

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

June 9, 2021 – 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. Jonathan Hodges

Comm. Dania Martinez  
Comm. Nakima Redmon  
Comm. Corey Teague

Absent:

Comm. Oshin Castillo-Cruz  
Comm. Manuel Martinez, Vice President

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 notice of this meeting:

**Workshop Meeting  
June 9, 2021 at 6:00 p.m.  
Remote - Zoom  
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**

### **Discussion Regarding Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER III) Funding**

Ms. Shafer: Thank you, Mr. President. Good evening Board Commissioners and Paterson community. I think everyone knows that we received ESSER II funds and now we have received an allocation of ESSER III funds. Tonight, you're going to hear about

the plan for safe return to in-person instruction and continuity of services, as well as two community forums that we attended where the community gave us feedback on what they would like to see the funds spent on in ESSER III. As you all know, we had our comprehensive restart plan that was called 'Keeping the Promise Restart Plan.' What ESSER III requires is that the state sent us a template and the plan is called the 'Plan for Safe Returning In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services.' That plan consists of about 10 questions that the district needs to answer. That's what you're going to hear about tonight and then you're going to hear about the funds. The answers in the plan that you're going to hear about tonight come from our comprehensive 'Keeping the Promise Restart Plan.' We're going to move right into this plan for safe return and we will take any questions. Then we will go into the plan as to what those funds can be spent on and to get your feedback as well. Then we will have an additional community forum to get back to the community. Boris, if you could pull the plan up please? I'm going to ask Sandra Diodonet to start off.

Ms. Sandra Diodonet: Good evening. The universal and correct wearing of masks and maintaining health and safety is a direct relationship with the 'Keeping the Promise.' All students, staff, and visitors entering Paterson Public Schools will have to wear a mask in any building you attend. Whether you go to central office, School No. 1, or School No. 30, you will need to wear a mask. Anyone entering the building without a mask will be provided one. We have them right at the front seat when the security guard welcomes you. Masks have to be worn over your nose and covering your mouth. Wearing it under your chin is not acceptable, except when students or adults are eating. When students are at recess, they will be allowed to take off their masks, but they have to maintain social distancing. Students that are unable to wear traditional masks will be issued either a face shield or a medical mask, depending on what they need. The nurse and the one who is taking care of the "Medical Sick Room" (isolation room) will have to wear a medical-grade mask as well as a facial shield. Thank you.

Ms. Joanna Tsimpedes: Physical distancing. In the classrooms we are going to continue to utilize physical distancing strategies, which will increase spacing between individuals inclusive of seating arrangements in classrooms. Furniture will be adjusted accordingly to accommodate for distancing, which we have already done and continue to do. Additionally, staff will use strategies to minimize mixing between groups whenever possible. Students will continue to use the trifold partitions in the classrooms. In the cafeterias we are going to adhere to the NJDOH guidelines. Students will use their trifold partitions as an added layer of protection. When it comes to transportation, physical distancing will be encouraged where possible. Students will sit one per row unless they are from the same household. For traveling purposes, signs will remain throughout the building regarding maintaining social distancing and keeping to the right when walking in the hallways. The district will continue to follow the guidance that comes out from the NJDOH with regards to physical distancing as we progress in time.

Mr. Neil Mapp: Handwashing and respiratory etiquette. All bathrooms are stocked with adequate supplies of soap and paper towels. There will be hand sanitizer dispensers at the entrances of all bathrooms with signage that encourages you to sanitize your hands before entering bathrooms. Hand sanitizers will have at minimum 60% alcohol content and they will be available in classrooms, common areas, and hallways. All bathrooms, for respiratory etiquette, will encourage the students to cover their coughs in their arms. All bathrooms and classrooms will be stocked with paper towels and tissues to encourage covering their coughs and sneezes with those paper towels. I'll go right into cleaning and maintaining a healthy facility, including improving ventilation. The facilities department will take all necessary precautions to ensure safety and health for our staff, students, and families. We are using all the recommendations by CDC, New Jersey

NJDOE, and the Governor's Executive Orders to implement protocols to keep everyone safe. The district will refocus its general cleaning, sanitizing, and disinfection protocols to use COVID-19 prevention measures. We have moved from mitigation to prevention. The EPA-registered products will be used to disinfect our educational spaces, common spaces, and offices. Health and safety training for custodial staff will include the proper use of PPE. The overall cleaning protocols will be taught and encouraged for our custodial staff and to be verified by our chief custodians in buildings. We will be disinfecting areas using recommended protocols when there is a COVID exposure in any classrooms. We have a policy in place to do that. Hand sanitizer dispensers have been installed in all common areas and classrooms throughout all our school facilities and signage to promote handwashing is also installed. Heating, ventilation, and air conditioning - we are ensuring that all outstanding work orders for HVAC systems are completed in a timely manner. We have also amended the indoor air quality policies and procedures with the provision to allow supplemental ventilation by opening windows in each program and office space as recommended by CDC and ASHRE. The DOE asks that we provide isolation areas in every school and we will be providing those areas with Plexiglass barriers to segregate any of the occupants in those spaces. They will be monitored by someone outside of that space with a clear line of sight into that isolation area. A complete package of PPE will also be available for those monitors. We are also improving the filtration system in our ventilation units by upgrading from a MERV 8 filter to a MERV 11 filter throughout all our buildings where the ventilation systems are compatible with MERV 11 filters. Thank you.

Mr. Zaydel: This is Boris and I will talk about contact tracing. The district is going to have contact tracing led by the director of nursing in collaboration with school nurses who will be the main point of contact at buildings. We will collaborate with the city health department and with school principals, school safety specialists, counselors, and any other staff that may need to know about possible exposures to COVID-19 in the building, to identify close contacts and then contact those individuals through the board of health. I will also talk about diagnostic and screening testing. The district has contracted with a private provider of COVID-19 testing. It's called Synergene and they are available to meet our needs as pandemic conditions may dictate. They will help us establish operational procedures, provide licensed healthcare personnel to administer tests, obtain consents, and administer the kinds of tests that we think are best for detecting COVID-19. We will not be implementing screening testing at this time unless conditions change and infection rates go up. However, we do have diagnostic testing available upon request. Thank you.

Ms. Eliza Rodriguez: Good evening, this is Eliza Rodriguez speaking. I will be speaking about efforts to provide vaccinations to educators, other staff and students if eligible. On March 15, the district began our vaccination drive. We partnered with St. Joseph's at Dr. Hani Awadallah Elementary School and Hackensack Meridian Health at the Meadowlands to provide the Moderna vaccine. We also worked with Calvary Baptist Church to provide the Johnson & Johnson vaccine. As a result of our efforts, over a thousand staff members were vaccinated. As soon as students were able to get vaccinated, we also began a drive for students ages 12 and older. The district created a COVID-19 student vaccination page that has pertinent information and documents that parents will need when students are to be vaccinated. Additionally, we conducted two informational community forums, one in Spanish and one in English, in partnership with Hackensack Meridian. At those forums, the Paterson community was able to ask a panel of doctors questions regarding COVID-19 and the vaccinations. The district continues its efforts to provide vaccines for staff and students alike.

Ms. Kimler Williamson: Appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities with respect to health and safety policies. Certain students with disabilities or severe respiratory impairments who cannot tolerate the use of face coverings will be asked to wear a full-face shield as an alternative, even though face shields provide less protection than face coverings. Other accommodations with respect to health and safety policies will be granted as required under applicable federal and state laws and regulations concerning non-discrimination and disability rights.

Ms. Cicely Warren: Regarding ensuring continuity of services, all students in Paterson Public Schools will have the support of a fulltime mental health clinician on staff through Full Service Community Schools and the School Based Health Solutions grant. The grant was done in two phases. At this point, all the schools that were not originally included and do not yet have a fulltime clinician will now have one. Additionally, the schools participating in the grant will have the services of a transitional coach who will engage in group, individual, and family therapy for students. Schools will also participate in Mindful Schools, which will afford teachers the opportunity to do professional development to attend to their own social/emotional well-being. The second phase would be them attending to their students' social/emotional well-being. Lastly, Paterson Public Schools will continue its social justice inequity work as a component of social/emotional learning by extending the professional development that was engaged in by the core equity team to administrators, teachers, and ultimately a youth advocacy component for our students.

Ms. Peron: Public comment. That's my piece. Good evening, everyone. Good evening, Board members. It was way back in December of 2020 when the outbreak of COVID came about. Superintendent Shafer directed me to convene a task force for COVID-19 preparedness. Last year in March of 2020 we convened a task force that was inclusive of Board of Education Commissioners, teachers, administrators, community leaders, clergy, and other partners of the district to begin the work of the restart and the reopening plan. We did this in anticipation of reopening in September 2020. We hosted three restart meetings. Those were July 30, August 3, and August 4 for the community-at-large. Additionally, we held leadership meetings from July 22 through August 3 with district staff, district leaders, and students. In September, we decided and we did not open for in-person instruction, so the revisions to 'Keeping the Promise Restart Plan' continued. Many modifications were made as the CDC and state guidance were adjusted. In January 2021, we reconvened and began our reopening advisory board, which comprised of many members of the community, district leadership, and district staff. The purpose was to vet and review the plan to reopen our schools, which included safety precautions, attendance, facilities, and schedules as per following the guidelines of NJDOE and the CDC. Our reopening advisory board reviewed and provided feedback and recommendations and we allowed for modifications to the plan on January 10, February 20, and February 24. In anticipation now for our June reopening the Superintendent and her leadership team conducted two community forums on May 17 and 18. May 18 was conducted in Spanish. At both forums, all stakeholders were afforded the opportunity to ask questions via a question-and-answer section. The forums were recorded and posted on the district website for all stakeholders who were unable to attend the meeting. The Board of Education have been presented with several sections of the restart plan, sections specifically relating to facilities, PPE, remote learning scheduling, and two videos. One was the PPE demonstration and the other was 'A Day in the Life of a Paterson Student', which outlined many of the procedures that we had in place in our plan. This comprehensive restart plan is available to the school community via a booklet format, a condensed PowerPoint presentation, and many recorded formats found on the district website. We covered this on May 17 and May 18. Additionally, we will have these presentations

translated through our translation service in the additional languages of Arabic, Turkish, and Bengali. We are holding a new community forum on Tuesday, June 15 to share this plan again to the district community and allow for questions and answers. We also had all the signage for COVID precautions translated in the four major languages of the city as well – Spanish, Arabic, Turkish, and Bengali – in an effort to communicate district-wide and community-wide to all the different languages that we have. Details about the new community forum coming up on Tuesday, June 15 will be on our district website, our social media outlets, through school communication, and our infamous Robo-Calls. Stay tuned for those details.

Ms. Shafer: Thank you everyone for your presentations. If you want, Mr. President, we can go into the second part and then take questions when we're done.

Comm. Simmons: Yes, please.

Ms. Shafer: I'm going to ask our Business Administrator, Mr. Matthews, to put up his presentation. This is around the ESSER III funds that are coming into the district. As you know, the plan we just went over is a requirement for the district to receive the funds. Now we are going to move into what the funds can be used for. We had two community forums and we are going to talk about what the community said some of those funds should be used for.

Mr. Richard Matthews: Good evening Board of Education Commissioners and Paterson community. Tonight, I'm going to give a presentation on the American Rescue Plan. This plan is to seek community feedback in terms of the ESSER III and some strategies for consideration to maximize our financial impact and return. It also is a chance to get another set of eyes on some of the things we can do and how we can best use our resources. You will see later on that we had two community forums. One of the things that I will say about the community forums is that the community saw some things that we normally don't see as a district and as a cabinet administration. We are going to go through this American Rescue Plan and talk about allowable uses and strategies and things that we can do to really enhance how we provide resources to our students, staff, community, and parents who may have had issues regarding the pandemic and their job. We will move through this presentation and take questions at the end. In terms of the background, in March of this year the American Rescue Plan was signed into legislation and it provides direct aid to the states and districts to help us safely reopen schools, sustain safe operations, and address the impact of COVID-19. Not just to reopen schools, but to also make sure that whatever we do is sustainable, long-term, and has an impact for us beyond just the next year or two. The purpose tonight is to talk about the federal guidelines with regards to community engagement. One of the things we want to do is be transparent. As I said to you earlier, this is a chance for the community to give us that input, feedback, and another set of eyes in terms of what we are going to do as far as putting together this entire package and budget. It's also to provide assurance to the Paterson community that the school district values and believes in positive outcomes from proactive community engagement, and to seek public comments regarding the American Rescue Plan and take those comments into account in development of a plan. We are not just asking for your input and your feedback. We are actually going to come back later on, after the Board does all their considerations, and tell the community these are the things that are going to go back into the plan. What do we know so far? This is a grant. With a grant you have restricted use, but the grant ends September 2024. You'll see later on in bullet point #8, we are going to receive \$106 million. 20% of the money that we spend of the \$106 million has got to go toward learning loss. We've all heard the term over the last 14 or 15 months. We've had other grants, ESSER I and ESSER II, so there is a lot of the

same allowable use for ESSER I and ESSER II. There's a need for these things to happen. It's very important and also allows for hiring staff to avoid layoffs. Through the pandemic the government wanted to make sure that we maintained staff and kept our people in place so this grant does allow for us to hire staff to avoid layoffs. One of the things the grant says is that we don't have to give money to non-public schools. This grant does not mandate that this year. We get to spend the whole \$106 million dollars. Just remember, it ends on September 2024. On June 24 of this year, we have to put on our website what our plan is for a safe return to in-person instruction and that's why Ms. Shafer had the team go through that strategy before this call. We also must seek public comments. As I said to you earlier, we've had two public forums. As educators and administration, we think we know what really needs to happen in our schools and how to best utilize money, but when we had the forums there were some blind spots that we've uncovered that they were able to give us through community input that none of us thought of inside of 90 Delaware. It's really important that we get public comments because we get to collaborate and get more input in putting this budget together. On May 24 the state gave us guidance on how the money can be used. The allocation for this grant is \$106,683,858. This is the allocation that Paterson Public Schools has for ESSER III and, again, this grant ends September 2024, meaning that we have until that period to exhaust all funds, to spend the money. As we put together a budget, some things will be in for one or two years and some will be in for the entire time. All doesn't have to be spent in one year. What are some of the initiatives that they allow under ESSER III? As I mentioned to you earlier, learning loss. Kids have been at home for 15 months and there has been some loss. There have been some adjustments. There have been some learning delays. All the loss can be caught up and the government has legislated this money to allow us to close that gap and bring kids back up to speed. We have districtwide PPE, districtwide COVID preparedness, and facility upgrades, which we will go through later on. These are just some of the initiatives, not all, that are allowed under ESSER III. These are just some examples of learning loss – delivering services during extended school year programs or summer enrichment programs for all students, providing tutoring programs outside normal hours to address student needs, providing compensatory educational services to students with disabilities, delivering extensive activities outside of normal hours to support a successful return to school, offering career and technical education services to prepare students for post-secondary education. These are some things that we've talked about over the last couple years that our kids need. Again, the money is in the grant and sometimes in regular budgeting we have a hard time making these things happen. We need to make sure that these are some of the tools that we use to provide support to our students and staff for the next couple of years. As I mentioned to you earlier, we had community forums with the community and we took their information and their feedback. This is just a couple ideas they came up with. Mental health for parents - a lot of times you're getting grant money and you're thinking it's for students and staff, but there's money in the grant for parents who have gone through issues during the pandemic. There's money for mental health for parents. We talked about reducing class sizes and the grant does allow for us to hire teachers. Virtual Technology Academy, school supplies to support parents that have lost their jobs during the pandemic and maybe they can't buy their kids consumables like notebooks, backpacks, and stuff like that. This grant allows for us to provide resources to support parents. Kids' regular basic hygiene - brush your teeth, wash your face, and make your bed, just normal everyday hygiene things that kids might not be aware of or may not be getting at home. This grant does allow for that. It provides items for clothing and hygiene products for kids who are experiencing homelessness. It's obviously much broader than this, but these are just some examples of things that came up in the community forum that are also allowable expenses. They're not just ideas that came from parents. These are things that, under the guidance that we receive from the government, are allowable uses of these funds.

These are really good things that did not come from the administration, the district, the cabinet, or from internal conversations. These came through community forums. The community is kind of a blind spot for things that we may have missed. We don't want to miss an opportunity where we can help our community out. Some of these things you've seen before in ESSER I and ESSER II – protective masks, protective gowns, supplies to sanitize and clean buildings, sanitizing stations, and training students to maintain good hygiene practices. These are just some examples of PPE that we can use and have used in prior grants through ESSER I and ESSER II. This is also again in ESSER III. More examples of things we can use in terms of using the money from the grant. We can work with community-based organizations to identify needs and provide support for students experiencing homelessness during Coronavirus. We can increase our outreach through community-based organizations regarding food insecurity and medical services, and establish a team of people that can work to implement systems around being more prepared for the whole pandemic and post pandemic issues that we deal with regarding human trafficking, abuse, and violence. These are things that we deal with every day in Paterson Public Schools. There's money and resources in the grant that will help us address and really give support to students, staff, and the entire Paterson learning community. Getting back to facilities and items that are current in our Paterson Public Schools today, we have improving indoor air quality. These are ongoing. We want to make them sustainable. There's the replacement of HVAC systems. In a district of our size, that number is astronomical and probably exceeds what the grant does, but it allows us to upgrade projects and to improve windows and doors. A lot of the items that have been discussed as needing to be addressed for our current reopening, the grant does allow us to make improvements and to make things better for the whole Paterson learning community. Just to touch base on some of the community outreach that we've had so far, on May 11 we met with the community to provide this information that you're seeing today and to listen to suggestions and feedback. We got a lot of good feedback and questions. We took that back to the office and put it into part of this presentation. Later on, you'll see a lot of the items that came from the community into another list of items that are going to be presented to you later on. We met with them again on May 20 to get their input and solicit feedback. We actually touched different people. There was a different group on May 20 and we got a lot of good feedback. A lot of the feedback we got was information that did not come from our internal conversations, our internal needs assessments, from our cabinet, or from our administration. I think the community sees things that we don't see and it was very valuable feedback. We've taken that information and put into our needs-assessment, which you'll see later on. Here today, this is another opportunity to meet with the Board and get more feedback as to what needs to be done within the allowable expenses and use of the money. After the Board goes through all their considerations and receives all their input and feedback, we want to circle back to the community. It's one thing to say we want your input and feedback. We want to circle back before we press the 'send' button and put this thing into action. We want to come back to the community as say, 'We heard you. Your voice does really matter. These are the things that are in this ESSER III budget that we took from these meetings.' People will really realize that we didn't just meet on May 11 and May 20 and say we want their feedback but did nothing about it and didn't put this stuff into place. We want to circle back and say we have put these things in place. Obviously, everything that came to us will not go in there because not everything is an allowable use, but there are some very good things that came back. We have a blind spot and there were some things that we missed that they caught that we are definitely going to include into the budget after going through the proper community forums, having the consideration of the Board, and getting the plan to move forward that we could submit a budget to the state for ESSER III. I hope you can read this. These are the items that came from the community regarding the items for consideration. Nothing here is final, but these are just some of

the items that are allowable. I'm not going to read them all to you, but I will touch base on some of them. There's Bauerle Field, the PC Field, and thermal scanners. We put thermal scanners in a lot of the schools, but some of the schools have multiple entrances that need thermal scanners. For instance, Eastside has three scanners and Kennedy has four, but some of the other elementary schools need more than just one scanner and we have to make sure that we cover those gaps. Laptops operate thermals scanners. Learning Ally is in some of the other grants. Curriculum transition plan, student life skills supports, and school security camera systems. School security camera systems are something that we will also be using some of those funds for under the Alyssa grant that we talked to you about more than a year ago. These are items that are for consideration for the Board to look at, match it up with the allowable uses and expenditures, and make sure that we are using the money wisely, smartly, that we are having an impact on our Paterson learning community, and it's sustainable. The grant allows us to make some maneuvers with the budget. I'm not going to go into details about that. If that's a question, I'll answer the question. There are some one-time costs that allow us to do Bauerle Field and PC Field. Maybe we will talk about that in greater detail later on. Let me just move on to the other things that are for consideration. I think these are very good things and you see who the responsible person is for these items for consideration. Moving on, there are a lot of pieces here regarding learning loss, academics, Full Service Community School for DBT and Al Moody School. I'm not going to read them all. You see arts program, renewal of Pear Deck, tutoring, upgrade of textbooks, specifically science and social studies, and the Virtual Technology Academy. That's something that came from the community forum that we had back in May. Moving on to other items - SEL School Teams, Bilingual Magnet, which may have been from cabinet or administration, but it was definitely mentioned during the community forums. Mental health for parents was mentioned during the community forums. I remember having the conversation and having a person talk about those items. There are some items that were community forum-based and done through administration and staff. Then we get into some facility items regarding science labs, Butler Building, which is about trying to retrofit a building that can help us get out of our current situation at 200 Sheridan Avenue, HVAC replacements, and retrofitting 33-35 Church Street. Nothing here is etched in stone. Again, these are items for consideration. Science labs are an ongoing thing with the district. Hiring 35 teachers to reduce class size, that's under Mr. Rojas, and there are guidance counselors and other positions that are needed regarding your consideration. Windows was mentioned to you earlier. You see that up here. HVAC items, school libraries - everything before you now are things that are allowable. Promethean Boards for all classrooms. We have \$106 million. We have to exhaust all those funds by September 2024 and we are putting everything on the table for consideration. School supplies for parents who may have lost their jobs during the pandemic. That's something that I know parents can definitely benefit from. This is a grant that we want to use to provide benefit to the entire Paterson learning community. Students, staff, and parents have all been impacted by the pandemic. The items that we have internally through administration and cabinet we put before you for consideration. We will take any questions, comments, and hopefully a lot of feedback from the community.

Ms. Shafer: Thank you, Mr. Matthews. Mr. President, we will take any questions that you may have.

Comm. Arrington: Thank you for your presentation, Leon. You hit on something in the presentation. Using the money for things we would have budgeted for over the next couple of years, is that going to be a priority for us meaning that we wouldn't have to use our own money for something in 2022 or 2023, like no HVAC repairs and Bauerle



Field? I guess those are two great examples. Is our priority to use the money on things that we would have had to budget for in the next future years?

Mr. Matthews: It's kind of a combination. We haven't received the money because we have to put for reimbursement once a month to the state to get the money back. So we spend the money first out of our regular money that we have in our operating budget and then we get reimbursed after we exhaust the funds. For instance, in a situation like Bauerle Field, there are items already in the local budget that are allowable to be into the grant. Just to make up a number, custodial contract is typically \$8 or \$9 million a year. That cost in the custodial contract is allowable to be put into the grant. If we were taking a portion of the custodial contract and put it into the grant, say \$2 million as an example, that would free up \$2 million in our budget that now we could use for a one-time cost for Bauerle Field. In 21-22, it allows us to make that improvement. It doesn't really affect us for the following budget because that's money that's in our budget anyway. We will just put it back. We are using the grant money, which is allowed for that particular use, to be paid for out of the grant. We are freeing up money in our operating budget to get some things done that were not already budgeted for. Does that answer your question?

Comm. Arrington: Absolutely. Hiring 30 people, is that going to be sustainable when the budget ends? I guess that's my only concern.

Mr. Matthews: I'll give you an example of hiring people. Let's take \$1 million of positions that are allowable in the grant and have it paid for by the grant. The \$1 million that you took out of your local budget, if you don't touch there's no loss because next year that budgeted number of \$1 million is still there for you to budget. It's a strategy to allow you to not use that money and fall out.

Comm. Arrington: We don't want to kick the can down the road either.

Ms. Shafer: Let me add to that a minute. What we don't want to do is set up where we would have to eliminate positions after the grant is over. We are looking at these one-time costs, like Bauerle Field and things like that, and then looking at a way to sustain the positions. We are looking into that.

Comm. Arrington: Is this an opportunity to upgrade some of our HVACs and repairs? We all heard reports of air conditioners not working.

Mr. Matthews: Yes. I will make the recommendation along with my colleague, Mr. Mapp, that we should definitely earmark a significant amount of money toward HVAC. There's \$106 million in this grant. We have to be smart about how we use \$106 million. But I think that would be a priority item that should be earmarked for something along the number that's out there for learning loss, which is 20%. We will have to see what else is on the table.

Comm. Arrington: Wherever we have summer school at, at some of the older schools with the inoperable air conditioning units in the windows, hopefully that's a priority. The kids are going to be there in the summer and hopefully we can get some fresh cool air in those rooms for the summer enrichment program. Thank you, Mr. President, Leon, and Madam Superintendent for the presentation.

Comm. Simmons: Any other questions?

Comm. Teague: Leon, I'd like to thank you for the presentation as well. Have you guys discussed if there's going to be any extra money placed in special services and special education? Do you have a ballpark number of how much money might be infused into that program overall?

Ms. Shafer: Corey, that's a great question. We have put some money into special education, especially around the transition program and behaviorists. I can't give you an exact figure yet. What we need to do next, after we get feedback from the Board, is to start to put some dollars to all of this. Once we do that, we can certainly get it to you.

Comm. Teague: Thank you.

Comm. Hodges: I'm really concerned about this hiring of personnel. That's a little bit of a concern. Since the grant money runs out in 2024, how do we sustain those personnel after that point, particularly in terms of teaching?

Mr. Matthews: I think we are thinking about this grant the way we think about other grants. In past grants, we took positions, moved them into the grant, and the grant does expire. We spent the money while we moved the positions to the grant. If we were to move 20 positions from local to the grant valued at \$2 million, we are going to block those \$2 million of positions and not hire in those positions. When the grant runs out in 2024, those \$2 million of positions might be \$2.1 million, \$2.15 million, or \$2.2 million in year 2025. That's still going to be there. We are not exhausting those funds over the next couple of years. We are just sitting on that. In years past, we moved to the grants and we also spent the money. You can't spend and save. We are going to save and save, not spend and save. When the grant runs out, those spots will still be there in the budget not touched.

Comm. Hodges: We've had to lay off people.

Mr. Matthews: We are not doing what we did in the past. This is totally different. I'm just making up number. \$2 million in positions are going to go into the grant for 2020-2021, 2021-2022, 2022-2023, and 2023-2024. Every year those spots are still going to be there. They're not going to go anywhere. We are not going to spend that money. When the 2024-2025 year comes in, they have to go back into local budget. It's still going to be there, but we've gained that money for three years. This is not going to be something where in 2025 they have to get laid off. We are not doing what we did in the past. This is different. This strategy is different. You're thinking about moving stuff into Title and when the grant runs out the positions are no longer there. We are blocking those positions for three years so that in 2025 those same spots will be there. That money will still be there. It will not be eaten up by other things. When the grant runs out, all those positions go back to the original spot paid from local and it's still in a budget. We are not taking it out of the budget. We are keeping it into the budget. Let the money just grow. We are saving and saving not spending and saving.

Comm. Simmons: I think this goes back to what the Superintendent said. They're actually looking into ways to figure out if it could be sustained and, if so, how.

Comm. Hodges: I can see how they can be sustained for three years.

Comm. Simmons: Right. That's what she's saying, beyond that.

Comm. Hodges: That's my problem. It's beyond that.

Comm. Simmons: I don't think there are a whole lot of positions. I know there are some positions in facilities and places where we are understaffed.

Comm. Hodges: We're talking about hiring staff to reduce class sizes.

Mr. Matthews: That's a different strategy, hiring to reduce class sizes. Let me put something together for the Board so they can maybe understand what the long-term strategy is. This is not what we did in the past. This is a smart move. I'll put something together so that everyone can better understand it instead of just going through it on this call. I promise you I'll put it together. I think when I give it to you you'll think this is going to work. It's for your consideration. Let me do that.

Comm. Simmons: As a matter of fact, we talked about putting together another meeting for Board members to get feedback on this as well and give more input as they think about some of the things they'd like to see.

Comm. Arrington: I clearly understand what you're saying. If I'm hearing this right, we're going to bank \$2 million. We're going to hire 'x' number of people. We're going to bank \$2 million for three years so that's going to be \$6 million. For the next three years, we'll draw from that bank of \$6 million. After that sixth year, we're going to have to find a salary for these new people.

Mr. Matthews: No. There are two strategies.

Ms. Shafer: I think we're going to put it together and send it to the Board. Then we're going to have another meeting where we can talk about it so that everybody is clear. We're going to put it together.

Comm. Arrington: I just want to make sure it's sustainable.

Ms. Shafer: Absolutely. The last thing we want to do is hire folks for three years and then have to RIF people. We've done enough of that over the past 10 years and that gets you nowhere. We're not going to do that. If everyone recalls about the reading specialists in ESSER II, we decided to do something differently. We're going to put it together. We understand that positions would not be sustainable once the grant is gone, unless it's a one-time position that you only need for a year or two. We'll put it together and we'll bring it back to the Board. We would ask that you take a look at the list of the items from the community as well as everybody else and see if there's something that we missed or something that you think we shouldn't do at all. Then send us your feedback so that we can begin to put it together and put the dollars onto it.

Comm. D. Martinez: Comm. Capers texted me and he's asking to be let in. He's here as a guest.

Comm. Simmons: She's going to send the information out. Board members are going to give feedback and then we will schedule another meeting so that there's a better explanation. You'll have a better understanding once you receive the information that was presented and both lists from the administration and the community.

## **REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT**

Ms. Shafer: For the first time since March 16, 2020, our students entered Paterson Public School buildings for in-person learning yesterday and that was Cohort B. They're on Tuesday and Thursday and Cohort A is on Monday and Wednesday. Yesterday we

89.8% of the registered students for that day's cohort come to school. We did have a couple of students come to school on the wrong cohort day, but we kept them. We talked to the parents and we were able to get that straightened out. I want to thank the cabinet members, principals, teachers, and all staff for welcoming our children back to school. I spent the morning visiting schools and talking informally with faculty, administrators, and staff. I visited Dale Avenue, School No. 15, and Dr. Martin Luther King Complex. At all the schools that I visited people were telling me how happy they were to be back. Teachers told me they were so glad to see the students and the students were so happy to be back in the classroom. One thing we have to keep in mind about students is that they're very resilient and so a couple of them said they felt like they never left. It is a little different with partitions and masks, but you know how kids are. They were just happy to be there. We successfully launched the first phase of our efforts to return all of our students to the classroom for in-person learning. For that I'm grateful to everyone who helped prepare the district for our first students to come back. As you know, the weeks leading up to it we were very busy trying to get ready. Also know that we still have a long way to go. We have our summer program, which will be Phase II, and that will start right after 4<sup>th</sup> of July weekend. Phase III will be in September when everyone will be coming back to school. We've come a long way from where we were a year ago with paper packets. I want to just show you a brief video of some of the scenes from yesterday so you can get an idea of how the children felt getting off buses.

### ***(Video Presentation)***

Ms. Shafer: Thank you, Paul, for that great video. That was just a quick sampling of what happened yesterday. You can see everyone was really excited that the kids were back in school. School buses were on the roads and teachers and students were interacting. It was really great. I went to one building where there was a gentleman teaching remotely. He didn't have children in his class. I went in, waved, and said, "Thank you for everything you do." He said, "I love these kids." That's really what it comes down to. If you're not in urban education because you don't love the children, then you need to go somewhere else. We can't teach you how to love the children in Paterson. We just can't. We can teach you just about anything else, but we can't teach you how to love the children in Paterson. Yesterday was just a photo of people loving the children in Paterson, missing them, and seeing them come back in school. It was just a great day for the City of Paterson and a long time coming. Stay tuned as we move into Phases II and III. Some folks asked me why we didn't send all the children back. I just want to make sure that everyone understands. I wanted to make sure that our teachers were comfortable with teaching remotely from the classroom, as well as having children in class. I wanted to make sure that parents were comfortable sending their children back to school. That's why we did it in three phases. This first phase is small. The second phase will be larger, which will be summer school. The third phase will be the school district. There's a reason why we phased in the three different groups of children. I just wanted to make sure that everyone understood that. I wanted to be sensitive to the parents, the children, and the staff needs. That's why we did the phase-in process for getting our children back into school. There was some concern going around the city, the community, and the school district about Neil Mapp's certification. I want to just make sure that everyone is clear on that. According to NJSA:18A, Neil has two years to complete the certification and he completed the coursework in May of 2020. I contacted the state to say where is the certificate that he completed the coursework for and they are behind in issuing the certifications due to the coronavirus. He has until January 2022 to complete the process. Neil already completed it in May of 2020, but he has to wait for the state to issue the certification. They have everything they need from him. I was in contact with them. I just want everyone to be clear on

that. He has done what he needed to do and now we're just waiting for the certification to be processed in Trenton. If anyone has any questions around that, I'd be more than happy to answer them. I wanted to take this opportunity to acknowledge the very good news of our own Sandra Montanez Diodonet being appointed Superintendent of Schools in the City of Passaic this past Monday night. We have all come to know Dio, as many of us affectionately call her, as a fixture in Paterson Public Schools. She began her career in education in Paterson as a student teacher a long time ago. Through the years, she ascended through the ranks of administration becoming a school principal and eventually an assistant superintendent. She has made many significant contributions to our district, including leading the campaign to increase student attendance and leading the team that created 300 curriculum guides for the district. As we all know, that was a major part for us to get local control and control back to the people of Paterson. Dio has made her share of history in Paterson Public Schools. I think what people think of first when they think of her is her ever-present smile and her infectious positive attitude. She has been a beacon of hope during the difficult times of the pandemic, not only for the students and families she has served, but also for everyone that she works with. It's going to be hard not having Dio on our leadership team. At the same time, we all recognize the amazing opportunities that lie before her at Passaic Public Schools. We all know that this is not a mere opportunity for professional advancement. This is a homecoming for Dio. It is a chance to give back to the community where she was raised and to the school system where she graduated. Just as she has changed Paterson Public Schools for the better, she will change Passaic Public Schools for the better. In Sandra Montanez Diodonet, the City of Passaic has a caring and driving educational leader that understands the community the way no one else can. It wouldn't be her style to be held up in an office building on Passaic's Main Avenue. She'll be out in the schools and in the community as much as possible. While she may have made a name for herself as a high school track star running the 400 meter and 800 meter, Superintendent Diodonet is in it for the long haul as she takes the helm of Passaic Public Schools. As her own professional track record indicates, Dio understands that achieving lasting success is a marathon, not a sprint. I know that Dio already understand this, but I'll say it anyway. When you maintain your focus on the students and families you serve, when you stay connected to the community they live in, and when you support your teachers by providing them with everything they need to be their best, you will be a successful Superintendent. To Superintendent Dio I say, welcome to the club, the club of those who dare to lead a school district's effort to bring the best in a community's children, to inspire them to achieve more than they ever thought they could, and elevate the hopes, dreams, and aspirations of generations of young people. You are simply what Passaic Public Schools need right now, a dynamic leader who personifies the success that we all want all students to achieve. You have gained a tremendous amount of experience and wisdom from the day you graduated from Passaic High School to becoming Passaic Public Schools' first Latino female Superintendent. This is a moment you are ready for. As much as we will miss you here in Paterson, we wish you great success in Passaic. You're only a river away. Congratulations and best wishes. Thank you, Dio.

Ms. Diodonet: Thank you. A little birdie told me you may want to prepare because I think something might be coming. We always have each other's back here. I do have a little something so with your permission, Madam Superintendent, may I?

Ms. Shafer: Absolutely.

Ms. Diodonet: First, I would like to thank god and give him the honor and praise for the new position. It is bittersweet. I am going home to Passaic to love, lead, and serve, a career goal that I set 11 years ago coming true. My assignment here in Paterson is

soon coming to an end. But know that my prayers for a stronger and better Paterson Public Schools will not cease. Thank you, Ms. Shafer and Commissioners. I appreciate all of your kind words. I want to thank you for all your support, leadership, and wisdom, the time that you have poured into me, and more importantly, for believing in me. I want to thank Madam Deputy, Susana Peron, for her mentorship, support, and for teaching me what teamwork looks and feels like. Know that I will go to Passaic and try to replicate our Academic Service 2015 Team. We could have taken over the world together. I believe that. So truly I do. I will cherish all the memories that I have experienced here in Paterson. Ms. Petra Liz-Morell, Mr. Steven Rodriguez, Ms. Dobbs, Mr. Bacchus, Dr. Castro, thank you for seeing leadership in me and putting me on this path. Thank you for allowing me to teach, learn, grow, and collaborate in these last 18 years in Paterson. I want the students, staff, and community of Paterson to know that I am going to miss you dearly. To my secretary, Zenaida Fantauzzi, you are one of a kind. Thank you for all your hard work and dedication to Unit II and for making me always shine. Eliza, you are simply amazing. To the principals, thank you for your support and hard work. Your words of wisdom I will carry with me and everything you have taught me along the way. Teachers, keep teaching like your life depends on it. Our children are worth it and deserve it. Thank you for your dedication. Central office, thank you for always helping a sister out when she needed a report, data, coverage, or whatever. You always said, "Dio, I got you." I thank you for that. Cabinet, I'm going to miss us. Your leadership, sisterhood, and brotherhood will be cherished forever. Keep having each other's back. Practice self-care because Paterson Public Schools need you and I need you. I am blessed to be able to ride down the New Jersey Parkway and be able to choose between 155-A or 155-B and still feel at home. Not everybody can do that. They can't call Paterson and Passaic home. I'm one of the very few. I close with one ask. Please find a mentee or two and pour into them. Everyone needs a mentor. When you miss me, as I will miss you, ask yourself, "Am I mentoring someone these days? Have I made a difference in somebody's life?" That's what I want you to do. That is what we are put here to do. Lastly, I know this to be true – together we can. I have adopted for Passaic. Madam Superintendent, we are better together taking everything I have learned from here and bringing it over there. I know that together we can and I know that we are better together. God bless you all and thank you. Remember that only the educated are free. Thank you so much. I love you all.

Ms. Shafer: That's concludes my report.

Comm. Capers: To Ms. Diodonet, I'm so happy for you in your new journey. I know I'm going to be seeing a lot of you. I just want to congratulate you again. I can't wait for you to get here. Madam Superintendent, I just want to give kudos to you and your staff. I know you have been under a lot of criticism as of late. I just want to thank you for opening up, sharing the video, and seeing the kids' faces getting back to normal, walking through the buildings, and welcoming them back into school. I can't wait until we get to Phase II and Phase III in September. Do you have an update on how many children are getting vaccinated?

Ms. Shafer: We don't have that number. We put it on our website where you can go and get vaccinated. St. Joseph's Medical Center is doing vaccinations at Dr. Hani and so is Hackensack Meridian. Children 12 years old and older can also get it anywhere now, just like the adults can.

Comm. Capers: Do we have a follow-up on how we are tracking our students?

Comm. Simmons: She answered this question a couple of weeks ago. If parents don't give us that information, we don't have a way to track that. It is medical information.

Comm. Capers: Can we survey the parents to volunteer to tell us? We know who is vaccinated and who is not.

Comm. Simmons: I want to make sure that we can. I think that's a question for legal counsel. Can you solicit personal medical information? I'm not sure.

Ms. Shafer: If it was mandatory, then we would be able to do that and we would have the numbers. Because it's not mandatory, we would ask Khalifah to respond to that.

Ms. Shabazz-Charles: I think you've all sort of touched on it. You really can't enforce anything related to medical history unless we are making it mandatory as we do other vaccinations, which we have not yet taken that step. Could you ask? Of course, you can ask, but you can't guarantee that you're getting accurate results.

Comm. Capers: Correct. I think we should so we can have an idea of how many kids are getting vaccinated and if the information we're putting out is working. Right now, we can't tell if it's working or not. We say we're putting it on the website, but how many kids and parents are actually seeing it and getting their kids signed up? We need to do something more to make sure our kids are getting the information for if they want to get vaccinated. I'm not saying we can enforce it. We just have to see if what we're doing is working.

Comm. Simmons: I think we're just letting people know that they are able to take the vaccine. I don't think we are...

Comm. Capers: Encouraging?

Comm. Simmons: No. That's a parental decision. There are mass campaigns. The Governor talks about it every day.

Comm. Capers: There are mass campaigns. But what are we doing as a district and how can we tell if it's working?

Comm. Simmons: We are doing our part. We are saying that it is available for children 12-16.

Comm. Capers: Thank you.

## **REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT**

Comm. Simmons: I don't have much of a report. But I will remind Board members if you have not completed the CSA evaluation, I advise that you do so immediately. It was due five days ago. To date, I think there's just one completion, maybe two. We are behind and we need to get it done right away or we will find ourselves in trouble and I don't want to do that. If you haven't done it, please take some time tonight after the meeting and make sure you get it done.

## **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

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

Ms. Rosie Grant: Good evening Commissioners, Madam Superintendent, Madam Deputy, staff, community, and madam new superintendent of Passaic. I want to start with that in case I run out of time. Congratulations to Ms. Dio. Our loss will be Passaic's gain. Yet, your legacy here will continue. There's no way that it won't. Congratulations and Godspeed. I'm thankful for a smooth opening of school and offer a round of applause to all the awesome staff members that prepped, welcomed, and continue to teach remotely or in person. Thank you for your service to our kids. As far as the funding, keep in mind that the city will also be receiving American pandemic funds and their guidelines specifically mention it can be used for educational programs for adults and students. I want to urge the School Board to reach out to the City Council to collaborate in these efforts. 20 years ago or so, PEF facilitated the first ever meeting of our locally elected boards. Thankfully, you've met lots of times since then. However, if you need our help, we're here as needed. It's fortunate that this new funding does not have the 'supplement not supplant' clause that usually apply to all federal dollars. I understand the conversation about the sustainability factor, but let's not deny students the services they need now simply because we won't be able to afford them after 2024. We have pressing needs and also schools should be able to meet the particularized needs of their students with this funding that exists in their buildings. I hope that a large portion of the funds can be put into enrichment programs, out of school time, and wraparound services, even if they do have to end in three years. Finally, I want to announce that PEF will be collaborating with the district to run a summer school at Senator Frank Lautenberg School and School No. 15. It's for kids registered to attend those schools in first through sixth grades. It's STEAM-focused, enrichment activities, fun, there's a Friday field trip, and it's free.

Ms. Michele Scavone: Hi, my name is Michele Scavone. I'm a teacher at Alexander Hamilton Academy. Mr. Acevedo has been named Interim Principal and I would like the Board of Education and Superintendent Shafer to know that he deserves to be the Principal of Alexander Hamilton Academy. Throughout the pandemic and remote learning he has gone above and beyond to ensure his teachers and the children have what they needed to be successful. Although many of the school buildings in Paterson may not be ready to accept students and staff, Mr. Acevedo has exceeded expectations to ensure the safety of our students and his staff. It is both a pleasure and an honor to work for Mr. Acevedo. Thank you for your time.

Ms. Mikia Simmons: Hi. I'm the parent of two students at Alexander Hamilton Academy. I'm aware that Mr. Acevedo has been named Interim Principal. I would like the Board of Education and Superintendent Shafer to know that Mr. Acevedo deserves to become the Principal of Alexander Hamilton Academy. Throughout the pandemic and remote learning he has gone above and beyond for our school, teachers, and especially the children. Although many school buildings had a lot of work to be done, he made sure everything was set in place for our kids to be ready for the summer enrichment program. We just hope that we keep him. It's best for our kids because of the simple fact that they have known him for many years. Bringing someone else new in will mess up our school. For the safety of our kids and for them knowing who he is and what he is about we're just hoping and praying that you keep him as the Principal of Alexander Hamilton Academy. Thank you.

Ms. Teresa Granata: Good evening everyone. I would like to say first congratulations to Ms. Diodonet. You are a wonderful person. I had the honor of teaching with you at School No. 15. You were also my assistant superintendent at Alexander Hamilton Academy. I would like to say congratulations. My name is Teresa Granata. I'm a teacher at Alexander Hamilton Academy. I'm calling on behalf of Mr. Acevedo who has been our Interim Principal and our Vice Principal also. I would like the Board of



Education and Superintendent Shafer to know that he deserves this chance to be the principal of our school. Throughout the pandemic and remote learning he has gone above and beyond to ensure his teachers and students have what they need to be successful. Although many of the schools in Paterson are not ready, we are one of the schools, because of Mr. Acevedo and all of you, that have exceeded expectations to ensure the safety of our students and staff. It is both a pleasure and an honor to work with Mr. Acevedo. I would like to thank Ms. Simmons. She has always been a voice in our school. Thank you for listening and have a nice evening.

Ms. Amani Kattaya: My name is Amani Kattaya. I'm a teacher at Alexander Hamilton Academy. Mr. Acevedo has been named Interim Principal and I would like the Board of Education and Superintendent Shafer to know that he deserves to be an official Principal of Alexander Hamilton Academy. Throughout the pandemic and remote learning he has gone above and beyond to ensure his teachers and students have what they need to be successful. Although many of the school buildings in Paterson are not ready to accept students and staff, Mr. Acevedo has exceeded expectations to ensure the safety of our students and staff. It would be both a pleasure and an honor to work with Mr. Acevedo. I can only imagine how much more he would do when the school is reopened. Thank you for your time.

Ms. Shea Markese: Good evening everyone. My name is Shea Markese and I'm also a fourth grade teacher at Alexander Hamilton Academy. Mr. Acevedo has been named Interim Principal and I would like the Board of Education and Superintendent Shafer to know that he deserves to be an official Principal of Alexander Hamilton Academy. After working with Mr. Acevedo for most of my time here at AHA, I can honestly say his hard work and dedication to our school makes him most deserving of this position. He's consistent, reliable, and supportive, not only with our staff, but most importantly with our students and their parents. Mr. Acevedo has created a safe, nurturing, and academically rigorous environment for all, even throughout this pandemic. He's constantly going above and beyond to make sure our students have what they need to be successful. It is both a pleasure and an honor to work with Mr. Acevedo and it truly would not be the same without him. Thank you for your time.

Ms. Raquel Amador: Hi. I'm a parent and I have a daughter who just went back to school today. She was excited, but she came home questioning the plastic partitions. I was a student of Paterson Public Schools. Let's be honest. We all know the school buildings weren't up to par and that they could be better. The spotlight is on them now. We have local control now. Let's figure out how we can move forward. Let's not fail now that we have local control. Let's figure it out. Let's do something, but we need to work together. There are brilliant minds in Paterson. Find a way to work together to do what needs to be done. I'm not saying that these buildings are acceptable, but we knew what they were. Now let's move forward. Let's be realistic also. If we keep going by when it's safe, we won't ever be ready to open. The world will never be rid of germs, bacteria, and viruses. Let's instead teach proper hygiene. Let's teach proper nutrition. Let's have more physical activities for the kids and the people of Paterson. Let's plant gardens. Let's teach healthy lifestyles. Let's not just rely on chemicals. Let's be realistic. This isn't utopia. As badly as we would all want it to be, it's not. Figure it out. Make it work. Be realistic about it. Stop trying to be politically correct and please everybody. You know you won't please everybody, but you'll figure something out to make everybody alright. It's not settling for less. Figure something out because people are sick and tired of being sick and tired. We deserve better. We have local control now. Let's show the state where they truly failed us. Let's show the state and the world, since the spotlight is on us now, what we can actually do. We live here. Our kids are here. We work here. We can do this. Have a good night. Congrats, Dio.

Ms. Marisa Vanderclock: Hi, my name is Marisa Vanderclock. I'm a teacher at Alexander Hamilton Academy. Mr. Acevedo has been named Interim Principal and I would like the Board of Education and Superintendent Shafer to know that he deserves to be the official Principal of Alexander Hamilton Academy. Mr. Acevedo has exceeded expectations to ensure the safety of our students through this pandemic and returning back to school. It's an honor to work for Mr. Acevedo. I've worked in the district for over 17 years and he's been a great vice principal and now principal for this year. That's all. Thank you.

Ms. Lisa Gagliardo: Good evening, my name is Lisa Gagliardo. I'm a teacher at Alexander Hamilton Academy. Mr. Acevedo has been named Interim Principal and I would like the Board of Education and Superintendent Shafer to know that he deserves to be the official Principal at Alexander Hamilton Academy. Throughout the pandemic and remote learning he has gone above and beyond to ensure that his teachers and children have what they need to be successful. One of my students was unable to connect. Mr. Acevedo went to the student's house to help him get his hotspot to work. Although there are many teachers in Paterson who have felt unsafe in the buildings that they have gone back to, our teachers feel safe and so do our students. He has exceeded the expectations to ensure that we feel safe in our school, the teachers and the students. It is both a pleasure and an honor to work for Mr. Acevedo. Thank you very much.

Ms. Carmelina Crincoli: Good evening Board of Education and Ms. Shafer. I'm also representing Alexander Hamilton Academy. You've heard all our cries to have Mr. Acevedo be our true Principal because he deserves the position. We hope you hear us from Alexander Hamilton Academy. He's an excellent Interim Principal and he has been dedicated to our school and our children. We wish that he fills that position. Thank you and good evening.

Ms. Maureen Errity: Good evening, my name is Maureen Errity. I'm a teacher at Alexander Hamilton Academy. I'm calling tonight to show support for the current Interim Principal, Mr. Edwin Acevedo. I would like the Board of Education and Superintendent Shafer to know that Mr. Acevedo deserves to be the official Principal of Alexander Hamilton Academy. Throughout the pandemic and remote learning he has gone above and beyond to ensure his teachers, but most importantly, the children, the students at Alexander Hamilton Academy, have what they need to be successful. Although many of the school buildings in Paterson may not be ready to accept students and staff, Mr. Acevedo has exceeded expectations to ensure the safety of his staff and students. It is a pleasure and an honor to work with Mr. Acevedo. Thank you for your time.

Ms. Vicki McKiernan: Good evening Board members and Superintendent Shafer. My name is Vicki McKiernan and I'm also a teacher at Alexander Hamilton Academy. Mr. Acevedo has been named our Interim Principal and I would like the Board of Education and Superintendent Shafer to know that he deserves to be the official Principal of Alexander Hamilton Academy. I've worked at AHA for over 20 years and I've worked for many administrators from when Alexander Hamilton Academy was a charter school. Mr. Acevedo is one of the finest administrators I have worked for during my years. He cares about the students, parents, and staff. He knows more than 500 students, not just by their names, but also by personality. Whenever he meets with me, he begins by asking about my family because he cares, and he does that with all staff members. AHA is a high-performing school because of the expectations Mr. Acevedo has for his staff and students both when he was Vice Principal and now as Principal. He takes pride in AHA and while many schools in Paterson were not classified as ready to accept

students, Mr. Acevedo went above and beyond to make sure AHA was ready for staff and students. He is always willing to meet with parents, students, and staff and has led us through remote learning better than any administrator I know. It is a pleasure and an honor to work with Mr. Acevedo and he is more than deserving of the principalship at Alexander Hamilton Academy. Thank you for your time.

Ms. Yadira Duran: Good evening everyone. My name is Yadira Duran. I'm a third grade teacher at Alexander Hamilton Academy. I would like to take the time to express to everyone the privilege I've had of working with Mr. Acevedo for the past five years. During that time, he has gained the respect and admiration of his staff. He has proven to be a fair and supportive leader, especially during this past year that has been extremely challenging for us all. He's had everyone's best interest at heart, from the children to the parents and staff. He has helped us adapt and has been open-minded about our suggestions to help us overcome this together. He has created a positive school climate and environment for his students, parents, and staff. This is not an easy task. However, he has proven to be an outstanding leader and principal. Thank you for your time.

**It was moved by Comm. Redmon, 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 June 3, 2021, beginning with direct deposit number starting with 1009 and ending with 1034, and check number beginning with 226494 and ending with 226640, and wire in the amount of \$9,637,051.30, for a total of \$18,332,680.10;

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.

### **Resolution No. 2**

WHEREAS, the Board may appoint a suitable person, except a member or employee of the board, as Treasurer of School Moneys and may fix his salary, and he shall give bond in such amount, according to such terms, as are required by law, of Treasurers of School Moneys of school districts, and with such surety as the Board shall direct. N.J.18A:8-33. The appointed Treasurer of School Moneys will be responsible to complete the monthly Treasurer report and its supporting reconciliations, and

WHEREAS, the Treasurer is not required to be a signatory on school bank accounts. The Superintendent and School Business Administrator is sufficient. The Treasurer of School Moneys currently appears on the General Fund Custodial Bank account #700902207, and the District's Agency account #4308903065; and

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the Board allows the removal of Treasurer of School Moneys signature on any school bank account. The district's General Fund account #700902207, and the Agency account #4308903065, will only require the signature the Superintendent and the School Business Administrator; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Board allows by resolution to TD Bank to remove the Treasurer of School Moneys signature from Paterson Public Schools bank accounts; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this resolution shall take effect upon its adoption.

### **Resolution No. 3**

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**

<b>STAFF MEMBER</b>	<b>CONFERENCE</b>	<b>DATE</b>	<b>AMOUNT</b>
Nakima Redmon	NSBA 2021 CUBE Annual Conference	September 15-19, 2021	\$2,969.00 (registration, transportation, lodging, meals)
Board Member	Atlanta, GA		

**Total Number of Conferences: 1**  
**Total Cost: \$2,969.00**

**It was moved by Comm. Redmon, seconded by Comm. Teague that Resolution Nos. 1 through 3 be adopted. On roll call all members voted in the affirmative, except Comm. Redmon who abstained on Resolution No. 3. The motion carried.**

#### **Paterson Board of Education Standing Abstentions**

Comm. Arrington

- Self
- Family

Comm. Capers

- Self
- 4<sup>th</sup> and Inches
- Westside Park Group

- Insight
- Jersey Kids

Comm. Castillo-Cruz

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

Comm. Hodges

- Self
- City of Paterson

Comm. Dania Martinez

- Self
- 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. Arrington: I&P did meet, but we do not have the minutes. We'll report at the next meeting.

#### ***Operations***

Comm. Teague: Operations met today at 5:15. Present were myself, Comm. Arrington, and Comm. Martinez. Staff present was Mr. Cozart, Ms. Vainieri, and the principal of School No. 9. We reviewed six submitted Board resolutions. We discussed approving the attendance of four staff members to attend conferences and workshops. We discussed transportation, which is something that has come up in several committee meetings. We discussed entering into a contract with William Paterson University for membership in the Professional Development Network to provide a professor-in-residence at School No. 9 for the 2021-2022 school year to provide professional

development opportunities for staff and learning opportunities for students. There's a price tag there. It was mainly discussing that particular contract and transportation.

### ***Fiscal Management***

Comm. Simmons: Fiscal met yesterday. The presentation that you heard was what we discussed yesterday.

### ***Personnel***

Comm. Redmon: Personnel met Monday. The report will be given at the next Board meeting because there are changes and the minutes have not been uploaded to the drive yet.

### ***Governance***

Comm. Simmons: Governance has not met. It is scheduled to meet next week.

### **Committee Reports**

#### ***Family & Community Engagement***

Comm. D. Martinez: We have not met. I plan to schedule something for next week.

#### ***Technology***

Comm. Hodges: We've not had a meeting yet.

Comm. Arrington: We're scheduled to meet tomorrow.

#### ***Policy***

Comm. Arrington: Policy has not met. We were waiting for some information to come in. That packet has arrived and I'm sure I will be scheduling a meeting for next week.

#### ***School Readiness***

Comm. Teague: We haven't had another meeting since the last one. I suspect that we will be having one very soon, hopefully before Wednesday's regular meeting.

### **OTHER BUSINESS**

Comm. Simmons: Before we proceed to close, I wanted to congratulate Ms. Sandra Montanez Diodonet on her appointment as Superintendent of Passaic Public Schools. It's well-deserved and I wish you much success. I'm pretty sure Madam Superintendent can attest that the administration here has always been available to assist those who have moved on to become superintendent. Since I've been on the Board, you may be the fifth or sixth who has moved on to become a superintendent. It says great things about the training that is provided here. Dr. Hodges says it all the time. People look to Paterson to take the cream of the crop from the training we provide. You're right next door. I'm expecting to hear great things coming out of Passaic and I know we will. Congratulations again. Does any other Board member want to make a comment?

Comm. Teague: I just want to echo your sentiments, Mr. President. I know she's going to do an awesome job. I mentioned on Facebook about how she turned around the attendance at School No. 5. She was the principal there and it was such a big thing she did there that I remember they invited her to the Board meeting. I still remember that night. She presented her plan to the district. I know she's going to transform lives in Passaic. I know that for a fact.

Comm. Hodges: I wish you the very best and the very best for the children of Passaic.

Comm. Redmon: I truly wish you the best. I know the City of Passaic has a jewel on their hands because the Board of Education in Paterson loves what you've done here. We know you're going to do well in Passaic and we wish you nothing but the best of luck there.

Comm. Arrington: Congrats, Dio. I'm looking forward to seeing you at the Passaic Eastside and Kennedy game.

Comm. D. Martinez: Congratulations, Dio. I know we have been working for a short time now, but the time that we have been working you are amazing. You're so encouraging. You have been very supportive. I know you'll do an amazing job in Passaic and they're very lucky to have you.

Comm. Simmons: As Comm. Arrington said, looking forward to seeing you at those games.

Ms. Diodonet: Indeed. Thank you for all your kind words.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

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

The meeting was adjourned at 7:56 p.m.