

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

**October 1, 2020 – 5:00 p.m.  
Remote Meeting (via 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

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

Comm. Manuel Martinez, Vice President  
Comm. Joel Ramirez  
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:

Board Retreat  
October 1-3, 2020 at 5:00 p.m.  
Remote  
90 Delaware Avenue  
Paterson, New Jersey

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

Deborah L. Keys presented opening remarks, inquired about the welfare of the Board and Superintendent during pandemic.

Board should have norms available and reviewed at meetings.

Strive for balance between the desire to share information with the public and being careful to not divulge confidential information.

Press releases held by the Board helped achieve transparency.

Good governance involves collaborating as a body, arriving at one unified decision that is the “will of the board,” and communicating it effectively to the public.

### Highlights from Chapter 1 – “Moral Imperative and the Governance Core”

- Timely and relevant policymaking
- Policies should focus on the “what” not the “how”
- Follow protocol by directing issues through the superintendent and her staff
- The board holds the administration accountable, not through micromanaging, but through the evaluation process
- Some board members do not feel the Board has a shared moral imperative, i.e., it does not always push in the same direction

Elements of Good Governance:

Consensus Oriented

Accountable

Transparent

Responsive

Equitable and Inclusive

Effective and Efficient

Follows the Rule of Law

Participatory

### Comments on “A Fork in the Road” Diagram

Board often does not act in a unified manner, but gets job done in spite

Entire board does not always agree with the decisions reached in committee

Some board members perceive an “us versus them” mentality on the board

Others feel that the board sees eye to eye, but ideas of what things need to change and how fast they need to change do differ

Questions asked by certain board members are meant to address the academic deficiencies in the district

### Discussion of the term “Shared Moral Imperative” – Why do you do what you do?

The motivations for becoming board members were varied, but all members love children and share a desire to make a difference in their educational experience

Superintendents, board members, parents, and the rest of the community have a moral obligation to support education in the district

All involved in the educational process want better for the students

#### Concluding thoughts by Ms. Keys

Trust, willingness to share feelings, mutual reliance, frank communication and the ability to listen carefully are all vital for functioning as a cohesive board

Bringing about meaningful change in education is a slow process (Turning the Titanic), but by continuing the work progress can be accomplished

Board has been assigned to review the "Guidelines for Serving" handout and reflect on the points in preparation for the next discussion

#### Concluding thoughts by Superintendent Shafer

The school district has important decision to make in the next year, such as whether to come back into school and what the educational structure will be under the "new normal"

Much progress was made prior to pandemic and lost ground has to be made up

#### Concluding thoughts by Board President

Training needed to address the real needs of an urban school district

### PUBLIC COMMENTS

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

### ADJOURNMENT

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

The meeting was adjourned at 8:27 p.m.