

MINUTES OF THE PATERSON BOARD OF EDUCATION WORKSHOP MEETING

March 9, 2022 – 6:00 p.m.
Remote - Zoom

Presiding: Comm. Kenneth Simmons, 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. Nakima Redmon, Vice President
Comm. Corey Teague

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:

**Workshop Meeting
March 9, 2022 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.

PRESENTATIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Major League Baseball Partnership (Hinchliffe Stadium)

Ms. Shafer: Good evening, Board Commissioners, parents, and Paterson community. Tonight, you're going to hear from Mr. David Spungen about a Major League Baseball Partnership that has to do with Hinchliffe Stadium.

Mr. David Spungen: Thank you very much. I appreciate this opportunity. Thank you very much, Board members. I had the opportunity to speak to the governance committee and that's how I got to speak with you today. I'm hoping I'll be able to show

you my presentation. When we did it last time, it was on Google Meet. Hopefully I'll be able to play all my material for you. The reason I wanted to come and see you is because I have spoken with the Board before about Hinchliffe Stadium. As many of you may know who know me, I've been in this community for four years. I came here with my wife, Inga Spungen. For a long time, I was just known as her husband. That's why I was here in Paterson. Thanks to her and the work that she does with the Paterson Alliance I had the opportunity to view Paterson in a way that many others don't when they first come into a city like this. We moved here four years ago and at the time I was still having a very productive career at CBS News where I spent more than 20 years. But the more time I spent in Paterson, the more the community started to get into my soul. I really started to believe in things that were going on here. As many of you know, I got very involved in the census and I'm glad to say I had an opportunity to work with the school somewhat. We all worked together and we're happy to see a 10% increase in that census number, which was so very meaningful. But I digress. The reason I'm here today is because I've always followed what was going on in Hinchliffe with great interest. Four years ago, I first put together a predevelopment video. My goal was how we can find the money to do this. There's something going on here that's special. We all know how this has evolved through the years. As the development got involved and it became a reality, my efforts to do something on behalf of the stadium fell by the wayside. After the events of last summer and the whole Black Lives Matter, I just could not stop thinking about what an opportunity there was for Major League Baseball to come here and help with what's going on with Hinchliffe Stadium. I'm here because I know that the school in the end owns the facility. I know that it is a very complicated sophisticated three-part deal. In the end, the school has 180 days of exclusive use and they have the opportunity for more. My feeling here is that baseball and the school district should partner together because baseball is already spending a lot of money on youth initiatives and diversity programs to increase their viewership. If I may, I'm going to try to share my screen with you and show you the video that I put together. It evolved over four years. It's five minutes long and we'll come back and talk afterwards. I'm going to mute myself because I don't want to have feedback and hopefully everything is going to work well.

(Video Presentation)

Mr. Spungen: For many of you, I know that's old news. This has really been prepared for Major League Baseball. The idea being they would understand the significance of what Hinchliffe Stadium is all about, as well as the opportunity that could be made available for them. The obvious idea here was to show them you are already spending money in an area that Hinchliffe can deliver to you. I'm going to share some information, more material that I have prepared that I would be giving to the presentation on behalf of the school. Let me put it open for questions first, if anybody has questions about what I'm talking about here.

Comm. M. Martinez: Thank you for the presentation. Has this been presented to anyone at MLB thus far? What level of involvement, if any, has the district had in the preparation or presentation of this?

Mr. Spungen: I'm coming to you here as a citizen. There has been no leakage of this idea to anybody. The whole thing here is that anybody with whom I've discussed this idea just looks at me and says this seems like a no-brainer. It seems like it's a very natural opportunity. Yet, nobody has been able to take advantage of what this opportunity could be. I had thought about trying to approach Major League Baseball and what I wanted to show you is that there is in fact a three-pronged approach that would be taken. There are three elements to go after. One is a gentleman by the name

of Tony Reagins who works for Major League Baseball. Specifically, his duty is to develop youth and diversity programming throughout Major League Baseball. The other person is Ken Griffey, who was appointed by Major League Baseball in the same capacity to be advising the Commissioner of Baseball about youth-oriented programs. The issue here is with what's going on with Major League Baseball right now and their strike, and the opportunity for an image-enhancing situation like this, and that baseball could come into a community to partner with a group like Hinchliffe Stadium and the school to invest into the school. There's no reason for me to read through all the dialogue. What I find interesting is what other partnerships could be on behalf of the school system and Major League Baseball. The ongoing labor dispute in Major League Baseball is creating a publicity nightmare for the sport. Grassroots outreach programs promise to be an important factor as MLB looks to rehabilitate and enhance its image. A partnership with the public school district and Hinchliffe Stadium could produce projects and programs reaching far beyond the league's ongoing youth-oriented initiatives, community programs, and the playing field. For example, the establishment of a maintenance fund, I see this as a critical opportunity. One thing I kept hearing during the discussions going on in trying to make the Hinchliffe rehabilitation a reality was why it became in disrepair. It was being able to keep up with the maintenance costs. One of the questions that was asked during these hearings was, what does the school really get out of this situation? The answer was a first-class facility. Who's going to run that first-class facility? I see an opportunity here to work with Major League Baseball to ensure that the district can maintain the facility long-term. I also know there has been talk about Major League Baseball doing a field of dreams. That's great, but that's a one-off. Anything that can get Major League Baseball more interested in Hinchliffe Stadium is great, but to do something for the long-term is what I'm trying to see happen. I also talk about the idea to sponsor creation of a portable performance stage so that Hinchliffe can also facilitate artistic events that might be used for school or to generate other commercial revenue streams. Baseball can work directly with school and the school officials to get involved in the Restorative Justice practices in sports and life, and to talk about all these various areas that are not only similar in sports, but in life and you have heroes mentoring. Here is the three-pronged approach that I was trying to illustrate and I'm happy to send you any of this information. First is Tony Reagins, and he's the Chief Baseball Development Officer, and then the information about Ken Griffey. The real interesting thing is what's going on with what is now called the Major League Baseball Players Alliance. I'd like to show you a one-minute clip from the All-Star Game in July when Major League Baseball and owners committed more than \$150 million to this group.

(Video Presentation)

Mr. Spungen: That essentially is what the state of the situation is. I feel that there is such a unique opportunity to take advantage of what is going on in society and to bring the parties together. Comm. M. Martinez, in answer to your original question, I made some early attempt back in April to approach Major League Baseball. Right at the time when the season opened was when they were making the decision to move the All-Star Game and it got very controversial and who's going to listen to this kind of an idea. I was trying to beat the shovel break ceremony for Hinchliffe and time it up that way. Then it didn't make any sense to go forward because nobody was authorizing me to do so. To go and try to get into Major League Baseball and they say how do we get involved, it would be to double-back and try to do it again. Along the way that I was trying to get in touch with Ken Griffey, I spoke to somebody who knew him very well and he said he was happy to help me. But until I know what I can deliver and what I'm really asking for, you don't want to approach him. That's when it hit me. It's the school that owns the facility. It's the school that's going to, in the end, have the opportunity to buy it

back after the 15 years or whatever the actual language is. All I'm saying is that I think this is a worthwhile idea to go after. I was asked at the governance committee is this a deal for me. My answer is, steal the idea. Somebody make this happen because it's just an idea that makes too much sense in my mind and to anybody who I have discussed it with. If I'm given the opportunity to represent the school in a negotiation to bring these parties together, then that's all I'm looking to see happen.

Comm. M. Martinez: I agree that it's a tremendous idea and a phenomenal opportunity because of the things that you listed. But with the ongoing strike that's going on and the lockout, as well as the stadium still being under construction and not completed, perhaps the timing isn't best right now, but that's not to say we can't go ahead and start making preparations and get the presentation together so when things are ready, we're ready to hit the ground running. I'm a huge baseball fan. I still play the game. It's the one true love as far as sports are concerned. I like the other sports, but nothing like baseball. It's tied into so many aspects of my life. I'd be more than happy to volunteer my time and effort in helping to bring this to fruition.

Comm. Capers: Is that because you're a Giants fan?

Comm. M. Martinez: You heard Chris Rock in the video. He was a Mets fan. 86' all the way. That's what got me hooked. I do root for the Giants too. Dave, I appreciate you putting this together and bringing it to us. I'd be more than happy to help. Comm. Capers is also a big sports fan. I'm not sure if he's a Mets fan, but I know he's a sports fan. I'm sure he's involved in athletics to this day too. I'm sure he'd be ready to help. Thank you, Dave. We'll communicate offline to get our ducks in a row. Thank you.

Comm. Capers: David, thank you for that presentation. Whatever monies we're seeking from the other entities, would this be a conflict with the current policy or agreement we have with the city?

Mr. Spungen: From my point of view, that's one of the things that I would need to obviously know if there's something that can be represented. My assumption is based on meetings that I have attended and readings that I have done on what the deal actually is. I keep getting back to the notion that in the end the school gets 150 days to do whatever they want with the facility.

Comm. Capers: I believe we're only using it for our games and graduations. I don't know the schedule, but the stadium isn't finished being built yet. That's one. I don't know if the Board made that decision on what we're going to be using the 150 days for exactly. I believe it's for practices, games, and different things like that. Can we use the MLB for equipment grants, batting cages, and stuff like that? That's what I'm thinking you're going down, but it seems like it's something bigger that's out of our control. I'm trying to understand it. Do you want MLB to come build batting cages or give the school this or that?

Mr. Spungen: That to me could be an additional situation. To me, the idea is Major League Baseball is already conducting youth initiative events throughout the country. Why not have Hinchliffe Stadium be their East Coast hub for those types of events because they spend money to make those events happen?

Comm. Capers: Like a youth homerun derby all-star game?

Mr. Spungen: Right. As I was showing you in the video with the Players Association, they are going out into the community working with kids specifically in diverse,

underprivileged communities and creating events for them to get them interested in baseball. Their whole goal is to try to create and get a new audience because as has been clear, they have been losing audiences and they know that they need to get it back. I always thought this was a good idea, but now with the discussion of billionaires going on, they're really going to need to work hard to get back in touch with the grassroots community that they have already suffered with. My feeling is that since they're already doing these kinds of programs, why aren't we shining the spotlight on Hinchliffe and saying in December 2022 this facility is going to be available and you can rent it for these types of things? We can be partners in these types of things. We can show you our community of diversity and you can build on it from there. Perhaps I'm too much of a dreamer.

Comm. Capers: I work in recreation. I know last year we did an event and we partnered with the MLB. They did an event in Passaic. Is that what you're talking about here?

Mr. Spungen: I'm talking about definitely those kinds of events. What they don't have is what the history of Hinchliffe Stadium is. It's not just a facility.

Comm. Capers: You're trying to do it on the Negro side of the house, like the National Negro Association?

Mr. Spungen: Absolutely that leads, but the diversity issue in Paterson is a more attractive issue with the Blacks being the first group that was really involved in Hinchliffe and opened up the whole idea of a stadium that could be a field of dreams for this community. They could say, "Are you kidding me? This is the biggest hair-brained idea I've ever heard of." Fine, I know that you could have said the same thing for me. What I'm doing with you now is either the end or the beginning of a four-year quest. I've always thought there was an opportunity to do something special with Hinchliffe and Major League Baseball.

Comm. Capers: I think you can leverage not only Hinchliffe, but Larry Doby as well.

Mr. Spungen: Right. There is nothing but opportunity that can grow out of a partnership. What I saw happen along the way with everybody that was involved in trying to make the rehabilitation for Hinchliffe a reality was that there were too many parties. It wasn't clear. It was a three-headed monster all the time. That's why I kept feeling within myself that in the end the school owns this facility. Yes, they're getting a first-class facility. Why can't you do something more to take advantage of it than simply run their high school events? It can really be a jewel. We can begin to expose the national park aspect of the whole thing. I see nothing but a potential growth here, but that's just me. What I'm seeking here is the opportunity to present them with your permission. I believe this district is situated to be able to enter into talks with Major League Baseball along the lines of them wanting to use the facility, especially if you're able to talk about it within the 150 days. My understanding was that the school could have first right of refusal on additional days, to as many as they wanted. Perhaps I'm wrong about that, but that was my understanding from the early negotiations.

Comm. Capers: Do you have this in writing that you can present to the Board so we can see exactly what's going on?

Mr. Spungen: You mean something along the lines of a letter of intent?

Comm. Capers: What exactly you're doing. I like the video. I think I know what you're talking about. When we did the agreement for the 150 days, the district looked at what we already use for different events and our high school games and practices. I think that was all built in there. I just want to see it in writing so we can have an idea of how we're approaching the MLB if we choose to go down this lane.

Mr. Spungen: I'm happy to draft a letter of intent just to give you the formula of what I'm looking to try to do. Tell me where to send it, whatever I can do to continue to advance this concept. The idea of going to MLB today is not correct. But the idea of lining up the people who I need to speak with who can start getting me into the door, I am working on some other projects having nothing to do with this, but to do with people who could help put me in touch with the appropriate people to speak to.

Comm. M. Martinez: It's going to be Eileen and our corporation counsel. Those conversations first need to happen right there.

Ms. Shafer: Dave, it's almost like a proposal. What are you proposing to do? I'll get it to our General Counsel, Khalifah. We do have to look at the agreement and make sure that we're in good standing with that. You can email me that and then I'll take it from there.

Mr. Spungen: I'll get something to you in the next day or so.

Comm. M. Martinez: If you wouldn't mind sending the video and information you presented tonight, then all the Commissioners and cabinet members can also have access to that.

Mr. Spungen: Sure. If I can use my email that I got my invitation and I'll just reply all. Is that the way to do it?

Ms. Shafer: You can send it to me and I'll get it to everybody.

Mr. Spungen: I'll send you the links and the documents that I made. Is there anything else? Thank you very much for this opportunity.

Comm. Hodges: I just wanted to say that this district has been working with the NFL who had a similar campaign going on. We used Bauerle Field and they came here because they had the same concerns with their program. This is nothing new. We could go ahead and move forward. Now is not too early a time, quite frankly, because we're in the process of building the stadium and we can get some help from them to do some things that we need as well. This would be a great time to approach them as they are extremely vulnerable at the moment. I love your presentation. I love your ideas. I look forward to working with you in the future. Thank you very much for the presentation.

Mr. Spungen: Thank you very much, Commissioner.

Ms. Shafer: Thank you, David.

Mr. Spungen: Thank you all once again. Hope to speak again with you soon.

Goals Status Report

Ms. Shafer: At this time, Mr. President, I'll move on to our Goals Status Report. I'm going to turn it over to Deputy Superintendent Peron.

Ms. Peron: Good evening, Board Commissioners, staff, and community. Tonight, I'm going to begin with Goal #1. These were the goals that were set out for school year 2021-2022. This is a status update. We had our goal-setting development. We developed four major goals that we keep reporting out on. The first goal is high school restructuring. What you see on the screen is just a reiteration of the original Board goal and the Board-approved resolution on September 8, 2021. Tonight, I'm just bringing you the most recent developments of what's been going on in many aspects of high school restructuring. Currently, our eighth-grade students are applying to our high schools and the process is underway. The high school choice process was revised just a bit to reflect the restructuring updates. All guidance counselors are currently working with our eighth graders and our eighth grades have submitted their applications. We have had some lotteries in terms of some of the high schools. That's really the process for PANTHER and this year for HARP at Paterson Catholic. Then we have auditions for Rosa Parks. That doesn't change. We have interviews for International Baccalaureate with the pathway of engineering at Garrett Morgan Academy. That hasn't changed. What we need to bring attention to is in September 2022 for the currently enrolled students in grades 10, 11, and 12 their pathway courses will not be altered. At this time, we took a look at where our students were currently in their pathways now. They're taking courses. They have been taking courses. Some of the academies are moving from the current facility to a new facility. For example, SOIT and STEM are going to gradually sunset and move into our STEAM High School located at Paterson Catholic. It's not fair to uproot these students now who are 11th and 12th graders who are currently underway taking a three or four-pathway course. They've established relationships at their high schools and to move them now to a different high school would just be to disrupt their current high school experience. We have put in place to continue those courses and gradually sunset those programs out. The enrolled students who are coming into grade 9 will experience the full restructuring effect and they will follow the new proposed school-specific pathways. In 2023-2024, these courses, where needed, will sunset and/or transition to the new STEAM High School and here are the examples that I mentioned before. STEM courses of study at John F. Kennedy, SOIT courses at Eastside High School, and engineering at ACT will follow through and become the program at STEAM High School. Planning is currently underway for our Newcomers high school program with our location to yet be determined. In academics there is a lot of work going on with many curriculum updates, revisions, and deletions because some of the courses have been outdated. The Department of Academic Services has been conducting ongoing curriculum meetings with principals and they're talking about and looking at every course that's in the catalog and scheduled in the current high schools. They're doing a complete audit of these courses with some courses being deleted and some having to be created for these new pathways. There is also work under the development of additional elective courses for students. We want to ensure that every student has access to higher level courses and different elective courses that they can choose from. They're expanding the access to career-themed course offerings, auditing higher level courses being currently offered. Academic services are taking a look at what courses have high numbers of enrollment. They're looking at it through the lens of students' interest and staff availability. The goal is to expand offerings of higher-level courses at every high school. We are also taking a serious look at expanding the offerings of these high-level courses through a blended learning environment. The teachers may be at a certain facility, and she may be teaching virtually to students in a different classroom at a different facility, opening up accessibility to all the sites and

more students. Right now, academic services have writing curriculum postings that are being processed and advertised inclusive of updating the state standards. I received a list from academic services with 28 courses being inactivated and over 100 courses being revised. There's a lot of work in curriculum being done. Also, academic services are working on scheduling. We have been working on scheduling and scheduling is underway with more electives available at both John F. Kennedy and Eastside campuses. We also have a curriculum that's being developed for September 2022 for the middle school. Academic services will be conducting a pilot in a true middle school around career exploration courses that are more aligned to our high school pathway offerings. Middle schoolers will become aware and get a feel for what is offered at the high school level and learn about it through a career exploration course. Curriculum is being developed for a new freshman seminar course that is also aligned to the school's specific pathways. All high school principals are compiling a list of needed resources, supplies, materials, and equipment for 2022-2023 with quotes. That work is underway. We're looking at enhancing JROTC programs and the development of an online student course catalog which does not exist right now. This would actually provide students with a look at all the courses that are being offered at every high school in the district. They can take a look and deep dive and have serious conversations with their guidance counselors around their course of study and what they want to do. In terms of personnel, we do have updates. As you may have heard, we have appointed a director of STEAM. We have appointed one pathway coordinator, who we are now calling pathway associate supervisor. We did hire one with a STEAM concentration. We are currently conducting and scheduling interviews for more pathway associate supervisors. The posting has been out for all the cosmetology teachers. We have many candidates scheduled for interviews. We did conduct an interview for a construction trades teacher as well. We continue working on assessing the needs of the staff for our STEAM High School and our other pathway programs, as well as conducting the needs assessment and working closely with both the department of special education and bilingual education programs to service and ensure that we do have services available in all our high schools. In terms of the facilities, there is a monumental work being done. We have been walking through all the high schools. A committee that works on high school restructuring along with our facilities staff have been conducting walkthroughs of every high school. Specifically at Eastside, we have located the cosmetology rooms. We have worked on developing programmatic specifications for architects that we have contracted. We have developed a detailed scope of work. We continue our facility walkthroughs and our work around designing the classrooms and the type of equipment, furniture, and supplies needed. We have provided recommendations for the renovation of these classrooms, and we are working closely with Neil Mapp and Tracy Williams, who is our point in lead on high school restructuring, to continue these conversations. I have a lot of reservations around the construction. Of course, we are all very apprehensive in terms of the timeline. It is a very tight timeline. Given the state of supply and demand we know this has to be done yesterday rather than tomorrow because of the scope of work. There are walls that are going to be torn down. There are things that are going to be renovated and changed. We all know when that happens you have to expect the unexpected and hope that all of this is taken into account and that our contractors stick to a timeline. We have been working closely with them. Neil has pinned them down for them to provide a timeline. This is all given that all our ducks are in a row and everything works out okay. I am nervous about the timeline. As you know, we are already way into March and this is set to open on September 2022. Our high school labs are also under contract. We have developed a scope of work with our director of STEAM who has been preparing all the programmatic specs and working hard to find all of the equipment for the labs. We're standardizing the science labs across the district and renovating five science labs over at Eastside High School. The scope has been done and that's completed. We just have to begin

the work. We also have an auto shop waiting to be cleared out. There is a lot of equipment in that room with supplies. We are working to develop a plan to empty out that room, take care of those supplies, store them in a safe place, and continue the work of setting up that auto shop for September as well. At John F. Kennedy High School, we are working closely again with facilities and the building administrator. The principal has worked with Neil. They have talked about and began the work of the programmatic specs for the stock exchange room and the media room. That's currently undergoing renovation. Quotes have been attained and facilities is working on that construction. At PANTHER, we continue the work of renovating our planetarium. In the STEAM High School, walks have been conducted. We worked on the specs for general science, biology, and chemistry labs. That has all been established and received. We continue working on our timeline. We do have a timeline for there. We also have three other major rooms at that facility to renovate, one being the dental program and the lecture classroom. There's going to be a lab component and a lecture component, as well as the patient care classroom and lecture room. We're awaiting quotes for equipment, classroom furniture, and designing what that's going to look like. Lastly, we are going to remodel the current media room at that building. We are going to convert that into an engineering lab. At Rosa Parks High School, emphasis is on the theater. We have received quotes to renovate the theatrical lighting. We're waiting on technology and supply quotes and a list of programmatic materials that are needed for that program. At International, we're also refurbishing the science labs, designing and creating an engineering lab, and awaiting material and supply quotes for those programs. We continue meeting and we're going to ramp up our meetings with the principals at each location with a focus on rebranding the high schools, developing an advisory board for all the pathways, and taking a look at the staffing needs. The principals at the high schools are also working with us to interview staff. We're working as a team. We're looking at higher education and community partnerships to establish internships, worksite experience, and apprenticeships. We continue those meetings about curriculum, course deletions, and creation. We are auditing all the high school clubs. We are having biweekly meetings and in June we are beginning weekly meetings in terms of accountability, keeping in time with our timelines, and ensuring that these tasks are completed. We also will schedule a community forum for targeted students and parents because we need to inform the students of what's going to go on for next year, where they're going to be, and what's going to be happening. Many of them are not truly informed about the restructuring and what's going to happen to their program. We're going to establish these community forums with them and their parents to bring this information out to them. In conjunction with all these meetings, we are going to have meetings with the high school staff as well. That concludes the update. Are there any questions?

Comm. Hodges: I have several questions I've since forgotten. You went through a lot of material there. In terms of designing the course, let's look at the engineering labs. Where are you getting the information in terms of what should go in that lab? Do you have engineers who are part of that process?

Ms. Peron: I'm going to ask Joanna Tsimpedes if you could join me in answering these questions. I know you and Sarah have been working on this.

Ms. Joanna Tsimpedes: Sarah has made visits to the building. Conversations have been going on between Sarah and the building principals as they had identified the rooms that were going to be utilized and then looking at the program pathways that we are going to put into those building to ensure that as we outfit the rooms, we outfit them correctly so that they mimic what it is that we're looking to do. Especially, at International High School, as it is a career related IB program, we also had specs to

follow. I'm going to ask Sarah if there's anything else she wants to add to that. I know she has spent a lot of time planning out the rooms and also meeting with Tracy from facilities to ensure that everything goes as planned.

Ms. Sarah Laldee: Good evening. We worked from specs that we received on recommendation from some of our higher education partners. I talked with some folks at TCNJ with whom I have a working relationship. They shared some documentation about industry standards around engineering labs for the collegiate level. We used that to guide us in thinking about what we needed in terms of square footage per student, equipment, and electric capacity. We used that list to generate the list of needs for those rooms. For the science and engineering labs, we have developed a comprehensive list of everything that is looked for in a room and then we can look at how we make that best fit into the spaces that we have available. In some cases, that means that a space we might have thought was appropriate we've had to go back and change our minds about and move to a bigger and more appropriate space. I hope that answers your question.

Comm. Hodges: It does. The reason I ask the question is because of the problem we have with the academies. We designed the academies without a full understanding of what they needed to function properly and having the staff planning to teach to help design those academies. I did not want to do the same thing again where we make all these grand designs and then go hire the people who say that this is not what we need. Then we don't have the money to make changes and improvements. That's what my concern is. I still have it after this discussion. I'm a little concerned. It would be helpful if we had more of the staff on board who plan to teach these courses help to design them ahead of time so that we don't have to go back and try to backfill when we don't have funding. That's my overriding concern here and that goes for everything.

Comm. Castillo-Cruz: Ms. Peron, what is an associate pathway supervisor?

Ms. Peron: This person has to have a supervisory certificate. They are the person who oversees the entire pathway, the courses and the advisory board. They help with the planning. They also help in the classroom supervising teachers, which is important. The title is the same thing as a coordinator. They coordinate the work and the staff. We decided we needed to change the title so that it could fit the certification, the scope of work, and the job description.

Comm. Castillo-Cruz: Will there be someone above that title that we need to hire for these pathways as well?

Ms. Peron: No. These pathway supervisors will be working under academic services. The directors in each of the content areas, the other supervisors, the associate chief, the assistant superintendent over academies, and the principals are direct supervisors of this staff. No additional director is needed.

Comm. Castillo-Cruz: Are they just individuals with a supervisor certificate? Or are they experts in the field? Are they teachers just being experts in the field? I'm trying to figure out which level is the expert in the field of that pathway.

Ms. Peron: We have advertised with a concentration in STEAM, cosmetology, and construction trades. The problem is that it's a challenge to find these people who have that certain expertise and the certification. In the area of STEAM, we found that person. This person has all the credentials and background. The advertisement is still out, and we are currently looking for the other areas.

Comm. Castillo-Cruz: I wanted to know the plan and what level this was. My concern is that we have these great pathways and ideas, but we don't have the level of expertise in the area. I'm hoping we do get it from here to then. I really do, but we're in March. Although we have a phenomenal staff, my concern is that there is no expert in these fields driving the ship and that our students get the best experience. I don't want them to just be reading from a book. I know that's an extreme example. I don't want them to just get concept that folks are researching, but that they're getting real live information and expert education, lessons, and practical on whatever the field may be. That's my biggest concern. Then we have to pay these folks, but that's a different conversation.

Ms. Peron: I think we all share your concerns. This has been a conversation at many meetings, and we continue thinking and coming back to the table. For instance, when we interviewed a candidate for the construction trades and realized that this is a very difficult person to come by that has the teaching experience, construction background, and all of that, there were other ideas that came to the table. For instance, Mr. Mapp said there are many associations out there that deal with construction. We need to tap into them to see if they can assist us with finding persons who are interested in doing this type of work. With the help of our HR department, that's something that we're going to go to and something that we didn't think of before. Every time we're running into this. It's the same thing with the cosmetology. When Capri closed its doors, we thought let's reach out to someone there that we can talk to so we can see if we can tap into the talent that's there and the teachers that were teaching. I think that helped with opening up our pool of candidates in cosmetology. We have a lot of them coming through. We're hoping to get that established and get them in. They can help us with the planning, selection of materials, curriculum, and all of that right way. In all those areas we have the same sentiment as you. We've been having those same conversations. As Dr. Hodges said, who better than the expert and the person with the experience in the field to come in and make this a true learning environment for our students? We are faced with those challenges and worries, and we continue working and trying to get that.

Comm. Castillo-Cruz: We have the labor unions who train folks. They have to have someone who is in charge of teaching, educating, or providing that training. Maybe we can look into that. Are we finding that it's difficult finding folks in the area with the experience and certification? Or is it that we're finding folks yet we're having an issue with salary?

Ms. Peron: No. Salary has not been an issue up to now, not at all.

Comm. Castillo-Cruz: Great. I know we talked about the Newcomers program. Is it for Spanish, Arabic, Bengali, or all three?

Ms. Peron: We have plans underway for Newcomers and all of those language populations because it is a need in the district. The biggest number is the Spanish language. Then it's the Bengali and Arabic. Those are the three major programs that we're looking at. In terms of space and budgeting, we're going to phase it. We also phase our bilingual services districtwide. Not just for the Newcomers population, but for all our bilingual students we need to ramp up our services in that area. Every bilingual child has to have ESL services. First, we have to ensure that we have those ESL teachers across the board in every high school for all our kids. Then we have to have the bilingual supports. As you know, there is also a challenge in trying to recruit bilingual teachers. In some of the languages it's really difficult. Bengali is a very difficult area to find a certified teacher in. We have some in the district, but we need more. Arabic is the same. We're phasing it in. There is a plan. There is a phase. The

bilingual department and academic services have been really working hard to bring about these plans. We're taking a look at it and trying to phase them in. We plan and budget for things and then it doesn't come to fruition because of the challenge of hiring. It kind of stands still. I think the phase in development is a good one and we can talk about it in detail at I&P so we can bring it back to all the Commissioners and the Board at large and everyone can have a better understanding of why we have planned it that way.

Comm. Castillo-Cruz: A more detailed discussion is needed. I think we had this conversation of phasing in Newcomers high school four years ago. Unfortunately, that didn't happen then, and it's being brought back four years later. Not to say you haven't been working on it, but officially as a high school. You have all been doing a phenomenal job in educating the students and finding different avenues. As a high school formally and bringing it back to the table we want to have further conversations so everyone is on the same page on how we can move forward. The need just continues to grow. At that time, there was a three-year phase in plan. I'm not sure if three years is what we really have. That's means we have three years of students struggling throughout their high school career. I definitely want to have further conversation.

Ms. Peron: Which is why I also mentioned that the other prong of this is the bilingual education aspect and the services, for bilingual is something that we are also working on because a Newcomers population is a different population. They have very specific needs. Some needs are the same as the other bilingual children. I want you to know that we have a Newcomers small program for high school. Ms. Tsimpedes and Ms. Garcia have been working on it this year. We have about 45 kids enrolled.

Ms. Tsimpedes: It's about 40 students. These are students that sometimes may be undocumented. They may also be overage and under-credited. If you get a 17-year-old without having a transcript, putting them in as a freshman almost guarantees that they're not going to complete their four years to graduate. We started it off as a pilot this year to see how it would take and it's been successful. The kids are attending. We have teachers working with them. We've been creative with the schedules to ensure that there's a teacher of record that can provide them the courses that they need in order to graduate. It started off as a pilot with 17 students and it's grown to over 40. That's what we're looking to continue to expand. Unfortunately, we do get kids who come here and who do not have the credits. They're 17 years old and putting them in as freshman starting from scratch does a disservice to our children. We can talk about that, Comm. Castillo-Cruz, more so in I&P because we did want to present something there, but we wanted to wait until after reorg so that all members were present to participate. Perhaps at the April meeting, with your permission, we can do that.

Comm. Castillo-Cruz: Absolutely. I do want to say kudos to your team and Ms. Garcia. You took this task and revamped it and tried something different that would work for our young adults. You have been doing a phenomenal job. It hasn't been status quo. It's a little different than the regular expectation, but it's worked and that's what's important. I'd be happy to have the conversation and I can't wait until the rest of the Board hears that presentation in the future, so they know what you and your team have been doing with our high school students.

Ms. Tsimpedes: We look forward to that.

Comm. Arrington: Is the automotive pathway going to be active at John F. Kennedy and Eastside?

Ms. Peron: This year it's slated for Eastside.

Comm. Arrington: It won't be at John F. Kennedy. I share your concerns about the construction. It's a very aggressive timeline. What are we going to do with summer school at all these schools when we're knocking down walls and tearing up all the schools? Are we not having summer school?

Ms. Peron: That's a great question, one that we have posed and discussed of late. We had a meeting yesterday and we discussed the construction that's happening at Eastside. The cosmetology rooms that are designated for construction are on the lower level of Eastside High School. I would say the basement. It has an entrance to the parking lot. Mr. Mapp confirmed that that area can be roped off and summer school can happen at Eastside High School. It won't interfere with the construction. The five labs that are slated are also on a certain wing of Eastside High School that can be partitioned out and students won't be allowed to enter that area. There is the possibility of having summer school at Eastside High School.

Comm. Arrington: What's our drop dead? I'm assuming we're going to start construction July 1.

Ms. Peron: I hope June.

Comm. Arrington: How many weeks of construction do we need in all the schools?

Ms. Peron: We have a timeline. I do have those specific timelines with me. Not in my head, but in my paperwork and documentation. I can have those to the Board. I can share that with you all.

Comm. Arrington: I don't want to get into Joseph A. Taub like we had. It's death by a thousand paper cuts. A delay here and a delay there and once we're halfway in then we're going to be talking about delaying opening the high schools. That's my concern there.

Ms. Peron: We share that with you along with my team and Ms. Shafer. We continuously talk about that. I see Neil Mapp. Maybe he has something to say. I've also been exploring Option B. Worst case scenario, our cosmetology students have to start from day one. In that program, you have to incur a specific amount of hours for your license. At the end of the four years, you leave with a license which has to do with passing an exam and accruing a certain number of hours. Seriously, we have to take a look at what could be an Option B. Would we offer more hours to kids if they don't start on time on Saturdays or after school? Do we find a different location for them to practice? We have to put all those things on the table because we have to be ready.

Comm. Arrington: Do we need to get any certificates after this construction is performed in these schools? With Joseph A. Taub we said we were going to be done September 1 and by the way we needed this and that certificate to open the school up. Are we going to have the same scenario here with this construction?

Ms. Peron: I could imagine so. I think every construction site has a temporary certificate of occupancy and then a certificate of occupancy. I'm going to leave that to Mr. Mapp who can talk about that better than I can.

Comm. Arrington: Hopefully that's built into the schedule. What is the maximum amount of students for the cosmetology pathway? How many have registered so far?

Ms. Peron: The first year is 50, but I have to check that number for you because I do know those numbers are in.

Comm. Arrington: 50 is the maximum amount of students.

Ms. Peron: Freshman year. Yes.

Comm. Arrington: We're at 50 so far?

Ms. Peron: I'm not sure. I don't want to give you a number I don't have. I want to confirm that number because those lotteries were just done. That paperwork has just been completed. I need to get those numbers now from the department of central registration who runs that.

Comm. Arrington: Is cosmetology only at Eastside?

Ms. Peron: Yes.

Comm. Arrington: If a student goes to School No. 5 or Joseph A. Taub and they want to go to the cosmetology pathway, how does he or she get there? Do they get there on their own? Is there going to be transportation across town?

Ms. Peron: The same kind of thing. In terms of high school, we don't provide transportation. We provide bus tickets for our students.

Comm. Arrington: Okay. Thank you.

Comm. Castillo-Cruz: I know we're all crossing our fingers and pushing forward. How realistic is it that we will be ready for September?

Ms. Peron: This one I'm going to turn over to Mr. Mapp. I think facilities is really our worry. In terms of curriculum and preparation for programs we are on schedule. The facility aspect of the vocational programs and the science labs is a timeline that depends on contractors and work. Mr. Mapp, I know that you and I have talked about timelines. You've given me a timeline for all of them from the contractor and the vendors. Do you want to talk a little bit about that?

Mr. Neil Mapp: Good evening, Commissioners. The question was about how realistic is the timeline. In normal times, prior to COVID it would be very realistic to be able to open these spaces in September. Right now, when we look at all these new spaces we're looking at creating white boxes. It's not major infrastructure that we have to put in place, but what's more meaningful about these spaces are the professional staff that man these spaces. That's what we've seen in our walkthroughs of other spaces at other facilities. We're trying to create white boxes. In terms of the schedule for the cosmetology lab, the greater portion of the work is really sanitary and installing water source infrastructures. We have to get DOE schematic approval for the plan. Then we have to go out and get permitting for the plan from the city to do the work. Then we have to get a temporary certificate of occupancy once the work is complete. What we have done is eliminate the procurement of a contractor. That procurement process has been eliminated because we can go directly to the state or a co-op contractor to do the work. At this point in time, we're beyond programming. We're finalizing the

programming now and getting into construction documents. We're looking to phase the work. Potentially, demolition work can begin any time now because the spaces are abandoned. We put in the safeguards right now to make that happen while school is in progress. We understand that testing is about to start. There is some work that can proceed now if we get the demolition drawings. Then the construction work in earnest will begin July 1. The other open-ended issue here is the lead time on equipment. We have a lot of equipment going into the space such as hair dryers and nail stations. We're firming up those specifications now and we will be able to get a lead time on all that equipment in the next two or three weeks. That then will determine whether or not that space can open with everything in place. Compared to Joseph A. Taub, it's not as involved because we're already in the building with all of the infrastructure at least outside of the space. We're now bringing it into that space. We believe we can do it. Lead times are in our favor with equipment. We're not talking about large HVAC equipment. It may be compressors with split systems to air condition spaces, which seem to be readily available in three to six weeks. We believe, at least for the cosmetology space, we are able to meet that timeline.

Comm. Castillo-Cruz: Are we able to meet the timeline for all the pathways by September?

Mr. Mapp: We're looking at the science labs also at Paterson Catholic. That work too is beginning in earnest. It will begin with abatement of asbestos ceiling and floor tiles. We're looking there too. It's not a lot of construction work. It's clearing the space and creating a white box. The longest lead times we're looking at would be casework, the cabinetry that goes to the perimeter of the building, and the desks and chairs for the field of the space. If those timelines for the equipment are in our favor, we certainly can meet that September date.

Comm. Castillo-Cruz: Is it fair to say that in April or May we can have this conversation and review these dates? I think it's appropriate for us to do some planning. We don't want to say we didn't know. We should know. If September is not realistic, then this Board needs to have a real conversation with the administration on what happens next. We don't want September to be chaos, especially when our students have applied. They will be accepted and there are certain expectations for the students, teachers, and staff. I think we need to really have a follow-up conversation, whether it's in April or May, so we know what is a realistic timeline for facilities and also an update of where we are with staff. I know it is difficult, but here we are and what's most important now is to make sure that if we are going down these pathways that we are going full steam ahead, but that we're also meeting the expectations of the students and the vision. We don't want to start something halfway and end up it being a disaster. That's my opinion. I don't know what the rest of the Board thinks. Mr. Mapp, you let us know what works, April or May.

Mr. Mapp: Mid-April we should have concrete timelines. We're in the programming phase of all these projects right now determining what should go into these spaces, including the professional staff. Once we get to construction documents, we will know exactly what goes in there, where drain and water lines are, and we can better see what the construction timelines are. We're in the beginning phases of a project that we can't really be specific about the timelines. We know that documents will be done in the next four weeks and with that we can have complete specifications where we can go out to manufacturers and say is this product available and what the lead time is. If it's not available, we'll have to switch to another product that's more readily available. We're waiting on the architects now to complete their construction documents and we'll be better able to discuss more concrete timelines in April.

Ms. Peron: Up to now, the turnaround has been excellent. When we provided the programmatic specs, they got us the design. We went back and looked at all the furniture and everything. I did have reservations about five items. We worked on that and we got it to the vendor as well quickly. Now we have options for the furniture that I had reservations about. I want the best for our kids. I'm not going to settle for something that is just put together. We continue looking at it and addressing what it is that we really need and want. I think the lead times so far have been very good.

Comm. Arrington: Just to piggyback on what Oshin just said, the goal is not to start school virtually in September.

Ms. Peron: That is my goal because besides a blended learning environment, because there is something to say about that, I don't want a virtual school.

Comm. Arrington: We don't want to start virtual in September.

Ms. Peron: I do not.

Comm. Capers: I know you said the students may not be in the way in summer school. Should we just entertain the idea that summer school will be virtual so we won't run into any problems?

Ms. Peron: We have other sites that we can possibly use for summer school. It's not just Eastside and Kennedy. We do have other sites. Our last resort would be virtual. I think our best bet is to have kids in front of us and work with them on what they need to work on. I think that it will be doable. We can find a facility and we can have them in-person. Neil talked about the area and where it is. If you saw, you would also agree that it is in one section of the school. Kids wouldn't have anything to do with going there.

Comm. Capers: It's just about getting equipment in and out. I didn't want to have any kind of delay if everybody moved freely throughout the building. If the construction that's going on won't interfere with the students being there, I'm good with that. Have an option. That's all.

Mr. Mapp: Perhaps I'll do a presentation to the facilities committee so you can get a better understanding of where we are. I think you'll feel a little better about what we're referring to. This area is segregated. This is at the end of the building with its own access points. We don't be impeding on any other program spaces.

Comm. Capers: Thank you. I'll look for that in the committee. With the supervisors that we're hiring, is this going to free up some of our other supervisors to have a lesser load in the district because we're moving schools? There are some supervisors that are shared. Are they going to get a lesser load so they can focus in on more?

Ms. Peron: No. We have elementary school supervisors that are shared. These pathway associate supervisors are just for that. They're targeted for the pathways at the high schools and that's their work. The other supervisors are content area supervisors that work in science, language arts, mathematics, technology, and things like that. This is separate and apart. It's a different job description, responsibility, and task.

Comm. Capers: Are we still going to have shared supervisors in the high school?

Ms. Peron: Yes, we are.

Comm. Capers: Because they're content specialists.

Ms. Peron: Yes. There will be some coordination. They'll have to have conversations around instruction and things like that, but it is a different type of job.

Comm. Capers: I want to see where the numbers are in terms of enrollment and how we're going to select those students. What are the criteria? I would want to look at those different things.

Ms. Peron: That's being worked on now. I actually touched base today on high school applications. They're finalizing it. Some of it is lottery. For the STEAM high school, the applicants go into a lottery, the way PANTHER does. That's all still being worked on and finalizing. It's not going to be ready for a couple more weeks yet. When that information is ready, I will be sure to share it with the Board.

Comm. Capers: How are you guys working this out administratively? Are we adding a new assistant superintendent? Are we giving more roles to the current ones?

Ms. Shafer: The change in pathways doesn't change the makeup of the assistant superintendents. We still have the same school buildings. The difference is we have different and new pathways. It doesn't mean that we need an additional assistant superintendent, and it doesn't mean that there will be any type of unequal share. For example, the changes are happening at Paterson Catholic, Eastside High School, Rosa Parks, and Kennedy High School. They already are under an assistant superintendent.

Comm. Capers: They'll just keep the same. They're just changing the name of the schools.

Ms. Shafer: Changing the pathways.

Ms. Peron: The administrators stay the same. That was the first phase of high school restructuring. Remember? The charge was to change the structuring of the administrators at the high schools and so we did that.

Comm. Capers: Who will be overseeing these different pathways? Are we going to have different experts? I know you have the supervisors. Are you going to have directors? Do the supervisors go right to the assistant superintendent and give recommendations on what's going on?

Ms. Peron: It's the pathway associate supervisor who is going to be that expert on overseeing those pathways. Of course, they will go to the principal who's always the first line. From the principal, it's the assistant superintendent and academics or any other director over a specific area. That's the way the structure is set up.

Comm. Capers: Are we looking for new principals? Do we have principals already expert in those areas we're going to place in those schools?

Ms. Peron: The principals that we have are the principals that are staying.

Comm. D. Martinez: I saw that you wanted to hire personnel for special education. What specific areas of special education are you looking to hire for?

Ms. Peron: We continue looking at that. I would acquiesce to Ms. Coy, who is over special education and currently taking a look at all the programs in the high school. It's just that, taking a look at what self-contained classrooms we have available, what other special education teacher is needed as a resource or pull-in or pullout. It's hard to say and pinpoint the titles that we need because you have to look at it per program. Before we conclude with you, I just want to make clear that there will be a structural reorganization change at one of the high schools. That's up and coming. I talked about reorganization of staff before on my last slide. That is yet to happen. We did change principals last year and we may take a look at that again in some area or in a specific area. I just want to clarify that and put that on the record for tonight. Back to Comm. D. Martinez, Coy, do you want to help out with this and talk a little bit about the plans that we have been working on?

Ms. Cheryl Coy: You're absolutely right, Ms. Peron. The programs will drive the type of teachers that are needed. It could be anywhere from a teacher of the handicapped certification who is across high school area. It can be a teacher of student with disabilities who is content-certified. It really is determined by what the need will be once the program is in place. Right now, when we advertise for special education teachers, we take them across the board. We're looking at new hires as well as existing positions that are in the district to see if there are better fits in other areas as well.

Comm. D. Martinez: Now that we have the restructuring and the pathways program, are special education students able to enroll into these programs? If they are, is it going to be modified to their learning? Let's say they want to do construction. Is the hiring accommodating to that? Or is the hiring just in general?

Ms. Coy: Let's say you have a student who wants to do cosmetology. The elective itself would be in the content with the general education teacher. You would more than likely have a push-in special education teacher to support the student. Or pullout in the same classroom to be able to support the students so they are able to stay on task.

Comm. Hodges: I'd be interested in the demographics of these programs, particularly the STEAM program. I have some concerns which I have shared previously. I'd be very interested in what those figures look like as we move forward and as the enrollments fill out and we get more of an understanding of who's attending.

Comm. Simmons: Any more questions before we move on?

Ms. Cicely Warren: Good evening, Commissioners. Goal #2 is learning acceleration by professionally developing administrators and teachers. As we all know, COVID changed the landscape of education. We understood that we would need to provide specific professional development to address that changing landscape. This goal addresses two of the indicators in our walkthroughs. Our walkthroughs are a coaching tool. They inform individual coaching sessions as well as PLCs. They also inform the district-level professional development that's provided. That is what this specific feedback tool is used for. We also have our teacher evaluation rubric, which is used for a different measure. This is specifically about professional development. Our goal was to increase the two most challenging indicators by 10% over the course of the school year after providing specific professional development to address the implications of the pandemic and remote instruction. The first indicator that we were addressing is lessons adjusted based on classroom response data. That's modifying and differentiating instruction based on teacher-made tests, based on our intervention platforms, which you will hear about later. We have been providing professional development and

coaching for teachers to improve that. In round one, which was presented the last time we were here, out of the classrooms that were visited during the walkthroughs, it was seen 38.9% of the time. We just completed round two, from November to February 28. 3,019 walkthroughs were conducted, and we did see an increase. We're now at 49.7%. Bear in mind that walkthroughs can take place in the beginning of the class, the middle, or the end and they last for no more than 10 minutes. It's really a snapshot of what's occurring during the course of the lesson. We did see greater evidence of differentiation and lessons being adjusted based on the data teachers are collecting in real time. The second indicator that we looked, which has been challenging for us historically, was purposeful use of engaging instructional strategies such as working in collaborative groups, think pair share, and turn and talk. Those are several types of engagement strategies that we typically see in the classroom. As we discussed the last time we were here, it's been really challenging to use those specific strategies in light of our COVID protocols. The students have partitions. The desks are three feet apart. Students are masked. That's had a real impact on those strategies that teachers have relied on to get students to work collaboratively. However, we have seen a slight increase from round one. In the 3,019 classrooms that was noted 26.9% of the time. That was about 811 times in the classrooms that were visited. I will reiterate that some of the protocols we have in place do have a significant impact and we just need to be transparent about that. What has occurred? What has been in place in terms of professional development? The data has been shared for those two indicators in principals' meetings. A refresher regarding engagement strategies has been provided to principals and supervisors because it looks different in our current situation. RTI training for teachers in grades 6-12. I think that's where we can attribute some of the increase in differentiation. We contribute it to that. We had blended learning for teachers in grades k-5, and training on the intervention platforms that we're using across the district, particularly iStation, ALEKS, and Imagine Math. We're really providing support in terms of making sure everyone understands the data from those platforms and that they're actually using it to inform instruction. We will continue to do that as we move into round three.

Comm. Simmons: Are there any questions for Goal #2 for Ms. Warren?

Comm. Hodges: Do these changes correlate to improved student outcomes? If so, how do they correlate?

Ms. Warren: While there's no specific algorithm that calculates 'x' amount of PD results in 'x' amount of increase in student outcomes, there is certainly a wide body of research that affirms the value of professional development and coaching in that regard that I'd be happy to share. You'll hear more about the specific intervention platforms in Goal #4.

Comm. Hodges: I had questions about this goal, as you recall. I'm trying to find out whether there's evidence that my concerns were misplaced. That's what I'm looking at, to see just how effective this was in terms of improving the outcomes educationally for our students. Obviously, professional development is extremely important, but what we were looking at I raised questions about. I'm trying to determine how they helped the students.

Ms. Warren: I think increased differentiation means that the students' individual needs are being met, as opposed to just teaching to the middle or to just one level. If teachers are taking the data that's being provided by those intervention platforms that we're using and actually meeting students where they are, that will result in better outcomes.

Comm. Hodges: I'm looking for evidence of that. That's my interest. I'll look for that in a future report.

Ms. Warren: Understood. This is measuring what we're seeing in the classroom and there's a separate presentation on the benchmarks and on the student performance in terms of ALEKS and all our other intervention platforms. That is Goal #4. I think you might see what you're looking for there.

Comm. Hodges: Thank you very much.

Ms. Warren: You're welcome. Are there any other questions?

Ms. Shafer: Thank you, Ms. Warren. We'll move on to Goal #3, which is Ms. Coy.

Ms. Coy: Good evening everyone. Goal #3 is the update of the transition program and where we are now. Right now, the supervisor and coordinator are networking with local agencies to develop community-based instruction supports and worksite job assignments for the 2022-2023 school year. Due to COVID, we were very limited to be able to go out and establish these partnerships. A lot of organizations were not ready to bring the students back in, but they are looking forward to it for the 2022-2023 school year. We're partnering with local businesses to support development of the production room, as well as in-district support for the production room. We're going to be supporting security, if everything goes well, with being able to help Mr. Olympio and Mr. Price with the signage that is done districtwide and on one location of the Paterson Catholic classes for the students. An example of the assembly line preparation is also the Valpak mailers. We're reaching out to them, and they have agreed to establish that partnership for students to begin in the 2022-2023 school year with establishing the mailers, boxing them up, sending them back to Valpak so they can send it out in their distributions as they do on a quarterly basis. The remaining furniture should be installed for March and April. That will allow students to now see what fully established rooms are when it comes to the kitchen and dining room. They learned the foundations of what it takes to run those areas in an independent home, as well as social development. They're also going to have what we call an interview room where they're going to be establishing partnerships with different organizations to know what it's like to go into the field and really have a one-on-one interview and what it takes when it comes to appearance, presentation, and resume writing as well. They also have collaboration with Accesslink for those students who currently do have jobs so they can establish their own independent transportation, get a feel for it now, and continue it upon graduation. They're also in collaboration with the Division of Developmental Disabilities, Employment First, and Transition 21 Unit who is going to establish different programs for those students who are 18 who decide that they are ready to graduate, but don't want to graduate into nothing. They're going to have a series of different organizations that they can partner with from that 18-21 grade band to get jobs, services, and support so they don't lose it as a result of graduating. The team has worked with the students to develop the logo you see at the bottom for the TIES program. Are there any questions?

Comm. Hodges: Are there any plans to follow up to see how successful this program is after the students leave us?

Ms. Coy: Once they partner with DDD, the goal is to track them. They're going to be pouring a lot of support into these students' development. For instance, they did help one student get a job now. The current job reaches out to the coordinator and the supervisor to exchange feedback on how the child is doing at the job, what their abilities are, and if they need additional support from the school. When the child does come in

to work, they can continue to advance. The goal is to definitely track these students for the next couple of years to see if everything we're putting into them now at the district level is a support for their independence in the long-run.

Comm. Hodges: That's exactly what I'm looking for so that we can adjust our programs based on the feedback that we receive to make sure we are delivering what the students need. That's what I'm looking for across the board. Not just in special education, but throughout the district in all the programs. We should be looking at how effective we are at developing our students educationally after they leave us. I appreciate having that as part of the project.

Ms. Coy: Thank you. That support definitely has come from the team that I work with, Ms. Shafer, Ms. Peron, JT, and all the cabinet members. We're all getting on that same mindset. This transition program I could not have done alone. It is definitely a collective effort. Everyone has put a lot of support from different areas. We all take credit for this program, and this is something that we are looking to roll out districtwide in a bigger capacity as each year goes on. I thank my team for being able to support me on this program as well.

Comm. Arrington: I just want to compliment you on this program. I had the chance to visit the program on Read Across America. I was invited there to read and I was really impressed with the students and the teachers. They seemed to be really passionate about what they were doing and very compassionate with the students. I want to compliment everyone for what they're doing down there. I was really impressed with the program. They're doing a great job down there. I think the students really enjoy the program. I just want to compliment you on that program you're running down there.

Ms. Coy: Thank you very much.

Ms. Shafer: We're going to move on to our last goal and that's Joanna.

Ms. Tsimpedes: Good evening again, Commissioners. My goal is academic and focuses on ELA and math. The concentration for ELA is on k-3 running records and it's to increase student reading comprehension levels by a minimum of two levels by the end of the school year. For math, we focused on the middle school for the students to utilize the intervention platform and move into phase two to help them with their coursework and increase their mathematical proficiency among the middle school population, better preparing them for the high school especially now coming from the pandemic. How are we doing this? There are multiple ways that we are monitoring the data. The most important is to get the data into the hands of all the stakeholders. Every week I send out the report to principals, supervisors, vice principals, cabinet members, and anyone else who has a hand with teacher support. This is so everyone is aware of where our students are progressing weekly on ALEKS, Imagine Math, and iStation. We also provide professional development to teachers and administrators regarding, not only using the platform, but understanding the data so that when they are making decisions regarding their strategies they have data to speak to what they need to do in the classroom. We also monitor the data that is given to the principals. The assistant superintendents review when we go into the buildings. We are actually in the midst of having our second meetings with the principals now. Also, the principals use the data when they are evaluating their teachers with regard to standards 2 and 4, which speak directly to data and intervention. We just completed the second round of running records for our students and now we're analyzing the growth and looking at what are the next steps to continue to see an increase in the number of students who are increasing their comprehension level by a minimum of two levels. Our second

round of meetings started in February and is continuing through March. This is for all our schools from pre-k to 12. After having discussions with the principals, we provided another training that was more in-depth on using intervention platforms so they themselves can see what the benefits of the platforms are and what types of instructional strategies and support the platforms provide to our students and teachers. The information that we shared with our principals at our meetings was also shared with staff at their grade level meetings, PLCs, faculty meetings, data team meetings, and so forth. It is important to see the level of accountability that starts with the top down. We're all looking at it and this year due to the pandemic and being remote for a year and a half it's even more important that we monitor the data to ensure that students are on track and are making the gains necessary to progress to the next grade level. I have to say after meeting with the principals the first round we definitely saw an increase in the use of the platforms. Even in conversations with principals now, they had conversations with teachers on how to better implement the platform so that it's not taking away from direct instruction. Students are using the platform not only during intervention, but also at home as assigned homework for extra practice. It's ongoing. We are currently in the midst of preparing for NJSLA. Part of that is a continuation of using the platforms, monitoring instruction, and having those deep dive conversations with our principals who in turn have those conversations with their teachers. We all have to be of the same mindset that we have to do what's best for students. That is to ensure that we continue to provide them with instruction that is going to meet the gains that we're looking for, not only for the district, but also for themselves so that they can be proficient and move on to the next grade level ready to go on. Are there any questions regarding academic Goal #4?

Ms. Shafer: Thank you team for giving the Board and everyone an update as to where we are with our goals.

REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

Ms. Shafer: I want to congratulate our basketball and wrestling coaches in the district. They had a great showing in the county and state tournaments. As you all know, doing anything during this time has been difficult and coaching has been difficult as well. It's not easy making sure that all your athletes are staying academically eligible, but on top of it you need to make sure that they're safe, keeping social distancing as much as we can, and quarantining if we have to. I want to congratulate Brandon Pilgrim, who is the Eastside High School girls' basketball coach. Their team and assistant coaches won the county championship, and they had a great showing in the state tournament. I want to also congratulate Tommy Patterson, who is the Kennedy High School boys' basketball coach, his assistant coaches and the team for making it to the county finals and also a great showing in the state tournament. Congratulations to Marquise Webb, who is the Eastside High School boys' coach, and his assistants and team for making it to the county semi-finals and a really great showing in the state. I'll tell you why I say that. A couple of days before the state tournament game, one of the athletes tested positive and that meant that the team had to quarantine. There were four student athletes on the team who were vaccinated and two players who had not been around for about a week to eight days. Coach Webb was able to put together six players and go to the state tournament and they were in the game until the end. I really want to give him a shout-out. These are tough times when you make it to the state tournament and then COVID gets in the way. Congratulations to them. I also want to congratulate Cleave Robinson, the wrestling coach, and his assistants at Eastside High School. It's the first time in a long time that we brought a wrestler to the state tournament in Atlantic City and that wrestler was Arthur Edmonds. I want to congratulate the Eastside High School JROTC under the direction of CSM Garcia, SFC Branwell, and Major Barraza.

This past weekend was their second in-person competition and they brought home six trophies where 20 schools had participated. In addition, we have International High School who earned for the fourth year in a row the AP Computer Science Female Diversity Award. Congratulations to the principal, teachers, and students. I'm going to ask if Boris would put up the statistics around COVID. I know the Board is going to vote tonight and I want to make sure you have all the information. Right now, where masks are mandatory are Plainfield, East Orange, New Brunswick, Trenton, and Newark. The local COVID-19 conditions as it relates to hospitalizations as of Friday – St. Joseph's in Paterson has 12 patients, St. Joseph's in Wayne has two, and statewide hospitalizations were 728. Our vaccination rate for school staff is 86%, in the City of Paterson ages 12-17 it's 85%, and in the City of Paterson ages 5-11 it's 27%. The CALI score continues to be moderate, which is at Level 2. Our percentage of positivity is 3.64% and that is the percentage of total positive cases from the PCR tests that have been performed, and that's a 7-day average. The statewide viral transmission rate is .78%. You can see there we have a chart of where the district is. During the last week of January, we were at 40 cases. We've come down and in the week of February 28, which was the first week of March, we had 10 cases. Our staff survey results were 2,509 and parents surveyed were 998. Those that want to keep the mask from staff are 1,557 and for parents it's 651 for a total of 2,208. The ones who do not want to keep the mask, staff is 952 and parents are 347 for a total of 1,299. For partitions, staff that want to keep the partitions are 698 and parents 591 for a total of 1,289. For those who want to remove the partitions, staff is 1,807 and parents 407, for a total of 2,214. I just wanted to make sure that the Board had all the information when you vote whether or not to keep masks and partitions. That concludes my report.

Comm. Capers: I want to thank you for that report and for celebrating all of our student athletes and those who perform in the classroom as well. I want to read you something. Another Board member who was at the wrestling tournament sent me a message about Arthur. He wanted to let us know that the young man Arthur who wrestled this weekend did a phenomenal job. He embodied what it means to be from Paterson. He was respectful and had a lot of grit. Hats off to those coaches! I just want to take the time out to let you know how great this young man is representing the City of Paterson and his school district. Hats off to him, the coaches, and all of our coaches! Thank you.

Comm. Hodges: This question is directed to the Superintendent. Based on the data that you presented to the Board, do you have a recommendation?

Ms. Shafer: Yes, I do. My recommendation is to keep the masks until two weeks after the spring break and eliminate the partitions.

Comm. Hodges: Thank you very much.

Comm. Capers: Why do we want to keep that in place?

Ms. Shafer: Right now, we have a very low vaccination rate with our children ages 5-11. We also have classrooms that exceed 24 students. We're using three feet for social distancing. With all of that taking place at this particular time and with the holiday coming up, which is Easter and spring break, you know people will gather. I just think it's prudent for us to wait for two weeks after the spring break. If the numbers continue to go down and things continue the way they're going right now, then the masks can be optional. By that I mean we would not have a mask mandate, but if anyone wanted to wear a mask they would be able to do so.

Comm. Capers: If the Board chooses to go in another direction and make it optional, would that include the testing as well? Would the testing go away? How would that work?

Ms. Shafer: The testing is still required. According to the New Jersey Department of Health, the only thing that is on the table is the mask mandate. The partitions are something that the district put in place themselves. They were not required and so that is something that we can forgo. As far as testing and all the other precautionary measures that we have, we will continue.

Comm. Capers: Testing is a state guideline?

Ms. Shafer: Yes.

Comm. Capers: Is the state continuing in other districts with the testing, following the same thing?

Ms. Shafer: You have to. It is the requirement at this point. If you are not vaccinated, you have to be tested weekly.

Comm. Capers: Thank you.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

It was moved by Comm. Capers, 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.

Mr. John McEntee: Good evening, everyone. I want to thank this Board for the opportunity to speak this evening. I hope that everyone is well and I hope you are healthy. The reason I'm here tonight with many of my members who I thank also for joining me is that once again it feels like deja vu all over again. The School Board is entertaining the possibility of once again changing the healthcare carrier. While I certainly understand that the carrier is non-negotiable, we've lived through this before. I know that Ms. Shafer has heard me a million times talk about the problems. I won't get into them here and now because I only have four minutes. I'm sure my members in their minute or two will do the same. We are now coming on the other end of a pandemic where all of our staff members have faced trials and tribulations regarding this pandemic. Some, unfortunately, are dealing with the unfortunate reality of what they're now coining long-term COVID. There's no such thing as a perfect insurance carrier. Every one of them has their issues. If you Google any of them, I'm sure you'll see people who have had experiences that were not favorable and some who were favorable. For the most part, since being an employee here going on 20 years, Blue Cross/Blue Shield has always been, in my humble opinion, award-winning. The difference between Blue Cross/Blue Shield and Aetna, from what I learned yesterday, is that Blue Cross/Blue Shield takes care of everything under one umbrella. You're not calling Texas, like we did under the Cigna years, to hope that someone is going to put through a claim based upon the way our summary plan description reads. What we have here in Paterson is a very complicated formula. According to Suzanne yesterday and my notes that I have here in front of me, she is going to have to go line by line in all of our plans and we have close to a dozen, more than they still offer in the state plan. They're going to have to make sure that for every single plan we have line by line everything is being followed properly. That's not to say CBIZ is not an upstanding organization. I actually do like them very much, but we don't have that type of time.

Our employees need to focus on one thing, that's their families and their jobs, educating and making the Paterson Public School District run as smoothly as possible. The last thing they want to deal with on July 1, if this does happen, is calling whoever it's going to be to make sure that some third-party administrator, because Aetna uses a third-party called Meritain, and they're going to be the ones responsible. They do not have that umbrella setting like Blue Cross/Blue Shield does. \$14 million is the amount of money that I'm hearing is being saved. We always say we want the best of everything in Paterson. We want the best staff. We have it. We want the best students. We have it. Let's take care of the staff that takes care of these students the best that we can. We do a survey for everything. I just saw a survey and those results. I'm glad they were shown because it shows what's going on, on the ground. But there has been no survey of the members asking them about going to Aetna. Would you like to do that? I guarantee if that survey was done, overwhelmingly if people had the time nowadays to participate, they're going to say they want to keep their healthcare plan as it is. There are times to do things and there are times not to do things. This by no stretch of the imagination is the time to do that. I was going to talk about another topic that I think I'll log on another time to do, but I want to say one final thing on a different topic here.

Ms. Danielle Bespalko: Good evening. I'm here today to talk about how masks have negatively affected my pre-k students and why I hope today there is some kind of vote to make them optional, just like the way it is across our entire state and other public places. This year I've seen the children in my class, although they're a high-level group of students, not making the progress that I expected them to make in speech articulation, English language acquisition, letter identification, and letter sound correspondence. As a whole, in years before the same techniques, strategies, and curriculum being used made me think what this was caused by. Why aren't they getting some of the skills that I thought they would? The only thing that is different is the fact that my students cannot see my mouth the way I move it to make certain sounds, words, and letters. They can't hear me well at all. Slight differences in letters like 'x' and 's' are impossible to hear or see with their mouths covered. There are certain milestones these children need to reach and only have a certain amount of time to do so before it's impossible to catch them up. In a lot of cases, for pre-k age students their teachers are the only people they know that speak English. If they're not learning the language from me, they're not going to learn it at all. The masks have been dirty, soiled, disgusting...

Ms. Camila Ravelo: Hi everyone. I'm recent employee in the Paterson School District. I do have a major concern with the switch in insurance plans. My one question when starting with the district was your insurance carrier. Blue Cross/Blue Shield is an excellent provider of services. That is important for my family and I, and also for many of my colleagues. I do think that it's important for the retention of your employees, but also it is a magnet. Not many places do still have Blue Cross/Blue Shield, especially major organizations like public school districts. That will make you one out of many. You will be an attraction for future employees that we do need. Thank you.

Ms. Jean Stewart: Good evening, my name is Jean Stewart and I'm calling to speak about the health insurance. I would like to stay with Blue Cross/Blue Shield. I don't really know the difference in the plans or if my doctors are covered, but I found working with a third-party administrator to be very cumbersome and time-consuming the last time we had that, just as a lot of my colleagues did. We're spending all this time trying to straighten out issues. You talk to this person and now we're talking to this person. That's one of my major concerns with switching to this new health plan that's going to have a third-party administrator. Thank you.

Comm. Redmon: Before we move on to the next speaker, can you tell us how many speakers there are on the line?

Mr. Zaydel: Roughly 20.

Ms. Donna Thompson: Good evening. I'm a math teacher at Eastside High School and I've been in the district a long time. I'm really fearful to have another TPA. The first one we had my mammogram would not get paid, countless bills referred to collection, endless phone calls back and forth between WebTPA and the doctor's office. It was really frustrating. The only way it got resolved was PEA and Superintendent Shafer. My gateway to getting this issue resolved was painful. Mammograms should not be a stressful issue. They're stressful on their own, but to go through that at that time was very time-consuming. There was an issue with the eye doctor getting refractions paid for when neither one of them was ever an issue with Blue Cross/Blue Shield.

Ms. Shamika Cope: I'm just calling in because I've been in the district for a while, and I just found Blue Cross/Blue Shield to be the best healthcare plan we have. I have a child who has serious medical conditions. We finally found a doctor that can treat him, and this doctor is not covered under Aetna. I don't feel like as a parent I should have to deal with that after finding a doctor who can treat him. If the health plan is what we want and it's working, I don't mind what I have to pay out for it. It's worth it. To keep switching back and forth we've been to Cigna and back to Blue Cross. Now we're going to Aetna. We'll probably end up back at Blue Cross. Let's just have it standard and be consistent so that we don't have to worry about this every couple of years. It's very stressful to have to keep circling back to this. I urge you to keep Blue Cross/Blue Shield. Thank you.

Ms. Melissa Rodriguez: Please undo this. I'm a parent of an autistic non-verbal child and she requires different specialists with her condition. With Blue Cross/Blue Shield, I have no problem. I haven't had an issue with them. When we used to have Cigna, you said it was going to be the same, but it wasn't. My daughter needs a level of consistency in her care. Switching doctors because they do not participate with Aetna is going to be a setback for her. I implore you, don't do this. It's very stressful and I'm sure, as other colleagues have spoken, there are many like me with children with different kinds of conditions who are not going to be covered. Why not keep what we have? Thank you.

Ms. Camila Lewis Francis: I'm concerned about claim reimbursement as we switch providers and just managing my healthcare overall. I would really prefer if everything stays the same and not be different. Thank you.

Ms. Clara Basyurt: Good evening, Superintendent Shafer and Commissioners. Thank you for allowing me to speak tonight. My name is Clara Basyurt and this is my second year teaching in Paterson. Although my experience in the district has been wonderful so far, I wanted to express my concerns like many of my colleagues about the possible insurance exchange. I'm urging the district please don't get rid of Blue Cross/Blue Shield, especially in the midst of the pandemic. My husband and I are in the New Jersey Educator's Plan. He's diabetic and having a good insurance is absolutely necessary for us, especially him since insulin is incredibly expensive without it. Blue Cross/Blue Shield has been wonderful for us because it's the most comprehensive insurance plan we've ever had. It's given us so many resources that we can take advantage of and we don't want to stop using it. I know that we're not the only ones in the Paterson community that has significant health concerns. There are other people in

our situation. Changing insurance will negatively impact their health and wellbeing and my ability to be there for my students. Why get rid of something that already works?

Mr. Steve King: Thank you for letting me speak this evening. Ms. Shafer, thanks for recognizing our student athletes. If any of you were there, I was the one handing out the trophy to Brandon Pilgrim from Eastside. I'm the chairman of the girls' basketball tournament and it's a great pleasure to do that. I'm also heavily involved in Paterson. I'm President of the Paterson Old Timer's Athletic Association. I'm always supporting the youth of Paterson. I want to speak to stability. Please, we've gone through a pandemic. We have gone through difficulties with kids learning virtually. We now have them in class. We're still going through difficulty of attendance and getting them up to where they should be. The last thing we need is to deal with changing of healthcare things. We need to stay stable. My wife and I have experienced when we switch things. This is my 48th year of teaching math and I'm so blessed by god for that. When we've changed over the years, we'd end up losing doctors, changing doctors, and not getting covered. Please stay with it. By the way, continue stability. Let's go optional with the mask. Many districts have done that. They're having no problems.

Ms. Peggy Goodwin: Good evening. I'm speaking with regards to the changing of our insurance. I concur with all my colleagues that we really shouldn't be changing the plan. Blue Cross/Blue Shield is what we have been working with and it's been working well for many. I don't understand why we have to keep switching every couple of years. I understand this might be a short-term cost-cutting measure. However, in the long-term it is incredibly frustrating and it is not helping the staff. I have doctors that only take this insurance. I've been with the district for 14 years and I haven't had insurance as good as this. I'm willing to pay for it and I do pay for it. I concur with my colleagues. Don't do this. Please don't change our insurance. Thank you.

Ms. Karen Stephenson: Good evening. I'm an employee for the last 33 years in Paterson. As stated by the previous speakers, I'm asking you to please keep Blue Cross/Blue Shield. Throughout all my years here they're the easiest company to deal with. Trying to find new doctors is not an easy task, especially for those with preexisting conditions and some of them are life and death. I really would hope that we stay with Blue Cross/Blue Shield. Thank you.

Ms. Shaye Brown: Hi, Board Commissioners and Superintendent Shafer. I'm calling just like everyone else. I'm the mother of a child with autism. Please understand how difficult it is to transition providers. It's enough to try to get my son used to his current doctor and specialists that he needs. It's very challenging. In addition to that, please understand we're still in the midst of COVID. Our health and mental wellness are really key. My therapist does not accept Aetna. My mental health is everything and I know I'm not the only employee in the district that's having that problem. Please consider putting out a survey so you can actually get real time data of what we need in the district in order for us to maintain our sanity and mental health while we're going through this difficult stage. I'm also curious as to why we're reduced to one minute. Where in the policy does it say that we keep changing from three minutes to four minutes to one minute? I'd love to know where that information is. Thank you.

Comm. Redmon: The one minute was reserved because of the number of speakers. There were 44 speakers, and it was reduced to one minute to make sure that everyone was heard. That was the justification for why we went to one minute.

Ms. Lynn Schweighardt: Albert Einstein once said, "Insanity is doing the same thing over and over again but expecting different results." I feel this is what the Board of

Education is going to do if they switch us to Aetna. We had problems with Cigna, an unpopular company, and we're going to have the same problems if we go to Aetna. Under Cigna, people had to cancel chemo appointments, which affected their health. Surgeries had to be rescheduled. Parents could not get life-saving asthma medication for their children. If we switch to Aetna, another unpopular insurance company that many medical doctors do not accept, how many people will have to suffer again? People's health is not the area to cut costs. Thank you.

Mr. Michael Lewis: Hi, I'm a teacher at Eastside High School. Superintendent Shafer, thank you for the work you've done. I know you're very personable. Though there have been some differences with the union, as a person I appreciate your work. You will be missed by people like me. On the other hand, when you buy something that's going to save you \$14 million, I don't care what it is, if it looks too good it usually is and you pay for what you get. As my colleagues have said, Blue Cross/Blue Shield has been so far since I've been in the district for 15 years the best one we've had so far. That's all I have to say.

Comm. Redmon: How many more speakers are remaining?

Mr. Zaydel: About three.

Ms. Sophia Kadrmas: I've been an employee in Paterson for the last three years. Both my husband and I have some underlying health conditions and we're very lucky to have the best doctors with our current health insurance plan. I've already done some research. I've reached out to a few of my doctors, and they've confirmed my fears, which is that they do not accept Aetna for insurance claims. It was one of the main reasons I chose this position over another position that I was offered around the same time I was hired. As a previous speaker mentioned, for me this being one of the few districts that still carried the Horizon Blue Cross/Blue Shield plan was a main attraction for me to want to come work for Paterson. I'm honestly more than willing to have a higher deduction coming out of my paycheck if it meant keeping Horizon as my insurance provider. Thank you for taking the time to listen and I do hope you will heavily reconsider this decision.

Mr. Sahil Shah: Hi, I'm speaking as many other colleagues are speaking. Blue Cross/Blue Shield has been a great insurance. It has helped me, my wife, and my family. It has helped my children with any situation they may have. Just to change the insurance is really frustrating. There are medical situations that need to be taken care of. With the pandemic going through and the mental health, I really don't think the changing of the insurance would be a good thing to do. Please don't change the insurance. That's all I want to say.

Comm. Redmon: Boris, was that the last speaker?

Mr. Zaydel: I believe it was. I'm just double-checking the list. That's all that we have.

Comm. Redmon: There was a mistake. Mr. McEntee was extended extra time to speak on behalf of his members that signed up for the meeting. He has an additional two minutes. If Mr. McEntee is still on the line, please allow him to speak for an additional two minutes.

Mr. McEntee: Thank you. I really appreciate the extra time that was afforded and those who helped me achieve that. I'm not going to belabor the point with the benefits. You heard a really nice snapshot of a wide array of members and how they feel. I won't

belabor that. I really hope that the Board does take that into consideration when making their final decision. I do want to say one final thing. I really do appreciate the School Board having access to these meetings virtually. I think it's a great thing and moving forward it probably should be a component that you look into seriously so that parents can do exactly what we're doing right now when they cannot get to the meeting. Be that as it is, I also think it's time to start exploring having these meetings with an in-person component as well. I can't tell you how wonderful it will be to get back before the Board at the podium doing this to exercise my nerves a little bit with public speaking. I also think it would be great because I would have an opportunity to see all of you. Right now on the screen I'm only able to see Ms. Shafer and Comm. Arrington. I know there are others there, but there's that human interaction we're missing with some of these. I do believe it's a great idea to keep it virtual, maybe even expand upon it like Jersey City does. They have it Facebook Live where you can touch a lot more. There is something to be said when you're having these meetings and I give our staff a lot of credit because it's like they're talking to the screen. A lot of our folks on this call don't even have cameras on. I wanted to put that out there. I'm a little old school. I like to see who it is I'm speaking with. I know that our teachers in the classroom would be saying the same thing to their students as well if this were the case. I think you for the extra time tonight. I do appreciate you listening to our concerns. I hope that moving forward we can have some constructive dialogue, not only on these meetings, but the masks as well. In my opinion, I think it's time to start looking towards taking them off and let's start getting life back to normal as soon as we can. Thank you again. I really appreciate it. Have a great evening.

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 AT THE WORKSHOP MEETING

Resolution No. 1

Whereas, the Paterson Public School District approves the payment of bills and claims dated March 9, 2022, beginning with check number 230040 and ending with check number 230108, and direct deposit number beginning with 1276 and ending with 1299, in the amount of \$7,872,396.88, and health benefits in the amount of \$7,000,000.00, for a total of \$14,872,396.88;

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. Castillo-Cruz, seconded by Comm. Arrington 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. 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, 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
Maureen Bruins	STEAM Leadership Conference 2022 at Georgia Tech	March 14-17, 2022	\$100.00 (registration)
Teacher Coordinator of Science	Virtual		
Elizabeth Caccavella	STEAM Leadership Conference 2022 at Georgia Tech	March 14-17, 2022	\$100.00 (registration)
Supervisor of Math	Virtual		
Lakisha Kincherlow-Warren	STEAM Leadership Conference 2022 at Georgia Tech	March 14-17, 2022	\$100.00 (registration)
Supervisor of Science	Virtual		
Sarah Sterling-Laldee	STEAM Leadership Conference 2022 at Georgia Tech	March 14-17, 2022	\$100.00 (registration)
Director of STEAM	Virtual		
Michelle Van Hoven	STEAM Leadership Conference 2022 at Georgia Tech	March 14-17, 2022	\$100.00 (registration)
Supervisor of Fine & Performing Arts	Virtual		
Nakeia Wimberly	STEAM Leadership Conference 2022	March 14-17, 2022	\$100.00 (registration)
Teacher Coordinator of Science	Virtual		
Teresa Alfonso	STS Conference	March 23-25, 2022	\$642.00 (registration, lodging, meals)
Supervisor of Transportation	Atlantic City, NJ		
Lisa Vainieri-Marshall	STS Conference	March 23-25, 2022	\$642.00 (registration, lodging, meals)
Director of Student Assignment Services	Atlantic City, NJ		

Hafiz M. Saleem	International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) Live 2022	June 26-29, 2022	\$475.00 (registration)
Supervisor of Instructional Technology	Virtual		
*Laurel Olsen	Nurtured Heart Approach / CTI Training Services	March 7-11, 2022	\$150.00 (registration)
Supervisor of Student Support Services	Virtual		
Richard L. Matthews	New Jersey Association of School Business Officials	June 6-10, 2022	\$1,064.50 (registration, transportation, lodging, meals, parking)
SBA Business Administrator	Atlantic City, NJ		
June Gray	New Jersey Association of School Business Officials	June 6-10, 2022	\$1,064.50 (registration, transportation, lodging, meals, parking)
ABA, Business Services	Atlantic City, NJ		

***FOR RATIFICATION**

**Total Number of Conferences: 12
Total Cost: \$4,638.00**

It was moved by Comm. Castillo-Cruz, seconded by Comm. Simmons 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. 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. 3

WHEREAS, the district's 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 attached list of approved destinations as appropriate field trip sites for the students of the Paterson Public Schools for the 2021-2022 school year.

It was moved by Comm. Capers, seconded by Comm. Castillo-Cruz that Resolution No. 3 be adopted.

Comm. Capers: I didn't get a chance to check this list, but is Barbour Park still up there for the students to go from School No. 6?

Ms. Shafer: All of the field trips were approved back in January. This is just to add one more.

Comm. Capers: Was Barbour Park on there?

Ms. Shafer: I'm pretty sure because it was on the original.

Comm. Capers: It never changed. Okay.

On roll call all members voted in the affirmative. 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. 4

WHEREAS, on August 6, 2021, Governor Murphy issued Executive Order No. 251, requiring all school districts to maintain a policy regarding mandatory use of face masks by staff, students, and visitors in the indoor portion of school district premises;

WHEREAS, on February 7, 2022, the Governor announced that masks and facial coverings will no longer be mandated effective March 7, 2022;

WHEREAS, Paterson Public Schools (the "District") solicited community input from parents, staff, and the Paterson Health Department to determine whether the continued use of face masks and physical barriers should be required;

WHEREAS, the District received more than 3,500 survey responses from staff and parents, with more than 60% percent of respondents voting to keep masks mandatory but eliminate the use of transparent student desk partitions;

WHEREAS, local public health authorities continue to recommend masking policies as an important measure to limit COVID-19 exposure in schools and other congregate settings;

WHEREAS, there is no reliable evidence supporting the use of transparent desk partitions against COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, it is in the best interests of the District's students and staff to end the use of transparent desk partitions, but to continue requiring the use of face masks in all District buildings and schools, even after the Governor's mask mandate ends on March 7, 2022.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Education affirms the District's mandatory masking policy and approves the elimination of transparent desk partitions for students.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board of Education will reconsider the mandatory masking policy in May 2022, based on then-current public health recommendations and COVID-19 transmission rates.

It was moved by Comm. Simmons, seconded by Comm. Castillo-Cruz that Resolution No. 4 be adopted.

Comm. Castillo-Cruz: Did we get any stats from the hospital regarding...?

Comm. Redmon: That was done during your Superintendent's report. She gave us her stats and she made sure that the Board has it. It was also forwarded to all Board members in the packet.

Ms. Shafer: I can repeat it. St. Joseph's in Paterson has 12 patients, St. Joseph's in Wayne has two, and statewide hospitalizations are 728.

Comm. Castillo-Cruz: Thank you.

Comm. Hodges: Based on this you made a recommendation to continue the masks and remove the partitions.

Ms. Shafer: That's correct.

On roll call all members voted as follows:

Comm. Arrington: I'm voting on this in two parts. I vote no to continuing the masking because I think it should be optional at this point. I'm voting yes on the elimination of the desk partitions.

Comm. Capers: We have to do two votes here? I'm confused.

Comm. Redmon: We're voting on the resolution as it is stated on our agenda. We have a motion and a second.

Comm. Arrington: I asked if I could split my vote.

Comm. Simmons: No. I'm not sure how you would do that.

Comm. Capers: How do you split the vote? That's what I don't understand.

Ms. Shabazz-Charles: You're not able to split a vote.

Comm. Arrington: I'm sorry. I asked that question earlier. My vote is no. I think it's time to make the mask optional.

Ms. Shabazz-Charles: I'd like to just note for the record that there is a way to draft separate resolutions, but as is the resolution contains all of the items so you're not able to split the two items.

Comm. Arrington: Thank you, Khalifah. Then my vote is no. It's time to go optional.

Comm. Capers: No.

Comm. Castillo-Cruz: Yes.

Comm. Hodges: Yes.

Comm. D. Martinez: No.

Comm. Redmon: Yes.

Comm. Simmons: Yes.

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

GENERAL BUSINESS

Items Requiring a Vote

Instruction and Program

Comm. Hodges: It was a short meeting. We had a discussion regarding the first item, which was the ALEKS program. They're looking to make sure there's a correlation between the student performance on ALEKS and the student performance in the state testing. They're going to be gathering data starting this March of the student results and then they're going to be doing an analysis starting in June. That information will be submitted to the teachers early in September or October. They will be able to determine whether or not the performance on those two testing regimen are predictive of the state exam. In addition to that, we talked about the logistics program, which is in its fourth year. That was really about it. In attendance were Dania Martinez and myself. Are there any questions?

Operations

Comm. Arrington: Operations met today. Present was myself, Comm. Teague, and Comm. Capers. We have seven resolutions we'll be submitting at the next meeting. Two of them were basically for the IB program and two PD programs for teachers. We also had another PD for the professor-in-residence. There is math tutoring going on there. We have two resolutions for transportation, just some maintenance going on there. We have two resolutions for the Board for the harassment, intimidation, and bullying investigations. The reports do have some additional details that were requested by Comm. D. Martinez, and she'll see that in the resolution. That's all I have.

Fiscal Management

Comm. Simmons: Fiscal was supposed to meet yesterday, but the meeting was rescheduled to next week because there was a meeting with the insurance broker and the administration with the union to talk about the insurance carriers.

Personnel

Comm. Redmon: Personnel met on Monday. We discussed the current vacancy list, which is currently at 90. We also talked about new ways of recruitment for new teachers. We're also talking about upcoming job fairs. That's all we had in personnel.

Governance

Comm. Simmons: Governance did not meet yet this month.

Committee Report

Facilities

Comm. Capers: We did not meet. We have a meeting coming up.

Family & Community Engagement

Comm. D. Martinez: We met on February 17. The meeting minutes are in the drive. Present were myself, Comm. Capers, Director McDowell, and Gilman Choudhury. We discussed the potential of a new community center at the Urban Leadership Academy. Mr. McDowell presented the project plan and the steps as to how the project would develop. The next steps after this project development plan are to submit a survey to the community within that area to understand what the needs of the community are and what programs we should be offering. Hopefully we will be discussing that in our next meeting, which is scheduled in April.

Negotiations

Comm. Simmons: If there are any negotiation updates, we'll discuss in executive session.

Technology

Comm. Simmons: Technology has not met.

OTHER BUSINESS

Comm. Simmons: Does anyone have anything to add before we begin to close?

Comm. Hodges: I recognize that there is a tremendous fatigue with mask wearing and I certainly share the concerns. The problem is Paterson, Newark, and Trenton have large minority populations, they have the highest incidence of the COVID cases, and they are the poorest in terms of the vaccinations. That is why I'm reluctant to vote to have it optional. When you have optional, it only works for the persons who are wearing the masks. I think that if we can demonstrate clearly after people go home and spend time with their friends and family during the break that there are no huge spikes, then we can move forward with thinking that we're relatively safe. We have 27% of our lower elementary students vaccinated, which is a concern. I recognize that there is frustration with this and I also heard the teacher who spoke to how language development for certain students because of the masks can be a problem. I'm very responsive to that, but as a healthcare professional this is a major concern for me. I really want to get past this pandemic once and for all rather than have to come back and make steps afterwards. That is why I wanted to put it forward to you. That's why I made the decision and those were some of the things I discussed with Dr. Persaud and referred to the hospital cases to see where we were headed. That's the concern. I recognize that Newark and Trenton are remaining with the masks at this time. I just want to make that clear as to why an optional case is not as successful. If you have an option, then you really don't have anything. It doesn't effectively work. That's why I voted the way I did and I just wanted to make that clear.

Comm. Simmons: Thank you, Dr. Hodges. Forgive me, I misspoke. We are not about to close.

It was moved by Comm. Hodges, seconded by Comm. Castillo-Cruz that the Board goes into executive session to discuss legal matters. On roll call all members voted in the affirmative. The motion carried.

The Board went into executive session at 9:08 p.m.

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

The Board reconvened the meeting at 9:25 p.m.

Comm. Arrington: Is there any discussion about field trips for the remainder of the school year? I'm hearing some teachers would like to do some field trips with the kids. Is that on the roadmap for this year? Or is that off the table?

Ms. Peron: We had a principal meeting this Tuesday and we discussed that we are reinstating the field trips.

Comm. Arrington: That's great news. I guess it hasn't gone out to all the teachers.

Ms. Peron: Right. It was just this Tuesday morning that we had our meeting with the principals, and we had a discussion around that. That information is probably going to be trickled down to the teachers by way of a staff meeting or something like that. But yes, it has been decided that we are reinstating the field trips.

Ms. Shafer: Let me just say that it's starting in May and it's only in-state.

Comm. Arrington: That's fair.

Ms. Shafer: We're also doing in-person graduation for eighth and twelfth grades. We're bringing back the proms and the eighth-grade dances. We're trying to move them back into buildings unless you had already put a deposit somewhere and that venue kept your deposit, and you can now use it this year.

Comm. Arrington: Some normalcy is good. As far as visits to the school for educational reasons, such as speakers and career days, is that on the roadmap to return soon?

Ms. Shafer: Everything is coming back in May, including parents as well.

Comm. Arrington: Awesome, that's great news.

Comm. Capers: I wanted to follow up with Madam Superintendent about using YMCA as a gym class for the Young Men's Academy and also the Moody School.

Ms. Shafer: We're looking at that too and all of that will begin in May as well.

Ms. Williams: There were 272 people on tonight viewing.

Comm. Hodges: Thank you very much. Did the union get an opportunity to listen to the presentation by CBIZ?

Comm. Simmons: Yes, we met with them yesterday.

Comm. Hodges: And they have a full understanding of the increase of healthcare participants that Aetna has?

Comm. Simmons: Yes.

Comm. Hodges: They are fully aware of that.

Comm. Simmons: Yes.

Comm. Hodges: Okay.

Comm. Capers: Madam Superintendent, when you can, can you give us a report on what's going on with the school lunches? How are problems at the beginning of the year being rectified now? I don't know if you want to give it to us now or later. I just want to see where we are with that.

Ms. Shafer: We have a subcommittee of teachers, parents, and administrators. We went through all the lunch items and based on grains and proteins and everything that you need in a meal we're putting together meals based on the surveys that the students completed. Kids might not like cooked broccoli or carrots, but they do like fresh broccoli and carrots with some kind of a ranch dip. We're putting menus together and that was the last meeting that we had. Once we complete that committee work, food service will be bringing it to the Board.

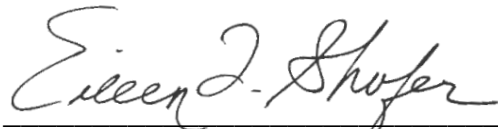
Comm. Capers: That's great and I know that's long-term planning. In the interim, the current food is not being served like it was. That's been remediated, right?

Ms. Shafer: Yes.

ADJOURNMENT

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

The meeting was adjourned at 9:31 p.m.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Eileen F. Shafer", written in black ink.

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