

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

March 10, 2021 – 6:10 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. Oshin Castillo-Cruz  
Comm. Jonathan Hodges  
Comm. Dania Martinez

Comm. Manuel Martinez, Vice President  
Comm. Nakima Redmon  
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 notice of this meeting:

**Workshop Meeting  
March 10, 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.

**MOTION TO GO INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION TO DISCUSS LEGAL MATTERS AND PERSONNEL**

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

The Board went into executive session at 6:11 p.m.

**RECONVENE**

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

The Board reconvened the meeting at 6:30 p.m.

## **REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS**

Ms. Shafer: Thank you, Mr. President. Good evening, Commissioners and Paterson community. I just wanted to give you a quick update as to where we are with the vaccination plan for all employees in the City of Paterson and in the school district. On March 1, the Governor announced that he moved into phase 1B and that educators and support staff can be vaccinated. On March 3, we put our plan into action. We are working with St. Joseph's Medical Center at Dr. Hani Awadallah. The vaccinations were supposed to start on March 15. I'm happy to say they are starting tomorrow. We sent the list of about 500 of our employees to St. Joseph's and 185 to Hackensack Meridian who is operating out of the Meadowlands Mega Site. To date, we had 1,146 employees sign up. The list is going to go pretty quickly. We know today that over 300 were called by St. Joseph's and 185 for Hackensack. We are continuing to remind our folks to sign up. It's in a Google form and there's a link that they need to click on. You fill out the form and then you can let us know if you want to go to Dr. Hani Awadallah where St. Joseph's is or if you want to go to the Meadowlands. Once you sign up, we send the information off to both of those entities. We'll continue to work this plan until everyone who's employed by us gets vaccinated, if they wish to, including our early childhood centers. They have been invited as well. Once we go through all the employees, then we are going to start looking at our substitutes because we are going to need them when we open up. That's where we are with our plan. I'm happy to say that people are taking advantage of it. We'll continue to remind them. Right now, we have about 30% signed up, but we'll continue to remind them. Some have been notifying us that they already got the vaccine on their own, but we are going to continue to chip away at this. That's the end of my report, Mr. President.

Comm. Hodges: Madam Superintendent, what is the status of the International High School vaccination program?

Comm. Simmons: I was going to address that in my report, Dr. Hodges.

Comm. Hodges: I've been busy all morning and I'd like to know what's going on now.

## **REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT**

Comm. Simmons: Everyone is aware of what's been going on with the vaccination site. Everyone is aware of the negotiations that have been taking place. About half an hour ago, the Council voted to approve the MOU. If it's ready for us when we get to the end of the meeting, we'll vote on the same agreement tonight. The vaccine site is open because the Council did their part and voted on the agreement. That includes the reimbursement to the district as well as how they will staff the site moving forward. We'll discuss it further when we get to that point where we have to vote on it. That is my report because we've all been bombarded with phone calls and going through this process. I think this is Comm. D. Martinez' baptism into part of what we do at the Board.

Comm. Teague: It's called baptism by fire.

Comm. Simmons: I spoke to you all last night. The issues have been resolved and the Council did vote.

Comm. Hodges: I guess I'll be recusing myself from that vote.

## **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

**It was moved by Comm. M. Martinez, 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.**

No speakers.

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

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

Ms. LaDeana Artis: Good evening to everyone and thank you for inviting me to speak. I'm a parent of a child who attends School No. 2. He's in the autism classroom with Ms. Petillo. I have tons of questions and this is the first meeting I've attended. My primary question is, what is the plan for children going back to school? I understand the concerns related to the pandemic. It's been a year. I think next week will mark a year, if I'm correct. What is the plan? What has gotten in the way of putting safety protocols in place for children to return to school prior to this year mark? Those are my primary questions. I do have other questions and concerns, but I know I only have two minutes.

Comm. Simmons: Ms. Artis, if you would just stay on. The Superintendent will answer questions or point you in the right direction to get the answer to a staff member. Just stay on and once the public portion is closed, the Superintendent will address your questions.

Ms. Artis: Thank you so much.

Ms. Rosie Grant: Thank you, Boris. Good evening, Commissioners. Thank you for reopening the public portion. I somehow got kicked out as it started and had to use my phone to come in. I appreciate that. Good evening, everyone. I'm thankful that Ms. Shafer announced that the vaccination is beginning for Paterson Public School employees. That is our first step to a return to our buildings. I've been participating in some small group meetings with our legislators to advocate for some legislation that is being posted to replace, repair, or install adequate ventilation systems in all schools that have poverty levels under 75% of the kids. We are advocating for free and reduced lunch for any school where 50% of the students qualify, which of course would include all Paterson Public Schools. I'm hopeful on that and anyone who wants to add their voice to that, please be in contact with me either at our Facebook page, Paterson Education Fund, or by email and I will get that information to you. I am thankful for the work that Ms. Shafer and her team did on the budget and that in your deliberation as Board members you did put the needs of our students and the adults who serve them as a priority. I'm very grateful for that. I shared the link for the Assembly and Senate testimony sessions. Those are now open. They are having public hearing sessions around the budget. Remember that the Governor's budget can be adjusted by our

legislators. Please take the opportunity to stand in support of it this year. This is the first year that we are looking at a balanced budget early in the season. If you can, sign up and testify. It's all online. Support putting the money behind educating our children. Thank you so much.

**It was moved by Comm. Hodges, seconded by Comm. Redmon 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 10, 2021, beginning with direct deposit starting with 907 and ending with 930, and check number beginning with 225646 and ending with 225665, and wire in the amount of \$5,139,323.06, for a total of \$20,823,470.70;

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. Redmon, seconded by Comm. M. Martinez that Resolution No. 1 be adopted. On roll call all members voted in the affirmative, except Comm. D. Martinez who abstained. The motion carried.**

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

Comm. Arrington

- Self
- Family

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

## **Resolution No. 2**

*Resolution of the School District of the city of Paterson, County of Passaic, State of New Jersey, authorizing the Department of Purchasing to join The New Jersey Cooperative Purchasing Alliance hereinafter referred to as the "lead agency" for the conduct of certain functions relating to the purchase of work materials, supplies and services for their respective jurisdictions:*

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

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

WHEREAS, this resolution shall be known and may be cited as the cooperative pricing resolution of the School District of the City of Paterson; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to the provisions of N.J.S. 40A:11-11(5) the School District of the City of Paterson is hereby authorized to enter into a Cooperative Pricing Agreement with the Lead Agency as needed; and

WHEREAS, The Paterson Public Schools shall pay no fee to join said Cooperative Pricing Agreement; and

WHEREAS, the awarding of this contract is in line with the Five-Year Strategic Plan 2019-2024, Goal Area # 3, Communication & Connections; and

WHEREAS, the Lead Agency entering into contracts on behalf of the School District of the City of Paterson shall be responsible for complying with the provision of the Local Public Contracts Law (N.J.S. 40A:11-1 et seq.) and all other provisions of the revised statutes of the State of New Jersey, now

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Department of Purchasing of the School District of the City of Paterson, County of Passaic and State of New Jersey is hereby authorized to enter into a cooperative pricing agreement with *The New Jersey Cooperative Purchasing Alliance* for the 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 school years, as needed.

**It was moved by Comm. Redmon, seconded by Comm. M. Martinez that Resolution No. 2 be adopted. On roll call all members voted in the affirmative, except Comm. Hodges who abstained. The motion carried.**

**Paterson Board of Education  
Standing Abstentions**

Comm. Arrington

- Self
- Family

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

**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

STAFF MEMBER	CONFERENCE	DATE	AMOUNT
Nicole Booker	18 <sup>th</sup> Annual International Males of color Virtual Empowerment and Retention Educational Conference	March 17-19, 2021	\$430.00 (registration)
Principal/School 13	Virtual		
Domenico Carriero	18 <sup>th</sup> Annual International Males of color Virtual Empowerment and Retention Educational Conference	March 17-19, 2021	\$430.00 (registration)
Principal/School 9	Virtual		
Nancy Correa-Tavarez	18 <sup>th</sup> Annual International Males of color Virtual Empowerment and Retention Educational Conference	March 17-19, 2021	\$430.00 (registration)
Principal/School 28 (PAGT)	Virtual		
Cheryl Coy	18 <sup>th</sup> Annual International Males of color Virtual Empowerment and Retention Educational Conference	March 17-19, 2021	\$430.00 (registration)
Assistant Superintendent for Special Education	Virtual		
David Cozart	18 <sup>th</sup> Annual International Males of color Virtual Empowerment and Retention Educational Conference	March 17-19, 2021	\$430.00 (registration)
Assistant Superintendent for School Administration	Virtual		
Sandra Diodonet	18 <sup>th</sup> Annual International Males of color Virtual Empowerment and Retention Educational Conference	March 17-19, 2021	\$430.00 (registration)
Assistant Superintendent for Special Education	Virtual		
Dewitt Evering	18 <sup>th</sup> Annual International Males of color Virtual Empowerment and Retention Educational Conference	March 17-19, 2021	\$430.00 (registration)
Principal/ACT @ JFK	Virtual		

Maria Francisco	18 <sup>th</sup> Annual International Males of color Virtual Empowerment and Retention Educational Conference	March 17-19, 2021	\$430.00 (registration)
Vice Principal/NRC	Virtual		
Courtney Glover	18 <sup>th</sup> Annual International Males of color Virtual Empowerment and Retention Educational Conference	March 17-19, 2021	\$430.00 (registration)
Principal/School 26	Virtual		
Natalie Hackett	18 <sup>th</sup> Annual International Males of color Virtual Empowerment and Retention Educational Conference	March 17-19, 2021	\$430.00 (registration)
Principal/STARS Academy	Virtual		
Charla Holder	18 <sup>th</sup> Annual International Males of color Virtual Empowerment and Retention Educational Conference	March 17-19, 2021	\$430.00 (registration)
Principal/PANTHER Academy	Virtual		

Kiai Jones	18 <sup>th</sup> Annual International Males of color Virtual Empowerment and Retention Educational Conference	March 17-19, 2021	\$430.00 (registration)
Supervisor/Special Education	Virtual		
Chris Lewis	18 <sup>th</sup> Annual International Males of color Virtual Empowerment and Retention Educational Conference	March 17-19, 2021	\$430.00 (registration)
Director of Technology	Virtual		
Petra Liz-Morell	18 <sup>th</sup> Annual International Males of color Virtual Empowerment and Retention Educational Conference	March 17-19, 2021	\$430.00 (registration)
Principal/MLK	Virtual		
Moses McKenzie	18 <sup>th</sup> Annual International Males of color Virtual Empowerment and Retention Educational Conference	March 17-19, 2021	\$430.00 (registration)
Principal/School 20	Virtual		
Marc Medley	18 <sup>th</sup> Annual International Males of color Virtual Empowerment and Retention Educational Conference	March 17-19, 2021	\$430.00 (registration)

Principal/DFN	Virtual		
Zatiti Moody	18 <sup>th</sup> Annual International Males of color Virtual Empowerment and Retention Educational Conference	March 17-19, 2021	\$430.00 (registration)
Principal/ATMS	Virtual		
Susana Peron	18 <sup>th</sup> Annual International Males of color Virtual Empowerment and Retention Educational Conference	March 17-19, 2021	\$430.00 (registration)
Deputy Superintendent	Virtual		
JoAnne Riviello	18 <sup>th</sup> Annual International Males of color Virtual Empowerment and Retention Educational Conference	March 17-19, 2021	\$430.00 (registration)
Principal/School 21	Virtual		
Nicolette Thompson	18 <sup>th</sup> Annual International Males of color Virtual Empowerment and Retention Educational Conference	March 17-19, 2021	\$430.00 (registration)
Principal/SET @ JFK	Virtual		
Cicely Warren	18 <sup>th</sup> Annual International Males of color Virtual Empowerment and Retention Educational Conference	March 17-19, 2021	\$430.00 (registration)
Assistant Superintendent for School Administration	Virtual		

TOTAL CONFERENCES: 21  
TOTAL AMOUNT: \$9,030.00

**It was moved by Comm. Redmon, seconded by Comm. Arrington that Resolution No. 3 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. 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

#### **Resolution No. 4**

WHEREAS, the Paterson Public School District (the “District”) wishes to contract with a qualified independent consultant to assess current staffing levels and needs across all Central Office departments;

WHEREAS, before awarding any contract that in the aggregate is less than the bid threshold but 15 percent or more of that amount, the District is required by N.J.S.A. 18A:18A-37 to solicit at least two competitive quotations, if practicable;

WHEREAS, the District issued a Request for Quotations (RFQ) to multiple vendors and received one (1) responsive proposal; and

WHEREAS, the District has determined that the vendor whose response is most advantageous, price and other factors considered, is Thorough Planning LLC.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board approves this award of a consulting contract to Thorough Planning LLC, for the Central Office personnel audit, and authorizes the Superintendent to enter into a contract with vendor for a total cost not to exceed \$40,000 during the 2020-2021 school year.

**It was moved by Comm. Arrington, seconded by Comm. Redmon that Resolution No. 4 be adopted. On roll call all members voted in the affirmative, except Comm. Hodges who abstained. The motion carried.**

**Paterson Board of Education  
Standing Abstentions**

Comm. Arrington

- Self
- Family

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

**Resolution No. 5**

WHEREAS, the DOH is charged with the responsibility of enhancing and protecting the Public Health; and

WHEREAS, prudent planning includes providing for mass vaccination, pharmaceutical dispensation and sheltering; and

WHEREAS, the offices of the Division of Health at 176 Broadway, Paterson, New Jersey 07505, may need to be augmented in the event of a potential crisis to provide for mass vaccination, pharmaceutical dispensation and sheltering; and

WHEREAS, the DISTRICT recognizes and appreciates the civic responsibility inherent in participating in a widespread program of mass vaccination, pharmaceutical dispensation and sheltering; and

WHEREAS, the DISTRICT, by virtue of available space and location, agrees to offer certain designated spaces to participate in a mass vaccination, pharmaceutical dispensation and sheltering program, when and if needed by DOH; and

WHEREAS, the participation and cooperation of certain key personnel of the DISTRICT will be needed to implement this program; and

WHEREAS, the DISTRICT agrees to provide the following personnel to assist in maintaining the DISTRICT'S facilities effective March 4, 2021: one (1) regular custodian at per diem rate of \$23.00 pr/hr; one (1) Chief custodian at a per diem rate of \$44.44 pr/hr; and one (1) Supervisory Staff member at a per diem rate of \$465.20 per day; and

WHEREAS, the DISTRICT has incurred and expended \$222,428.68 in costs from January 1, 2021 through March 2, 2021. These costs are associated with assisting the DOH in participating in the widespread mass vaccination, pharmaceutical dispensation and sheltering program. These costs consist of facilities labor costs; material costs; and DISTRICT personnel; and

WHEREAS, the DISTRICT shall be reimbursed the aforementioned accrued costs by the City of Paterson within sixty (60) days upon this agreement being ratified by the City Council,

NOW, THEREFORE, in an effort to enhance and protect the public health, and to establish the responsibilities of the parties to this agreement, it is hereby agreed as follows:

1. The DISTRICT agrees to offer certain designated spaces to participate in a mass vaccination, pharmaceutical dispensation and sheltering program commencing January 1, 2021 and ending May 1, 2021.
2. The DISTRICT agrees to provide the following personnel to assist in maintaining the DISTRICT'S facilities: one (1) regular custodian at per diem rate of \$23.00 pr/hr; one (1) Chief custodian at a per diem rate of \$44.44 pr/hr; and one (1) Supervisory Staff member at a per diem rate of \$465.20 per day.
3. The DISTRICT has incurred and expended \$222,428.68 in costs from January 1, 2021 through March 2, 2021. These costs are associated with assisting the DOH in participating in the widespread mass vaccination, pharmaceutical dispensation and sheltering program. These costs consist of facilities labor costs; material costs; and DISTRICT personnel.
4. The DOH agrees to provide properly trained and certified personnel to administer such mass vaccination, pharmaceutical dispensation and sheltering operation in a manner so as to provide minimal disruption for the operations of the DISTRICT.
5. Supervision and security for the orderly operation of such a program shall be solely provided by the DOH or other civil or legal authorities provided and coordinated by the DOH.
6. The DOH shall provide all medical personnel, equipment, supplies, and materials, including vaccines, without any such requirement being imposed on the DISTRICT. The DOH shall be responsible for future payment that may be incurred, as well as 100% one hundred percent reimbursement for any costs expended by the DISTRICT.
7. The City of Paterson, as the Municipal Corporation in charge of the DOH, shall indemnify and hold harmless the DISTRICT for any and all claims which may arise as a result of a mass vaccination, pharmaceutical dispensation and sheltering

operation program. The City of Paterson shall, however, be specifically authorized to conduct the legal defense for the DISTRICT in the event any such claim is made and to present any legal defenses available to public entities and to the DISTRICT. This provision shall not waive any legal defenses held by the City of Paterson, the DOH, or the DISTRICT.

8. Either party may terminate this agreement within twenty-four (24) hours written notice.

**It was moved by Comm. Redmon, seconded by Comm. M. Martinez that Resolution No. 5 be adopted. On roll call all members voted in the affirmative, except Comm. Castillo-Cruz and Comm. Hodges who abstained. The motion carried.**

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

Comm. Arrington

- Self
- Family

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

Comm. Simmons: Before we go into Items Requiring a Vote at the regular meeting, I think Comm. Redmon and Dr. Hodges wanted to make some comments about the agreement just so that we have it on the record.

Comm. Redmon: My comment was based on what was said at the City Council meeting. We just wanted to make sure the members of the public understood that this body asked for a joint committee meeting with the city. We met several times and unfortunately nobody from the administration was there because in the public it looks like there was no representation from the School Board at the Council meeting. We finally worked out the deal, which we just voted on, but I wanted to put on the record that we only did what was requested from the School Board based on the conversations we had at that committee meeting. That's all I have to say.

Comm. Simmons: Dr. Hodges, did you want to make a comment?

Comm. Hodges: I wanted to find out what our nurses normally did during this time period. I don't want to discuss this object because I'm recusing myself from it, but I do want to put on the record what our nurses' jobs are during this time when we are not in school.

Ms. Shafer: Right now, nurses come two days a week in-person in the schools. Even when they weren't and they were remote, they all had assignments and professional development. They're going through a training course to become certified for contact tracing. In addition to that, nurses are responsible for moving forward student records. For example, our students that are going from eighth to ninth grade, those records and files have to be ready to go with the student for September. They have to make sure that they're all in order and clean them up, as well as the seniors that are leaving us and moving on. They had plenty of professional development that they were receiving as well as cleaning up all the files and moving things on. Because we were out for a year, there were students that had asthma plans and other things that are now going to have to be updated. They need to get those files ready, as well as all the students that need proper immunizations. They had plenty to do. Some of them would come in and take the files and clean them up. Others were coming into the building more than two days a week. It all depended on each school and each nurse, but they had plenty of responsibilities. Because we were registering students throughout the entire year, we have all of our pre-k and kindergarten registrations going on and also any transfers of students. Those things were still happening and the nurses have that responsibility.

Comm. Hodges: This has been going on all school year?

Ms. Shafer: That's correct, since we left last March.

Comm. Hodges: I just needed that to be put on the record. Thank you very much.

Comm. Simmons: We will move through the sections and I will ask the committee chairs if they are ready to give their committee report at the same time.

Ms. Shafer: Mr. President, did you want me to respond to the parent? Ms. Artis, thank you for your concern. All of us are just as concerned about bringing our students back to in-person instruction. I want you to know that we have been looking at the science and the data as we prepare our recommendation to the Board. Our next recommendation is April 14 at our Board workshop meeting. I can tell you that Passaic County area has been in the red zone from the onset of the virus back in March 2020. About three weeks ago, we moved from red to orange, but that only lasted for a week

and we were back into red. Right now, we just moved back again into orange. Red is the highest positivity rate for that particular area. Orange is right behind that. Right now, we are back into the orange, but we are monitoring that. Because the positivity rate was so high and the virus was so contagious, we erred on the side of caution to keep our schools closed and our students learning remotely. We continue to watch this. We get a report every week from the State and those are the numbers that we are watching. We want to bring our students and staff back, but we want to make sure it's safe to come back and that either our folks are vaccinated or the positivity rate has decreased. I just wanted to add to Rosie Grant's comment. I did testify today in the Assembly budget hearing and I'm scheduled to testify again Wednesday at the Senate hearing. Thank you, Mr. President.

## **GENERAL BUSINESS**

### **Items Requiring a Vote**

#### ***Instruction and Program***

Comm. Castillo-Cruz: Instruction and Program met yesterday. All the minutes are not yet on the drive, but I do have two important things. One of them is a request to have a retreat towards the end of May or the beginning of June, with the schedule permitting, to talk about the high school restructuring. We did have a conversation about the surveys that the students took and what their interests were. We do want to give some time for the administration to prepare the proposals moving forward, but it definitely requires an in-depth conversation and we thought that it requires a retreat. It's great information, but it is a lot of information. We also discussed the financial literacy and we will add some backup information onto the drive. The important part that we saw in the curriculum is things that our students are learning in there. Just to name a few, when you talk about incoming careers, by the end of the fourth grade students will know the difference between a career and a job, identify potential sources of income, and explain how income affects spending and take-home pay. They're learning about standard statements, how to demonstrate exemptions and deductions, reduced tax income, relationship between government programs and services, and taxes. They are learning quite a few things that I would like to have a more in-depth report during the next meeting and I want to share with all the Board. I guess we can talk about it as everyone can see the document. I think it is very important. They are coming up additional plans. Obviously, the pandemic threw a monkey wrench, to say the least, in order to find ways to better connect the students. It is in the curriculum and this is an ever-changing conversation, but we do know that it's there. There will be some changes to scheduling starting in September. Mr. President, if you will allow me to give a full report during the next meeting when everyone can see the documents in front of them.

Comm. Simmons: Absolutely. I'll ask Cheryl to poll the Board for a meeting. You said at the end of May?

Comm. Castillo-Cruz: The end of May or beginning of June, but definitely before the end of the school year. There's a lot of work to be done.

#### ***Operations***

Comm. Arrington: Mr. President, I'll be covering for Comm. Teague. Operations met today. Present were Comm. Teague, myself, and Comm. M. Martinez. Also present from the district was Dave and Lisa. We're submitting seven actions, O-18 through O-24. Most of them were transportation for out-of-district student placement. We also

have one HIV case that was reviewed. We also have training for six staff members going to National Science Teacher Association. If the minutes are not posted already, they will be posted in the Google Drive. That's all I have.

### ***Fiscal Management***

Comm. Simmons: Fiscal met yesterday. The minutes are not yet ready, but we'll have them at next week's meeting. We did discuss a review of the priorities that we talked about last week. There will be another presentation on that at next week's meeting. There was also some discussion around some of the stuff that we have asked the BA to look at in terms of facilities as it relates to 90 Delaware and 33-35 Church Street. I'll ask the BA to share the document that he sent to the committee with the rest of the Board. If you have any questions, you can ask those questions at next week's meeting. We'll be prepared to have a brief discussion about it. We will at some point schedule a meeting where we can just have conversation about the facilities. Those were the biggest pieces. We are waiting for a presentation from an outside vendor just to see what is being offered in the food service space, but it's just a presentation. Of course, there was discussion about upcoming RFPs. Madam Superintendent, I know we talked about it, but we didn't receive the list. If that list can be sent out to the committee and the rest of the Board, I would appreciate it, just so everyone is aware of what's coming down the pike.

### ***Personnel***

Comm. Redmon: Personnel met Monday. Attending and presiding was myself. Personnel discussed the continuation of our virtual hiring and virtual workshops that we are doing for hiring personnel. We also discussed the true vacancy list, which is actually 35. We have a few retirees. One of them was a nurse. I think we discussed that at our special meeting when we asked the Superintendent to add an additional nurse because of retirement. All other changes are at the building level. We asked the administration to keep all personnel hiring at the building level. The conclusion of the meeting was at 4:45. The minutes are loaded up to the Google Drive for those who missed the committee meeting.

### ***Governance***

Comm. M. Martinez: Governance committee met and convened last week. I'm unsure as to whether or not the minutes have been uploaded. We did discuss several ongoing pending litigations and items which I think we'll be discussing a little bit further in tonight's agenda. That concludes my report.

### **Committee Reports**

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

Comm. D. Martinez: Family and Community Engagement met last month on February 18. We plan to schedule a meeting sometime next week or the following. Since I'm new, it was a catch-up and talking about the different Google workshops that they're having and the different languages. We discussed parent coordinators, how many they have, and how many are part-time and fulltime. I made some suggestions about future workshops that I would like to see. Those who attended the meeting were myself, Gilman Choudhury, Kemper McDowell, and Susie Peron.

## ***Technology***

Comm. Hodges: Technology has not met.

## ***Policy***

Comm. Arrington: Policy is scheduled to meet on March 23.

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

Comm. Simmons: I want to go back to Family and Community. I guess this is for Ms. Peron. Typically, what has been brought to my attention is that there are Parent Universities or workshops that are usually taking place at the same time that we have our workshop meeting or regular meeting. The question was asked if they can be scheduled at a different time.

Ms. Peron: Absolutely, Commissioner. I'll take a look at that. Recently, we have had some competing workshops with the Board. We'll definitely take a look at that. We were shooting for Tuesdays and Thursdays. We have the Parent University, PTO workshops, and sometimes we have the community forums which are usually on Thursdays. Most definitely, I will stay away from our Board workshops and choose other days.

Comm. Simmons: Thank you. I'm getting beat up. I don't have the answer.

Ms. Peron: We don't want you to get beat up. We will definitely avoid the Board workshops and the regular Board meetings moving forward.

Comm. Simmons: If I can handle uninvited guests, I can handle Board members. That's it.

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

Comm. Simmons: Does anyone have anything that they want to add?

Comm. Hodges: I understand that the federal government has denied a waiver for state standardized testing. What is the district planning to do to address that?

Ms. Joanna Tsimpedes: The State has applied for the waiver. However, the President has not allowed for that waiver to go forward as of yet. According to the last information we received regarding the President's input on this, students will need to be assessed. States will have the liberty of either lessening the exam or providing the exam be given later in the year, perhaps in September when students come in. Last week at the State Board of Education meeting, the State was not confident in lessening the test due to the reliability of the questions and the validity. You can't just say you're eliminating one section for kids. Yesterday, at Instruction and Program, we talked in-depth about the in-person testing schedule should we not be in for in-person instruction and what that would entail. Until the Governor puts forth something for us, we have to go with the intent that we are going to be testing. It is not an easy process with 52 schools and 29,000 students. Even though you're testing grades 3-11, it's still a tedious process because we do have to follow social distancing guidelines and protocol. We are waiting for some feedback from the federal government. They have 90 days to respond to the waiver. I believe they applied for this waiver at the end of February. If you look at where the 90 days takes you, it takes you into the middle of May. If we find out in the

middle of May that we have to administer testing, we are really going to be in a bad situation to be able to administer testing before the end of the school year. Dr. Hodges, unfortunately our hands are crossed at this time until the federal government changes their regulations. The only thing that they said they would ease up on is the ESSER regulations with regards to accountability for QSAC and participation right. They have not yet eased up and we are waiting patiently. I know there has been a lot of talk with the politicians rallying for testing to be waived at the President's level. It's not just New Jersey that's asking for it if you go across the country. We are sitting idle. We are doing what we need to do in order to prepare should we have to move forward with it. Just please note also that the State has required us to provide them with assessment data that we have. Thankfully, we have given midyear assessments and we are uploading this into NJDOE Homeroom. It's going to be basically where our kids are in the trajectory of learning for grade level. We are hoping that can be used in place of taking the NJSLA. Again, no guidance has come and any time we ask they're tightlipped at the State level. They are not giving us information.

Ms. Peron: Ms. Tsimpedes, do you want to summarize the PowerPoint that you presented at I&P yesterday? We talked about scheduling. We're getting ready just in case we do have to do in-person testing.

Ms. Tsimpedes: There are some considerations that we need to take into account. If we are not open for in-person instruction but we're bringing kids in to test, we are going to have to provide transportation to our special education population. Those routes have to come in sooner or later so we need to move on this. You can't just create a route in a matter of a week and say we're ready to go. The other piece you have to provide for is substitutes. You have to have volunteer teachers. If you are not open for in-person instruction and you're not mandating for teachers to come in, you have to have volunteer teachers who want to come in to assess. If they don't, we're going to be at a disposition when it comes to having enough staff to administer. The testing period, based on what the guidelines are, and we're following what was given to us last year, you can only test two units per day and you can only test one content area. When you're looking at what you're bringing students in for, it can range anywhere between 1-2 weeks. They would be coming on a half-day schedule into the building. In your drive, the PowerPoint is there that was shared last night. Mr. Valentin, the Director of Assessment, put together a lengthy PowerPoint which showed what the schedule would look like. Basically, we would be testing from May 10 all the way through June 11. It's a hardship. If you are going to bring kids in just to test and that's all they're going to do, they are missing out on valuable instruction. At this point, we know learning loss exists and it continues to. I'm not sure what the State's take is going to be on it. We have also looked at making sure that our classrooms are going to be prepared for our students to come in and ensuring that we have staff on board. You need to have your nurse, your sick waiting room available, that you are doing food distribution, and providing breakfast and lunch, probably a grab-and-go when they leave. There are a lot of moving pieces to this. This isn't a simple we're bringing kids in to test and think it's going to be easy-peasy. We need to make sure that we have the staff members in place. The test is lengthy. In some cases, some of these kids are taking math, science, and ELA in grades 5, 8, and 11. They will be in for multiple weeks. Our special education students, because they have a limited time, you're really just giving them one unit. They are going to be coming in for a longer period of time, inclusive of our bilingual population, our 504 students. Basically, it would work in our favor if they waived it completely as we do have data points in our district that we are using and utilize the Start Strong assessments that the State is putting forth for everyone to utilize in September to gauge where students are in their learning. That's all hypothetical. We're hoping for the best and preparing for the worst.

Comm. Castillo-Cruz: Mr. President, this is one of the things that I wanted for the Board to have so we can have a better conversation. Once it's uploaded, it will give us time to review and to talk a little more about it during the next meeting once everyone is able to see what Ms. Tsimpedes is talking about. That way, we can go through a few of the questions that may be answered within the plan. Or if there's anything additional, we can definitely bring that up at the next meeting as well.

Comm. Hodges: Additionally, my concern is the health aspect of it and how we handle that with custodians and security, over and above the teaching. How are we preparing for all of that given where we are and where the city is with the COVID protocol?

Ms. Tsimpedes: Exactly, Dr. Hodges. That's something we took into consideration because you have to have extra security in the building. You are going to have staff in the building and students. You are going to need additional custodians to sanitize every day. You are going to need additional staff in general to handle the overflow that happens with this.

Ms. Peron: And food and a nurse.

Ms. Tsimpedes: Yes, we need the nurse. There are multiple facets. You'll see in the presentation all the considerations that we've put forth that we have questions with as well. It's not an easy fix and you want to ensure the safety of everyone, inclusive of the students who are coming in and the staff who are in the building following safety guidelines, protocols, social distancing, PPE, and all that. These are all things that we have taken into consideration and I hope the State takes that into consideration as well, inclusive of the federal government, as they review all the requests to waive the assessments for this year.

Comm. Hodges: My other issue is the facilities. The SDA is back in business, so to speak. I want to know where we are with pressing the case for Paterson and the needs that are still outstanding going forward. How do we get the attention of the SDA to address what remains of our outstanding new buildings and repair of buildings in the district?

Ms. Shafer: We had a meeting with SDA because we are pushing hard for Paterson Catholic. As you know, Paterson Catholic will be empty in September and it will be turned over to the school district. We put a plan together. I'll ask Neil to talk more about this meeting. We wanted to have a meeting with them to start the conversation about some of the refurbishing that needs to be done at Paterson Catholic. Neil, do you want to add to our conversations with SDA and Paterson Catholic?

Mr. Neil Mapp: Certainly. We met with the SDA and spoke to them a little about some of the deficiencies of the building and things that we've been dealing with over the last couple of years that we've been using it as a swing space and the infrastructure work that needs to be done. They did listen and they sent a team out to physically see for themselves what some of the deficiencies were. It started on the outside of the building. We identified the roofing structure that needs total replacement, the windows on three of the elevations of the building are existing and we have new windows on the back elevation that faces the field, all replacement windows that were done in the last 10 years or so. On three elevations of the building those windows need to be replaced. They are single pane. We have plastic and caulk and everything trying to seal the windows to prevent air and water infiltrating. We went into the building and we looked at other issues from the impact of the water infiltration from the roof to asbestos in

confined spaces throughout the building. They are going back and taking this to their administrators. Hopefully, we'll be getting a response from them in short time on what they are proposing to do to remediate some of these issues. That happened about two weeks ago. We're still waiting to hear back from them on a plan to remediate some of these deficiencies.

Comm. Hodges: That's one school. I'm looking at the rest of the schools that are in deep trouble. We were promised 14 schools. We have five or six in process and I'm concerned about getting our list together to make sure we are at the head of line when they do get money. There's the long-range facilities plan, which is going to be updated now. But I want to know what we are doing to push that forward because we missed out when other districts were ahead of us with their planning and their cooperation with their city, which cost us buildings. I don't want to repeat that problem. We still have a lot of facilities concerns. We have 100-year-old buildings all over the place here that our students are still attending. Given the air quality problems that some of those buildings have, we need to be rather aggressive in our approach with facilities. I'm putting it on the table for that discussion to take place. Certainly, the time to jump is now and not to wait for them to come to us.

Mr. Mapp: In terms of redevelopment funding, the SDA told us that they do not have any funds to further develop our master plan that you spoke of with the 14 additional schools. However, whenever funding becomes available, we'll be in the first tranche of projects to go forward because we have a site where there's no land acquisition required. If there's any funding available, we as Paterson Public Schools will be in the first tranche of projects to go out.

Comm. Simmons: I'm just piggybacking on what Mr. Mapp said. It was my understanding that they were only being funded to complete existing projects. I'm not sure where it's going to go after that or what the plan is after that.

Comm. Hodges: I know we are in trouble with the facilities plan with not being able to meet, but I think we need to begin to take a look at that. I expect there to be movement down the road.

Comm. Simmons: You're optimistic.

Mr. Mapp: To that end, in the next couple of weeks we are planning three charrettes as part of the long-range facilities plan. We plan to meet with community and district stakeholders to discuss what the top three projects and goals are for the district and begin to enumerate what those are. We have been given direction from DOE that we should identify three main projects that are quantifiable and achievable in the next five years to move forward as part of the long-range facilities planning effort. You are going to be solicited to be part of that charrette and we hope to get your input going forward.

Comm. Hodges: Thank you very much. That's all, Mr. President.

Comm. Simmons: Thank you, sir. Does anyone else have anything to add for the good and the welfare before we proceed to close?

Comm. M. Martinez: Did we have one more thing to take care of?

Comm. Teague: Was there one last thing that was pushed to the end of the meeting or did we nail that already?

Comm. Simmons: We voted on that already.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

**It was moved by Comm. Teague, 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 7:30 p.m.