms. Grant was saying, and I'm sure many other public members, I think we might be having two different conversations, or at least that's my perspective. One conversation of what we as Board members knew, discussed, may not have had information on, or whatever we feel as Board members, I think the question was regarding, and maybe that's where Comm. Martinez was going as well, is that the information that the public received, yes, they knew that potentially 30-days, maybe even a little more than 30 days at this point, received a notice or saw a notice that there was going to be a conversation about the Superintendent. I think what the question or the conversation discussion may be is that as a Board we have not had any discussions publicly of this potential thing we are going to consider. I'm saying in a public setting. I don't know if we could have had that dialogue in a public setting. I don't know how much of it could have been public and how much of it should have been private or could have more information gone out to the public saying we received this notice from the Superintendent and this Board is considering it. Then fast forward to a potential public hearing but at least we had said it publicly. I'm not trying to put words in Ms. Grant's mouth, but I think that's where she was going. I think that's where Comm. Martinez is going, at least on that first piece as well. He asked for that timeline so we can at this point inform the public of what we can or cannot, and I don't know how far we can go, of where this started so that when we vote at least folks know why we're voting and what we're voting on. Some folks at this point are confused whether her original contract expired in June or not and just those clarifications so that a thousand questions aren't coming away from folks that may be confused at this point.

Comm. Hodges: I reiterate that the original notice was on February 18. This is well over a month. We have had numerous discussions. We had a consensus decision to move forward with this approach. We discussed the terms of the contract as part of our considerations so this is simply the culmination of those events, having the vote to make a decision as to how we are going to receive the contract that the State and the County Superintendent supplied us. Was it negotiated by our legal voice? We discussed the parameters of those terms. That has all been taken care of. This is not a haphazard approach. This has been systematically done and this is where we are today. Today should be the vote. We've had the public notification. I really don't know what the discussion is. I really don't.

Comm. M. Martinez: Dr. Hodges, to your point, legally speaking we've checked every box. But factually speaking, we haven't had public discussions. I'm not trying to put the person on the spot. The people who are calling up in favor of advocating for Ms. Shafer's return are also texting me saying "Yes, that's the point." So legally speaking, Paterson Public Schools covered their tails. We submitted all the paperwork on time. We checked every box. Legally speaking, we are golden. But we haven't had real conversations with the public. And again, no one's position about yes or no matters in this conversation. The fact of the matter is we checked the box, we put out a notice in February whatever, but we haven't discussed it.

Ms. Shabazz-Charles: I kind of wanted to piggyback on something Comm. Castillo-Cruz said because I think her statement was poignant and because this is a public

meeting, and you have these watchdog groups. I just want to make it clear that Comm. Martinez's discussion about different dialogue and the way to engage the public is understood, but I do want to make sure that it is clear for the record that this is a personnel matter which is an exception to the open public meetings act. Those things are permissible to discuss in executive session unless Ms. Shafer were to disagree, at which point we discuss it publicly. There isn't anything outside of the norm to have personnel matters such as these discussed in executive. I say that even to the public for those who may feel perturbed that there wasn't discussion along the way. Quite frankly, this is pretty standard that the discussions happen in executive session because it's a legal matter. It's a contract. So that is not abnormal. From that legal standpoint there was nothing done that would put the district in jeopardy by having these discussions in a non-public manner. That's why, as Comm. Castillo-Cruz said, there are two separate issues about the way of practice and different Board members' differing opinions about ways to communicate with the public. There is that aspect and everyone's entitled to their opinion. But from the legal perspective, it was completely appropriate to have these discussions in executive session. Thank you.

Comm. Hodges: And this is the opportunity to put your feelings out there, which is primarily via the vote. We had discussions in executive session, more than one. That's where it took place and now we are here to vote. That's my understanding of the matter.

Comm. Redmon: That was my final comment.

On roll call all members voted in the affirmative, except Comm. Castillo-Cruz and Comm. M. Martinez who voted no. The motion carried.

Paterson Board of Education Standing Abstentions

Comm. Arrington

- Self
- Family

Comm. Capers

- Self
- 4th and Inches
- Westside Park Group
- Insight
- Jersey Kids
- NFL Foundation

Comm. Castillo-Cruz

- Self
- City of Paterson
- Transportation
- Downtown Special Improvement District
- Celebrate Paterson

Comm. Hodges

- Self
- City of Paterson

Comm. Dania Martinez

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

Comm. Manuel Martinez

- Self

Comm. Redmon

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

Comm. Simmons

- Self
- Family

Comm. Teague

- Self
- YMCA

Resolution No. 2

WHEREAS, the Paterson Public School District recognizes the need for complying with the New Jersey purchasing laws for obtaining the most competitive and responsive bid for goods and/or services; and

WHEREAS, Pursuant to 18A:18A-4.3(k), the Board is allowed to procure specialized goods and/or services through Competitive Contracting, and

WHEREAS, the Paterson Public School District desires to contract for consulting services to supply the Board of Education with comprehensive search and recruitment services for the Superintendent of Schools, funded by the District general account; and

WHEREAS, The Paterson Public School District encourages free and open public competition for goods and services; and

WHEREAS, The Paterson Public School District recognizes the need for obtaining the most competitive and responsive proposal for goods and/or services; now

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the School District of the City of Paterson, County of Passaic, State of New Jersey, authorizes the Department of Purchasing to initiate the competitive contracting process, pursuant to 18A:18A-4.3(k), to contract for a search consultant for the Superintendent of Schools, funded by the District general account.

It was moved by Comm. Capers, seconded by Comm. Hodges that Resolution Nos. 1 and 2 be adopted.

Comm. M. Martinez: Just for clarity, this is for RFPs?

Comm. Redmon: Yes.

On roll call all members voted in the affirmative, except Comm. M. Martinez who voted no. The motion carried.

**Paterson Board of Education
Standing Abstentions**

Comm. Arrington

- Self
- Family

Comm. Capers

- Self
- 4th and Inches
- Westside Park Group
- Insight
- Jersey Kids
- NFL Foundation

Comm. Castillo-Cruz

- Self
- City of Paterson
- Transportation
- Downtown Special Improvement District
- Celebrate Paterson

Comm. Hodges

- Self
- City of Paterson

Comm. Dania Martinez

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

Comm. Manuel Martinez

- Self

Comm. Redmon

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

Comm. Simmons

- Self
- Family

Comm. Teague

- Self
- YMCA

OTHER BUSINESS

Ms. Shafer: Thank you, Madam President. Thank you, Board Commissioners for your decision to extend my contract to June 30, 2023, and thank you for all those who spoke tonight in my support. By granting me the ability to reign at my post for another year, we will be able to serve the students, the families and the staff of Paterson Public Schools by putting the district in the best possible position to resume the momentum we have with student achievement before the pandemic and to complete the important work we have started for the future of this district. This is local control at its best. The Board Commissioners, with great caring consideration, have posed the question of district leadership for now and in the future. For more than 31 years, I have been proud to serve the Paterson Public School community and I will continue to do so. I am grateful for the opportunity to complete the work we started with High School Restructuring, accelerating learning among our elementary students with goals of having 70% of our K-3 students increase comprehension by at least two levels, and having our middle school students achieve proficiency of two or more levels in the ALEKS Program. And while we work toward these goals, we will continue to instill social and emotional learning in our students as well as build equity. I'd be remiss if I didn't take this opportunity to thank my team, the cabinet, for all of their hard work and their commitment to the children so Paterson, and the staff in the Superintendent's office and the district administration and all staff. If we have learned anything during this pandemic, it makes a world of difference when you have people around you who are reliable, dedicated and caring for the children in the City of Paterson. So, thank you to everyone on my team. I have said before there is a lot of work to be done and I am thankful to the Board Commissioners and Paterson community for the chance to continue as your Superintendent. Thank you.

Comm. Capers: Congratulations.

Comm. Hodges: Congratulations to the Superintendent and let's move forward.

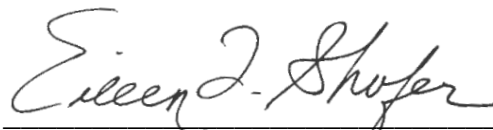
Comm. Teague: Congratulations, Ms. Shafer. I apologize you had to go through this ordeal.

Ms. Shafer: Thank you, Commissioners.

ADJOURNMENT

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

The meeting was adjourned at 7:11 p.m.



Ms. Eileen F. Shafer, M.Ed.
Superintendent of Schools