

**MINUTES OF THE PATERSON BOARD OF EDUCATION
BOARD RETREAT**

August 13, 2020 – 5:05 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. Corey Teague

Absent:

Comm. Oshin Castillo-Cruz
Comm. Manuel Martinez, Vice President
Comm. Joel Ramirez
Comm. Nakima Redmon

Ms. Shafer: Good evening, everyone. I'm going to introduce Kathy. We all know her. Good to see you.

Ms. Kathleen Helewa: It's good to be here. Thank you very much for having me on the call. It's nice to see everybody. It's nice to know that Paterson is doing okay. Thank you.

Ms. Shafer: Mr. President, did you want to do the Open Public Meetings Act?

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
August 13, 2020 at 5:00 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.

Comm. Simmons: I think we can jump right into it. Everyone knows Kathy. We can jump right into this. Did everyone receive the proposed goals?

Comm. Capers: Yes, I've seen them.

Comm. Simmons: Just so that everyone knows, they're proposed but the reason that those were proposed is because those were the things that the Board had been talking about and the discussions that the Board has been having and based on the things that came out of the Superintendent's evaluation. That's why they are proposed, but it doesn't mean that the Board can't come up with something different or give additional input.

Comm. Capers: That's what I was going to ask. Were those goals set in stone or are we going to have a chance to discuss them and go over them?

Comm. Simmons: Yes.

Comm. Capers: Got it. Thank you.

Comm. Simmons: Okay Kathy, take it away.

GOAL-SETTING WITH NEW JERSEY SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION

Ms. Helewa: Thank you very much, Commissioner, and thank you for having me as I stated before. It's great to be back with you, even if it is in this manner. But I appreciate the pre-work that went into this and I'm glad to see that you have proposed goals that resulted from some discussion that you had amongst yourselves, a discussion that came out of Superintendent's evaluation. I'm also glad to see that your agenda is very efficient. That's wonderful. I would like to share a little bit of information with you. Some if it you've seen before already. I am going to ask that Mr. Zaydel kindly allow me to be a co-presenter. So, if you'll bear with me, I'll get out my goal-setting presentation. I would also like to commend you all for having a retreat. A lot of boards are not doing this because of the stressful nature of what's going on in public education today. But you know something? Goal-setting and Board retreats really are a compass. They keep you focused and they keep you coming back to where you need to be and how you can use your role as Commissioners of Education to move your district forward in conjunction with your admin. It's very gratifying to be here with you. Thanks again. Here is my slideshow that I am going to advance through. Some of this is material that you know about already. Some of this is very unique to Paterson. Without further ado, I just want to note here that you've seen this diagram, but anyone who is on the call can also see that the Paterson Board of Education is right on track with its Board governance cycle. Goal-setting should be done in the summer. Action plans developed by September or so. Then, you report out on the progress of those goals throughout the year at mutually agreed upon times between the administration and the Commissioners. Those goals are the basis of the Superintendent's evaluation. It's very important that we all understand what we are doing here tonight and that we all have buy-in because excellent goals really are the foundation for so many things that a school district needs to do and that you, Commissioners of Education, need to keep your eye on. I'm sure all of these bullet points are very important to you. This is an oldie but goodie, but I always like to begin by making it clear to everyone who is listening or participating that the district goals that we'll set tonight are different from Board goals. District goals are set with input from everybody, but it is the administration

that is responsible for actualizing them. It is not the Board's job to make sure that those goals are being met in a certain way according to the action plan. It is the Board's job to make sure that progress is occurring on those and that you are updated on that progress. Board goals are different. Board goals are completely owned by the Board so they typically deal with governance issues, something like that. Are there any questions that you all have? I know we've done this together, but I certainly don't want to leave any questions hanging. Anybody have anything? Alright, good! It's exciting to come back to you guys because the last time I was with you or one of the last times that I was with you was in regards to your strategic plan which was a phenomenal process and I think you have a phenomenal product out of all of the work that everybody did. There was so much public participation and there was so much visioning going on in those sessions. That strategic plan is really the basis for your goal-setting going forward. If we look at the mission and vision statements that are in your plan, and I know that you are very familiar with them, these are going to serve as basis points for what we do tonight. Also, we are going to look at our strategic plan goals and make sure that your proposed goals or any goals that you wind up with tonight can all relate back to your strategic plan because this is what your stakeholders want to see coming out of the Paterson Public Schools. Now, when we did this strategic plan, no one was thinking pandemic so things have changed drastically, but your values have not. We want to make sure that we relate everything back to the strategic plan goal areas - teaching and learning, facilities, communications and connections, and also social/emotional learning. It's very important. In advance of our session, your draft goals were shared with me and I had a chance to read through them. It was a pretty easy job for me to match these up with the goal areas of your strategic plan. In fact, several of these goals relate to more than one of your strategic plan goal areas. Just for the benefit of everyone on the call, I am going to read them to you and delineate which goal areas they relate to. Your first one is a proposed district goal regarding a reentry plan, which is to develop, adopt, and ensure implementation of a comprehensive reentry plan that addresses the academic, operational, and social/emotional needs of the district. That hits all four goal areas. Second is an area that we talked about a lot during the strategic planning process, the high school graduation rate, which hits goal areas one, three, and four which is to, as proposed, increase the 4-year student cohort high school graduation rate by 2% for the upcoming school year of 2020-2021. Goal three is to restructure the high schools. This relates most pertinently to goal area number one and goal area number two of your strategic plan and that is to redesign district high schools inclusive of high school program offerings and organizational structure by June 2021. There are three more proposed goals, the fourth of which is to improve supervision of curriculum implementation and that squarely hits goal number one, teaching and learning, and that is to ensure the fidelity and implementation of the district curriculum by increasing classroom walkthroughs, focused on alignment of instruction to lesson plans. Your fifth one hits goal areas number one and number three regarding remote learning and it's very important, especially in times of pandemic. I understand that you are going to all remote learning for a certain period of time as the school year begins. Your goal, if this is to be adopted as written, is to increase the level of engagement in remote learning of all district stakeholders, inclusive of students from pre-k to 12 and staff. Lastly, to improve science instruction which also points to goal area number 1 and broadly put is to enhance and monitor science instruction and learning in grades pre-k to 12. That's our working document tonight. Superintendent Shafer, thank you very much for sharing these. I'm wondering if you would like to speak as the Commissioners take all of this in and review what they know about it already. Your thoughts on these proposed goals since actualizing goals are really to be the domain of you and your administrative team.

Ms. Shafer: Certainly. As we meet with the Board, and we've met a lot during the months of June and July and even August now and through my evaluation, these were really goals that I saw the Board was concerned about and wanted to see change with. As we look at the reentry plan, and we've been working on that since back in May, the Board has been very involved in the reentry plan. We had a retreat with some Board members that stayed the entire time to go through the plan. That really talks about the reentry plan and also it touches on number five, remote learning. As you know, we've been behind with not having enough devices. I did have a plan when I came in to be Superintendent four years ago and we just never have enough money. We were able to roll out the first phase of the plan for the high schools, but then we stopped short and we're not able to do the same for the middle school and the elementary school children. Now that we have COVID money, we have an order in but that's being held up. I think that the reentry plan and remote learning go hand in hand. The high school graduation rate, once you get the graduation rate up, and we were up to about 84%, you need to be able to maintain it. Since COVID, this is really a difficult one because of not seeing the students and not having a teacher in the classroom with them and the guidance counselors following up with them almost on a daily basis. We looked at that and thought that was important as well. We want to keep that rate up as well as students going to two and four-year colleges. Restructuring the high schools, this was a goal that the Board wanted. Because of some budgetary items, instead of trying to clear out all of the high school administrative positions at one time and change all of the themes, we're going to look at it this year. We do have a plan for the administrators and we looked at that last year, except it was not the significant cost savings that we had anticipated. But we do want to look at restructuring the entire high schools with the administrative team as well as the themes that are across the high schools. During my evaluation conference, the Board spoke a lot about the implementation of curriculum. We have state-of-the-art curriculum guides. The state has given us high marks on that and shared it with other school districts. But now it's really the implementation and following through to ensure that the curriculum is being implemented on a daily basis. For far too long, number six, our science scores, even prior to me being Superintendent, our biology scores were not where we would like them to be. We have been working all along trying to improve science instruction, recruit science teachers and professional development. We want to target that area as well. Those are the six that we thought were extremely important as we move the district forward. Unfortunately, because of the pandemic, it makes it a little more difficult, but we are up to the challenge. What I do have is my team is ready to go into each goal. We have an action plan that we want to share with the Board and get their comments and go from there.

Ms. Helewa: Shall I stop sharing? Do you have something to put on the screen or would you like to just go right into Commissioner conversation right now?

Ms. Shafer: If you will, Mr. President, we can just go right into the first goal, the reentry plan. I'll have my folks take you through it and then we'll answer any questions that you might have. Then, we'll move through the goals and answer questions after each performance goal.

Comm. Capers: If we want to present any new goals that are not on here or talked about, when do we have that opportunity?

Comm. Simmons: We can do that tonight. Let's let her go through what we have here because we're just using this as a framework. Then, once we get through them, we can introduce anything that you want to add.

Comm. Capers: Got it. Thank you.

Ms. Shafer: Goal number one is our reentry plan. Can we pull that up? It's an action plan. Is David Cozart on?

Mr. David Cozart: Good evening, everyone. I'm waiting for the action plan to come on the screen so I can see it.

Ms. Shafer: David, if you can just briefly go through the action items and then we'll take any questions from the Board.

Mr. Cozart: Good evening again. Ms. Shafer tasked us with what we can do to make sure that our district will be functional and operating at peak performance level for the 2020-2021 school year. When we started looking at options, we develop an opportunity to create a reopening task force which will actually involve several individuals from the district, all stakeholders regarding parents, staff, students, and community members to get their opinions on what we can do to make our district better in the face of the pandemic school year, as well as what can make our district better overall. The first six actions on the action plan address the need to develop and adopt strategies to address those goals. Back in April and May, we started the process and a lot of the process was completed by June 1, which basically established the reopening task force. We developed its' purpose, identified community members, and we also had individuals have opportunities to be selected and volunteer to the various communities. After we did our June 17 Board committee presentation, we had various stakeholder virtual meetings which we shared our template and asked individuals to volunteer to various committees. From that turnout, we were able to narrow down into specific groups, specific leads, and identify specific tasks that we will use as the framework. Within each committee, we made sure that we used all guidance that we received regarding CDC requirements. We had the opportunity to review other states' reopening plans to make sure that we were in line. This all happened prior to the state providing their roadmap to reentry. Once we received that document, we made sure that our plans were in line with Governor Murphy's strategies. We made sure that we had everything that is part of his plan expectations covered and we found that in some cases we went into more detail to make sure that we provide everyone opportunities. If you scroll down to number seven, starting with seven is the part of the plan in which we actually started to implement the plan as written. Number seven talks about the reentry plan from the standpoint of when we had to have academic services start to figure out how we were going to make our instructional program viable during the pandemic season. The lead people who were responsible in that area were academic services as well as assistant superintendents and other stakeholders. In that plan, you will see that we had to develop various operational as well as academic strategies. With all due respect, this is what we went through last night regarding overall planning which was previously reviewed and discussed last month. Last night, we went into great detail as well as making the revisions to reflect our remote learning. That was the whole purpose of that component from academic services. These are highlights for those who weren't involved in the process. We discussed the remote entry which is goal five. We discussed implementation of the curriculum, which is goal number four which will be discussed later. Securing instructional technology for all staff and students which was discussed last night and we continue that process. Student registration process and student transportation - that was the area that was in detail regarding the whole reentry plan. Again, this plan was presented to us and we reviewed it several times. Again, as of last night, it's been revised for today's presentation. The next portion of it was the operational portion. What are we doing to secure our building and make sure our buildings are viable, clean, being sanitized, and prepared for students and staff to be into the buildings? We started that process as soon as the schools were shuttered in

March with the initial cleaning and sanitizing of the buildings. An allocation of resources was mobilized to make sure that we can address those needs during a shortage of staff, and then also through the business office as well as facilities we created a path in which we can bring everyone back online and make sure that our buildings have been properly cleaned and sanitized prior to our July date. The July date was important because our buildings were being used in some locations for City of Paterson Department of Recreation aspects. Therefore, those buildings had to be cleaned inside. Those areas as well as buildings were being used for distribution of food services, as well as Chromebooks. Since the July dates, we continued to make sure our programs are ready and available for services. We have our facilities department monitoring the buildings and assessing the buildings to find out what we need in terms of supplies for PPE and making sure that we have enough supplies for the staff and students in reference to face coverings, sanitizing equipment, devices, and solutions. One of the major goals we had at that time was to reinstate our custodial staff members. We actually brought them back into process to clean the buildings. That whole implementation plan is still ongoing. It's never ending. It's still ongoing because we still have to make sure that we place the schedules for daily cleaning, daily sanitizing the buildings and equipment regarding student equipment as well as athletic equipment and large area equipment. That same process we still have to implement food distribution plan because our buildings will be used throughout this pandemic to provide food to the students as well as to the community as we did for the past several months. We had to make sure that we are able to provide appropriate food distribution delivery system and in areas in which we are not able to use our kitchen areas as well as cook within our kitchens. We also have to make sure that we provide an opportunity for our student athletes to participate in our fall programs according to the NJSIAA requirements. These are all things that were done in the first component. Again, we utilized various stakeholders. Everyone had an opportunity to participate. We see some of the action steps which were done by the business office and which were completed by the facility department as well as security as well as the athletic and other support teams. One thing we did do in connection with the athletics along with facilities as well as with the business office was we took this opportunity to make sure that we have proper equipment, sanitizing machines, as well as solutions that in the past we would never have thought about cleaning some of this student athlete equipment. During this pandemic, it gives us opportunity to review our overall program and order appropriate supplies and equipment to address those needs as well. Another area that we really thought about was very crucial to the academic support services and that is to address the social/emotional learning of all our staff and students. We understand how this pandemic has affected us in many areas. Last year, we realized that in order for us to be really successful, we had to make sure the whole child is being addressed. The social/emotional status of the child is paramount to that overall success. That was why last year you saw it materialize in part of our strategic plan. This year, we want to make sure that we are strengthening that component and making sure that it becomes more of a regular routine and it's not so much as a short thing that we do. Day to day, we want to make sure it is a viable part of the curriculum which gives everyone the opportunity to really get the chance to break some barriers and find out how we are doing. Ask those questions. How are you going? How are you feeling? Not leave it on just the guidance counselor that have those types of relationships, but provide students with the opportunity to have that relationship with all stakeholders. This is really crucial. We have Ms. Peron, my fellow assistant superintendents, Ms. McCoy, Director of Guidance, and we have Ms. Cheryl Coy, the Chief Special Education Officer spearheading this initiative along with the building principals. They will provide trainings throughout the school year. They will also have part of our opening address. We'll address this as part of our Administrator's Institute. Principals will receive opportunities to receive professional development throughout the year as well as teachers. Teachers

and guidance counselors will speak with students throughout the year. Parents will also be notified and have opportunities to participate in different activities. We will have coaches to talk with students and staff to be interviewed to talk about how we were able to do different things and how things are affecting you. But again, we just want to make sure that we provide everyone with the opportunity to really address the social/emotional needs and doing it in a way that is research-based and is very direct and intentional. This is one way we believe that we will be able to support our overall academic program and support the child's overall learning. That's all we have regarding the actual reentry plan in short summary form. But again, we will speak about other parts of it throughout this presentation.

Ms. Shafer: Mr. President, do you want us to keep going or do you want to have the questions now or get through the plans?

Comm. Simmons: Let's get through the plans and then we can ask the questions.

Ms. Shafer: I'm going to ask now for goal number two, the graduation rate.

Ms. Sandra Diodonet: Good evening. This is Sandra Diodonet. For goal number two, it would be to increase the 4-year cohort student high school graduation rate by 2% for the 2020-2021 school year. We have five action steps. The first one, we would meet with district administrators and principals on a consistent basis so that we can review the plan and make sure that we're on task with the plan. We would meet four times a year. Then, we would have the people who are responsible there. It would go from the Superintendent all the way to assistant superintendents, the director of secondary education, and principals as well as guidance counselors and supervisors if needed. We would analyze the data and intervene when possible. We would review the cohort to make sure that we have a transcript review process for the seniors to see and plan where we need to intervene and make sure that they have Credit Recovery classes. We want no surprises come January or June to say "Jan is not graduating." Jan is definitely going to graduate because we have plan for her. That brings me into step number three which talks about conducting credit audits. Any student that would have less than 90 credits, we would develop a plan for them, a graduation plan, to ensure that they would indeed graduate and make up the classes that need to be made up. Moving on to step number four, Credit Recovery, that would start early and that will be getting the budget together, making sure that we have the students identified, the locations, and making sure that we are tracking the progress month to month and meeting the students with their guidance counselors. Number five, which is something that we did this year, is bi-weekly meetings and they turned into weekly meetings where we met with principals for senior status. We've gotten to the level where we even knew students' names, how many credits they had, how many classes they needed to make up in Credit Recovery towards that path to graduation. That would also encompass us discussing college applications, college acceptances, and so on. That is goal number two.

Ms. Shafer: Thank you, Ms. Diodonet. Let's move on to goal number three.

Ms. Peron: Is that high school restructuring?

Ms. Shafer: Yes, it is.

Ms. Peron: We're back at high school restructuring, round two. I will remind you that the base line and all of the data in terms of the instruction and program, the curricular offerings and the academic courses were discussed at a Board retreat last year,

November 12, 2019. I can certainly offer you all of that information once again. We're back at high school restructuring, taking a look at updating revising themes and curricular offerings to the existing academies, making decisions around whether or not we want to strengthen those academies, revise those programs, include vocational education, restructure and share teachers among academies and campuses, revise the administrative teams and the way that they are set up. We would do a full reorganization of them and take a look at PCTI. Either we replicate programs or create different programs as well as create a long-range plan for the Paterson Catholic building. In a nutshell, that's what all of these tasks do, except that the tasks would include and be inclusive of community stakeholders, students, parents, administrators, and teachers so that we would have a full cadre of different voices around taking a look at what the interest of students is nowadays, what would be beneficial to their curricular programming, and even soliciting our middle school students because those are our rising high schoolers so that their voices would be included in this. All of the tasks that you see here I have outlined and summarized those actions in the statements that I have said. The blue boxes represent the timeline of when that would happen. This is not a phased timeline. This is not a two or three-year plan. This is a one-year plan. It's going to be a plan on steroids because we have to make decisions around staffing and staffing decisions have to happen early before the end of the year so that we have enough time for staff to know whether or not they will be in a current job or they will be transferred to a different building or different type of job. That's it in a nutshell. We can discuss this further, but it's a lot to read.

Ms. Shafer: Thank you, Ms. Peron. The next goal, goal number four, is to improve the supervision of curriculum implementation, and that's Ms. Warren.

Ms. Cicely Warren: Good evening everyone. Goal four is specific to the implementation of our curriculum. As Ms. Shafer said earlier, we do have a robust curriculum, but this goal seeks to focus on ensuring that curriculum is followed with fidelity in the classroom. You will see the initial steps in the plan are about identifying the pertinent data that will actually give us information specifically about the implementation of curriculum. We have various tools that will allow us to do so, such as the walkthroughs. The reason that you'll see observations for principals, vice principals, as well as teachers is because there are unifying standards in all of the evaluation tools that speak specifically to the implementation of curriculum, though all of those various performance appraisal tools are listed. The remaining steps indicate how we would collect that data and review it and utilize that data to develop action steps for support for teachers and administrators who evaluate classroom instruction. In essence, the goal seeks to narrow our focus of walkthroughs and observations and instructional feedback to the implementation of our curriculum with fidelity. There are of course other areas that are included in our evaluation process and our walkthrough process and overall instructional feedback, but we are seeking to be intentional about focusing on that particular area this year.

Ms. Shafer: Thank you, Ms. Warren. Remote learning is Ms. Cheryl Coy.

Ms. Cheryl Coy: Good evening everyone. With remote learning, teachers will be provided PD in G-Suites for Education so that they are able to provide efficiency with remote learning for students. Classes will be completed via the Google Meets and the posting of assignments will present what students are doing on a daily basis. Students will be responsible for daily responses via the Google Classroom in the areas of social/emotional learning and it will be monitored on a daily basis by teachers. This will also capture the attendance for students. Students will participate in digital intervention platforms with fidelity as Achieve 3000, Imagine Math, Alex and Read 180.

Ms. Shafer: Thank you, Ms. Coy. Joanna, goal number six.

Ms. Joanna Tsimpedes: Goal number six deals around science instruction. The goal will be to increase by 10% science classroom walkthroughs and virtual Google Classroom visits to ensure district curriculum and professional development is implemented with fidelity. The most important thing is to roll this out so that all administrators understand what we are looking to do and achieve in the plan. We're still waiting for the evidence statement analysis to come from the state. We reached out to them and they said they would send us an email once it's available to us, but we are actually going to create analysis guides for grades 5, 8, and 11. Based on that data, we are going to determine the areas of weakness and strengths that we have and then we're going to share that with science teachers as well as the building admin so that they can understand where we need to build our strengths as we do ourselves. We are also going to monitor curriculum implementation in science and identify trends to see what is working and what is not working and what needs improvement. The most important thing is that we need to conduct additional professional development as we started this year. I included in there the different types of professional development that we will continue to include this year that we started last year. Lastly, we are going to use the PDSA model, which is Plan, Do, Study, Act. After doing all of this, after planning, doing the classroom walkthroughs, looking at the data, then we're going to make additional recommendations based on what we have seen this year. That's goal six.

Ms. Shafer: Thank you, Joanna. Mr. President, that concludes the description of the action plans. We'll certainly take any questions that you may have.

Comm. Simmons: Does anyone have any questions?

Comm. Hodges: I do. I'm a little concerned because some of this stuff has already been done. For instance, the reopening plans were left for 7-9 which is basically the implementation of the plan. The production of the plan we voted on last night and there are some additional pieces to be looked at. But why would that be a goal for moving forward when we've already had that?

Comm. Simmons: If you recall, Dr. Hodges, this meeting was actually rescheduled. This meeting was supposed to take place last month, if I'm not mistaken. Just based on the conversation last night, because there were still so many concerns, last night we voted to amend the plan to go remote. But there were so many concerns by Board members for the original plan that was submitted. Because we are going remote, this gives us not only the opportunity to make some adjustments but it also gives us the time to make those adjustments.

Comm. Hodges: But again, the majority of the plan has already been completed. We're operating under that now. The majority of the plan has already been completed. We spent a whole day going through all of the pieces and discussing this and then another 4-hour meeting with the Board. There are pieces that need to be done and need to be adjusted. We talked about that, the plan that we voted on.

Comm. Simmons: But remember, what we voted on was the submission of the plan. This is my thought. There was a two-day retreat and some Board members sat through that two-day retreat. But we still had an almost 5-hour meeting talking about that plan after a two-day retreat, which says to me that there's still a lot to be done.

Ms. Shafer: The plan might be done but guidance changes on a daily basis from the DOE and the CDC. Also, it's about the implementation. I think he wanted to pick three. It doesn't have to be this one, but I think it's the importance of the implementation. We didn't just give you something because it was already done.

Ms. Peron: Each of those areas requires implementation and the supervision and the wherewithal and the monitoring of each of those things. Let's say one of the tasks is to provide professional development. We plan to do it. However, we have to schedule it, we have to conduct it, and we have to assess it. Each of those areas of the plan does need execution, implementation, monitoring and supervision. That's what the thought behind an action plan as a goal so that we would implement it 100% even though it is an evolving plan and it changes from time to time because of the guidance that comes out on the health effects and the factors that are going on. That's why we thought it would be a healthy goal and an actionable plan to implement and really assign to different areas so that we ensure the fidelity of the implementation of the plan.

Comm. Hodges: What I said was what is left is the implementation part of the plan. That's what I'm talking about. That's what has to be done. It's not just development of the plan. It's the implementation of it and making corrections once we encounter difficulty. That's all I'm putting on the table right now, which would be the same for the high school restructuring which we did go through, but we did not complete because of a variety of issues, financial being primary. You presented the plan to us. You're going to rehash that plan with changes in some of the building instruction.

Comm. Simmons: What we discussed mostly around the high school restructuring is just the configuration of building administration. We still have not gone through the process of determining whether or not we will have the same academies, if we'll go with the same themes, or we haven't gone through the process of determining, as Ms. Shafer said earlier, what students want. We haven't done that yet.

Comm. Hodges: Alright. I'm just going through and clarifying what's on the agenda.

Comm. Shafer: If you remember last year when Susie did a Powerpoint around the high school restructuring, that was a multi-year plan. Year one was the administration and that became an issue with the budget as well as the COVID-19. The second part of that was going to be to look at the themes, look at the core structure, and make some changes around that based on student interest and jobs as we move and so on. Just to clear that up.

Comm. Hodges: You have on the agenda that the public portion will begin at 5:50. It's 5:51, Mr. President, if you want to do it.

Comm. Simmons: Sure. Comm. Capers, how many questions do you have before I make this decision?

Comm. Capers: I agree with Dr. Hodges. I have a lot and it's going to turn into a longer discussion. I think we should go to public portion.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

It was moved by Comm. Caper, 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.

Ms. Rosie Grant: Good evening, Commissioners, Ms. Shafer, members of the staff and the public. Thank you for this opportunity to speak. Are you hearing me?

Comm. Simmons: Yes, we are.

Ms. Grant: Okay, thank you. I had one thing to offer. You have noble goals and we'll all certainly work with you and struggle to make those happen. The one thing that I wanted to offer today was as we reenter schools, even virtually, and then eventually when we are in person, it's a strong plan and I know that the plan includes quite a bit about social/emotional wellbeing. I want to push that a little bit further and ask for a goal around creating caring environments. It's a little bit more than the social/emotional wellbeing. It's making sure that our policies are trauma informed and we're creating healing, supportive environments for the children and the adults in the building. There are two statewide groups that are working on adverse childhood effects and how to counter those and address those and give space in schools for healing. As those are rolled out over the next month or two, I ask this Board to give it some special attention because we are all traumatized by COVID and we are additionally traumatized for people who have seen the violence around them. We've had quite a bit in Paterson and for people who are in small spaces and sometimes large families in small spaces during this pandemic it can be difficult. I appreciate the goals that you have, but I wanted to ask you as you have your discussion to consider that one more because I think it is so important. While most of the others are academic, this is one of those undergirding things that need to be paid attention to. Thank you.

Comm. Simmons: Thank you.

It was moved by Comm. Capers, 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.

Ms. Shafer: Mr. President, if I can make a comment about Rosie's suggestion, I'm just going to ask Cheryl Coy because she has been working in this area and has some good news to report about a pilot program we are getting ready to do. Ms. Coy, do you want to talk about that?

Ms. Coy: Hi. Myself and Ms. Warren worked on a grant for the district for \$250,000 over the course of five years that will allow us to create trauma informed care supports in four particular schools. In those four schools, they will have a clinical worker onsite on a weekly basis to support students who experience trauma during this whole COVID situation. We're also looking into other organizations, like CBH Care, to see what their services could look like in the district because these services partner with other districts at no additional cost. Bergen County capitalizes on it. Paterson and Passaic County do not. I've been working with them to find out how we can infuse their support into the district when school reopens in September. But we did definitely win the grant and those services for four particular schools will be going into place in September.

Comm. Simmons: Thank you.

GOAL-SETTING WITH NEW JERSEY SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION

Comm. Capers: I have a question to you, Mr. President, before I go into my questions. Do you want to base the questions around the six goals before proposing any new ones?

Comm. Simmons: Yes, so that we can make sure your questions are answered.

Comm. Capers: The first thing is the graduation rate. I think we need to set a benchmark and keep it there in that middle ground at that 85%. I think it was below 85%, but I think we need to keep a base number. We don't want to go below 85%. I'm suggesting that we make it 85% or better in terms of the graduation rate.

Ms. Diodonet: I just have a comment. America's Promise, which is an organization on graduation rates nationally, the national rate is at 84.1%, and low-income students in the year 2014 were 77.6%. This is posted as of June 2018. In terms of ESSA, they're looking at I believe 67%. I think if we do 85%, we are leaning way towards where it is not with the nation's percentage and we are at risk here of not meeting the goal. Progressive growth is what we want. I'm not saying that we can't reach 85% obviously. We want it to be 90% which is the national goal for graduates. But given where we are, it won't be attainable and these are smart goals. We want them to be attainable.

Comm. Capers: How did you come up with the 2%? How many students is that?

Ms. Diodonet: We're still waiting for the data for this cohort here. That data is not in yet and the state has not released the form for us to go in. We still have kids that are graduating from summer school. It would be based on what we had from the 2019 cohort based on today, but I really can't give you a direct answer to that.

Comm. Hodges: Is it 10? Is it 20?

Comm. Capers: That's what I'm saying.

Comm. Simmons: She doesn't have the data so she can't answer the question.

Comm. Capers: But how are we presenting percentages to the Board when we don't have this data?

Comm. Simmons: No, she said the data isn't available for this last cohort. She can't give you an answer to your question because the data isn't available for the last cohort. Once she has access to the data for the last cohort, then she can tell you what that number is.

Ms. Diodonet: The data for the 2019 cohort is 79.5% which is a few percentage points above the average for our urban children, which was 77.6% and we are at 79.5%.

Comm. Capers: Where are we based upon New Jersey in graduation rates?

Ms. Diodonet: I don't have that information in front of me. I can get that to you.

Comm. Capers: How do we project that in Passaic County with us being the largest district in Passaic County?

Ms. Diodonet: I don't have that information. I can certainly try to review it and get it.

Comm. Capers: 10% could be a little stretch, but I think 2% is shooting really low. It's really lowballing what we could do or what our students can do. I have another question about the high school restructuring. When did that process start with the Board?

Ms. Peron: Which process would that be, Comm. Capers?

Comm. Capers: About having conversations about the high school restructuring. About all of the different things that we have, which things are excelling while kids are graduating and going into different careers in that field, which things are failing, and which things we think we need to take away? When did this all start?

Ms. Peron: It started November 2019. I'm going to resurrect that binder for you that has all of the curricular themes, all of the programs, all of the courses in each theme, all of the different types of internships, certificates that they offer and all of that. We discussed all of that. It was a comprehensive discussion. That night it was a Powerpoint and a binder and all of the assessment data is there. You can start with that binder. That has a lot of information for you. Then we have updates. I would do updates to the Board. At our workshops, Superintendent Shafer schedules updates for us according to the themes and we provide an update for the Board. That's how we have conversations around it.

Comm. Capers: I guess that would be another question with the President in terms of scheduling another meeting around that topic.

Ms. Shafer: Once you decide what the goals are, then there are meetings to give you updates as to where we are and answer questions that you have or look into something that you want us to look into. Once the goals are established, we internally meet around them every two weeks and get updates and then talk about what else we need to look at and then that would be reported the Board.

Comm. Capers: My biggest thing right now is the graduation rate. I'll just wait for that data to come up. That's it for right now around the goals we have set already. Thank you.

Comm. Teague: I just wanted to figure out in terms of what we all saw about the incomplete. I'm trying to figure out in terms of special needs, the students with IEP's and 504 plans, how many of those students, if any, fell under that incomplete category and what are we going to do to make sure that we remain in compliance in terms of making sure that they get the services despite that we are going virtual? What are we going to do to make sure that we are in compliance and we remain in compliance to make sure they get the services they are supposed to have?

Ms. Shafer: Cheryl, do you want to talk about that? We just discussed this yesterday. Cheryl, do you want to give the Board an update?

Ms. Coy: Sure. At the close of the school year, we were able to maintain 90% compliance with IEPs and some of the lag came to the fact that we were not able to do in person evaluations. About 400 students had to be rolled over into September with the anticipation of going in person for evaluations. We are going to be scheduling the in person. We've identified locations to make this happen starting in September. As for the related services, we started out for those students that needed them in packet form and the others in virtual. The goal is to continue in September with the virtual. If there are any students that regressed due the services or any students that missed services, there will be scheduled sessions for them to make sure that they are receiving what is prescribed and anything that may have been owed. Supervisors are working on schedules now to identify any students that may have missed from March up until the end of July 31 when the program ended so that when we start in September we're ahead with the numbers knowing what we have to project and schedule as opposed to trying to play catch up.

Comm. Teague: And with the annual IEP review, I guess you'll have to do that via Zoom or something?

Ms. Coy: We'll continue what we can via Zoom, but as far as evaluations that need to occur in person, I do have teams of staff that are willing to meet in person with parents as long as the parents are comfortable to get the evaluations done. But I also want to note that staff worked really hard at that close of the school year for what we call our semi-revenue. Our proposed amount to generate for the year was \$1.3 million. We hit 111% in that area and we generated \$1.4 million in revenue for the close out of the school year.

Comm. Hodges: I didn't finish my questions. Looking at goal number six, the science, a 10% increase in walkthroughs, how do we measure that and, more importantly, how does that translate into true value for the students? How do we measure the improvement on the part of the student that 10% will bring you? That's the real interest for me. The goal is to somehow take us from where we were, which was 61% of our students in that lowest cohort in the science testing, up into the far better data spread in terms of the testing ranges. How does that 10% walkthrough translate into that and what does it translate into? How do we measure it so that we can say that something of value occurred educationally in the area of science for our students? Just having a 10% increase in walkthroughs doesn't mean anything to me. It doesn't mean anything to our kids either unless I can monitor it.

Ms. Tsimpedes: Dr. Hodges, that 10% is based on last year's number of walkthroughs that were completed. The walkthroughs provide us an eye into what's happening in the classroom with regards to instruction, especially at the lower grades. When you are a k-5 teacher who is self-contained, we need to make sure that walkthroughs are happening during science, not just your core math and ELA and leave science until the end. We need to ensure that our students are receiving the appropriate time that is in their schedule for science. We need to see that the teachers are actually implementing the strategies that are presented to them from the professional development. If we are walking into the classroom and we are going in with the eye of looking at it through what students should be doing while the teacher is teaching, that will give a better lens on how we can improve any type of practices that we see that are lacking within the teacher. The goal is to ensure all the professional development that we're putting in, if you see in the goal in the action plan, we have several types of professional development that are going to be offered and have been offered to teachers. We all know that as science we need to have that science inquiry starting from preschool and move that all the way through high school. It's really going to be a focus at the elementary level to ensure that our teachers are implementing the strategies, they are having a science inquiry, and they are doing the note-taking, and then also looking at what the kids are doing when we're going in the classroom as well. Are they engaged? Are they sitting idle? Are they asking questions? Do they know how to ask questions? That's what we're looking at as well when we're walking into the classroom. Not only what is the teacher saying but what are the kids doing.

Comm. Hodges: But it would seem to me that the 10% walkthrough would be an action plan and that there would be an actual goal of accomplishment. I don't see the 10% walkthrough as being an accomplishment.

Ms. Diodonet: If I can just add because we didn't have 2020 state assessments in science, we won't have anything to compare it to. The teachers are given what's called the SGP, student growth percentile, and in there we would be able to see the growth of

the students. If we had tested this year, we would be able to see that SGP comparison from 2020 to 2021. But because student growth percentiles were not issued this year, they'll be issued for 2021 the spring. The comparison will come in 2022 where you can see that growth that you're talking about, Dr. Hodges.

Comm. Hodges: There has to be that growth because it just can't be the 10% because that is the action plan.

Ms. Diodonet: But we wouldn't have a baseline for 2020. That's the problem because of no state testing. Therein lies the problem that we don't have a baseline to compare it for when it comes to state assessments.

Ms. Shafer: When we talked about this, this was all about the implementation of the curriculum and the question was is it the curriculum that we need to change. I said no. We have a state-of-the-art curriculum and we've been told that. That's not my opinion. We have been told that. I said the problem is the implementation. How do you ensure that the implementation is appropriate? It's by going into the classroom and observing what the teachers are doing. Are they implementing the curriculum? Are they implementing the professional development that we gave them? If so, we should see an increase in student performance. This is really about how do we monitor the implementation of the curriculum.

Comm. Hodges: But I can't see a way to measure the value of that goal simply by having a 10% increase in the walkthroughs. That doesn't mean anything to me. I can't judge anything from that.

Ms. Peron: Can someone talk about the walkthrough process and the look-fors that we go through when we enter a classroom?

Comm. Hodges: What would you report back to us saying yes we've accomplished a 10% increase in the walkthroughs and what resulted from that?

Ms. Tsimpedes: Dr. Hodges, if you look at the last step of the goal, it's the PDSA model and the PDSA model is research-based. What it does is when we're planning now to do the monitoring of instruction in science, we are going to implement the walkthroughs, then based on the walkthrough data that we have we are going to look at it and identify trends and identify what areas need improvement or we have seen improvement and then we're going to act on it. This isn't a one-year thing because the data we pull from this year contributing to the walkthroughs and, as Ms. Peron said, as looking for the look-fors when you go into the classroom, that's going to better help us in determining what are the needs of the teachers when it comes to implementing science instruction that may be prohibiting our students or not enabling them to do well as they do on state assessments. To use a state assessment as measurement, what is the guarantee that we are going to have state assessments this year as last year we did not? I don't want to tie state assessment to something that we can't guarantee will occur. What we can guarantee will occur are the walkthroughs in the classroom as well as looking at the trends that are coming from these walkthroughs and having those conversations to see where it is that we need to improve on, what is it that we are doing well, and what needs improvement.

Comm. Hodges: What would you report to the Board as the accomplishment of the walkthroughs? What would you report to us?

Ms. Tsimpedes: We would provide to you a plan of what was witnessed, what was seen and what we anticipate to do to continue, whether it's something that we see that's growing or whether something that we know needs additional support. It may be a specific strategy. It may be in the lower grades. It may be in the middle school. Based on the analysis that we are also doing with NJSLA to look at a specific area, are we falling short in life science? Are we falling short in physical science? Where is it that we need to provide additional support for teachers in understanding what strategies work best for our students?

Comm. Capers: How do you do these walkthroughs now that we are going virtual?

Ms. Tsimpedes: That's what we are working on now. They will be done virtually. Teachers will be providing access to all of building administrators that oversee them. They will have access to their Google Classroom as well as their Google Meets which will be scheduled through their Google Classroom. The principals, vice principals and supervisors will all know when Google Meets are taking place and will be able to drop in and see what is happening in the classroom.

Comm. Capers: But that's supposed to be done already. But you're saying in reference in terms of science. The people that are supposed to be walking through in science is principals and vice principals and whatever the building supervisor is. You're telling me that they are going to take the data? I don't know what data they are looking to collect and then report whatever to the Board.

Ms. Shafer: No. They will go and do the walkthroughs. They will provide central office with that data so we can scrub that data and we would report it back to the Board.

Ms. Tsimpedes: The walkthroughs have different components, Comm. Capers, that when you go into the classroom you look for. We would be looking at those pieces in the report that comes.

Comm. Capers: Just going on not this past school year scores when it comes to science, I think it was the 2019 scores. It was horrendous. The test scores were horrendous. Just going off that data, what are your potential outcomes that you are going to see that administrators should have been doing already? Because what you are telling me right now is supervisors and principals should have been walking through those classes already and reporting back to the district. You're telling me that they weren't doing that and that's why the scores were like that.

Ms. Tsimpedes: No. Comm. Capers, we have to remember something and we keep reiterating this. This past school year we did have professional development in science and we did do things with our teachers. However, the state did not have state assessments to show what it is that our students are doing. We're basing the data off of two years ago. We're not taking into account everything that our supervisors and coordinators did with the science teachers this year. We also have to keep that in mind that we were not afforded the opportunity to take the NJSLA in science this year to be able to show that our students did grow. Also, keep in mind that it was a new test. You can't compare it to NJAsk 4 and NJAsk 8. This was a brand-new test that we really have not received information like the evidence statement analysis, which I keep saying really guides us into where we fall short. I don't want people to think that our teachers did not do their job this year.

Comm. Simmons: If I may, it's important to understand that the Board does not approve the action plan. That's not our role. Our only goal here tonight is to choose which goals

we are going to adopt, but we don't choose the action plan. We give the administration the goal. They come up with the action plan. We don't have to approve that action plan.

Comm. Hodges: The problem isn't the approval of the action plan. The question is what are we looking at as a result of the goal? How do we measure what they are doing?

Comm. Simmons: When you get into how they do it, then you are getting into determining whether or not we are going to approve their action plan.

Comm. Hodges: I'm personally not getting into how they do it.

Comm. Capers: I'm sorry if I took it there.

Comm. Simmons: If we go back, as Ms. Tsimpedes said, remember there was no assessment this year. If there was an assessment, then the results of that assessment would have given us a picture. Correct me if I'm wrong, Ms. Tsimpedes. That would be how you measure it.

Ms. Tsimpedes: Yes, because then we would be able to see from 2019 based on what data we did receive from the state, as minimal as it was, we could have seen all of our efforts that we put in this year with regards to professional development and coaching teachers. We would have been able to see how the efforts panned out for student achievement.

Comm. Hodges: That's my concern. It's that result. What do we get from this 10% increase in walkthroughs that I can say this accomplished something educationally?

Ms. Shafer: You would get instruction, and as a result students would do better.

Comm. Hodges: How do I measure that? That's the problem.

Comm. Simmons: I guess his questions is, and correct me if I'm wrong Dr. Hodges, absent the assessment because based on what is going on, they can't guarantee that there will be an assessment. Outside of an assessment, is there something else that could give a measurement short of an assessment?

Comm. Capers: I have a question on that to the Superintendent. Also, I guess what helped measure the goals is you have a lack of science supervisors as well?

Ms. Shafer: Yes.

Comm. Capers: How many do you have currently that will be in the district? How many are currently in the district?

Ms. Tsimpedes: We have three school-based and one district. So, we have four science supervisors.

Comm. Capers: Madam Superintendent, on the real, are we going to get an action plan in terms of what you would need in terms of personnel to really help achieve this goal?

Ms. Shafer: I didn't know that was an option.

Comm. Capers: But this goal we have to vote on.

Comm. Simmons: That's the whole purpose of the meeting. I think six goals are way too many, but this is just a framework and if we chose any of these we could do that. But that would be part of the discussion. If increasing the science scores is going to be a goal, then my question to the administration would be what do you need to support and accomplish this goal?

Comm. Capers: That would be my thing because I'm just looking at it like I know you're going to do walkthroughs, but we want to see scores go higher. We want to see the percent go higher. If she doesn't have the support to actually do it... It sounds like they don't have the support to do it.

Comm. Hodges: What is the difference between four and six? Isn't that part of curriculum and instruction as well? Isn't that part of improving supervision of curriculum instruction? Wouldn't that be part of that? Wouldn't six be an element of four?

Ms. Peron: Yes, it would be.

Comm. Simmons: It would be. Again, it's only there just based on conversation around what the Board has been talking about and what came out of the Superintendent's evaluation.

Comm. Hodges: I'm interested in having substantial improvement in science. There's no question about that. But it has to make sense. If you were to combine four and six, then I would go with that. But I would have to have some sort of what would be the result that I can measure and say this is that cap and the action plan would be to increase 10% of your walkthroughs. That's fine. You can go ahead and do that. I would expect that. But I want to see something that I can look at and say this happened as a result of that 10% increase or the improvement of your supervision of curriculum instruction because your curriculum is so good. How do we see that translated into student performance improvements because of a great curriculum? I want to know what I'm going to look at that would tell me that the curriculum is as good as it is and you can say that we've improved the supervision of how it's implemented? That makes sense to me. As a result, you are going to see an increase in this or whatever. But just to tell me that you're going to have a 10% increase in walkthroughs means nothing to me. It does not translate into anything for the students that I am aware of because I can't measure it.

Ms. Shafer: The more walkthroughs you do and the more feedback you provide to the teachers improves instruction. Once you improve instruction, then the student scores should go up. Minus the state assessment, we would have to come up with another way to figure out as we go in and do walkthroughs and provide that feedback to the teachers and they change the way in which they are teaching that curriculum or they change the way the implementation is, then how would we see the scores go up minus that assessment? We could put together goals four and six and focus on science and then we would just have to figure out, maybe we would give an internal assessment if the state is not going to give an assessment.

Ms. Peron: I think another thing that would be helpful to the Commissioners would be an explanation of all of the elements that go into a walkthrough. When we go into classes, we take a look at the environment, we take a look at the instructional practices, and we take a look at how the student is engaged. All of those different elements in a walkthrough help to bring together the educators and the administrators to talk about

intentional changes in the classroom. All of that sometimes is not a concrete number, but it's doable in that it's an action where you will see the more effective strategies, the more efficient processes that he or she has in a classroom equates to student engagement, equates to motivating students to learning. We could have benchmarks. We could have informative assessments to show if there is an increase that we can use and not gear to just a state assessment because, as Ms. Tsimpedes said, we don't even have baseline now. We don't have one this year. We don't have anything to compare this year, but we can have internal assessments. Science has been a work in progress. It has been a work in progress since 2014 when we went from not having any science instruction in classrooms because the focus was ELA and mathematics. What we failed to do for a long time was to just focus in on ELA and mathematics and not incorporate science because ELA and math can be incorporated into a science class, but that's where professional development comes around. That's how through a walkthrough we can coach teachers to say perhaps you can think about incorporating this experiment and from this experiment you can teach these math standards and incorporate it into a classroom. We have been through our instructional model increasing science time which was a big win for us. There were schools and classrooms that didn't have sufficient science instruction. We have moved away from that. We went to science note-taking, having a science notebook in the class. For one year, we focused on whether or not students were using them because it was a new practice. We've made incremental gains and we have to continue that. Those look-throughs and those look-fors and the walkthrough of a science classroom make a difference for students in many different ways both qualitative and quantitative. Perhaps maybe we can share that with you so that you can see that it's not just increasing. Just because we say we increase our walkthroughs by 10% students are going to achieve and do better on a science assessment. It's getting to that achievement but through that achievement it's working on the teacher and working with the teacher, having the teacher reflect on their practices, taking a look at student engagement and those kinds of things. Perhaps maybe we need to give you some of those tools that go along with the walkthrough and the action plan so that you can understand better the way we see it in a classroom and the kinds of conversations that we have with teachers. I don't know if that helps but teaching is a science and an art, both qualitative and quantitative. Sometimes we want to look to a hard figure and a hard number and it's not just that. It's increasing motivation. It's increasing engagement. It's increasing interest. Those are the soft things that are hard to nail with a number.

Comm. Capers: Thank you for that, Susie. I would love for you to share that stuff so we can get a better understanding of what those walkthroughs are. I know it's going to be different too. Is the district and supervisors trained to do these walkthroughs virtually? A lot of the stuff you mentioned when you go into the classroom you can see better, but how is that going to look virtually when they do these? Are they different assessments? Are the kids sitting up? How can you tell if that child is motivated? You know what I'm saying?

Ms. Peron: Yes, I do. That's going to be something new for us because a virtual walkthrough will be new to a lot of people and we have to talk about that and we have to train administrators around that. It is different. To engage and to actually see a child engaged virtually is new to us because we haven't done it so much. I'm going to be honest with you. This is the first time we are getting into this. We're telling teachers they must include their administrators in their Google Classroom meets. Administrators must attend those Google Classroom meets to take a look at what's happening to gauge the instruction. It's very new to all of us and we have to keep reading,

researching, and helping our administrators and our teachers to get accustomed to this hybrid learning. It's a leap.

Comm. Hodges: I'm very glad with what you offered and it's a great step forward to combine number four and number six. That moves us closer to getting what we want to do in terms of our goals. I'm curious as to how you would look at the science note-taking remotely. That will be interesting to see how that's accomplished. That's important for science obviously, being able to make sure the students are taking notes and then using them as they go home. If you're going to create testing, we've had science tests all along and you're going to have to make sure the tests are closer to what they're being offered on the state level because evidently we did not recognize we had a major problem in science by the tests that we were already administering. Or we would have had to change them. The question is how we are going to change the assessments to make them more representative of what the state expects us to do. That's number one. And then bring that information back to us. What I'm looking for is a concrete way to measure that we have improved and that our curriculum is being implemented. I need a concrete way.

Ms. Peron: Yes, I understand. And I think Ms. Tsimpedes is awaiting the assessment information because they do offer that and we do look at our questioning. We do look at how we prepare our assessments so that they are aligned to a state assessment. A lot of state assessments now have gone away from multiple-choice. We've gone away from filling in the blank. Everything is a process. A lot of state assessments don't even look for the right answer. They just look at the process on how you get to the answer. Those are the types of analysis and types of questions that we need to incorporate more. We also need to incorporate higher order skills, metacognitive skills for kids. They have to learn how to think. A lot of our kids think that they have to answer a question instantly and when they are not prepared to do so they just turn off and quit. So, all of those different types of skill sets are things that we are continuing to look at and continuing to add to our repertoire of assessments and activities in the classroom.

Comm. Hodges: That's exactly what I'm trying to get at. Those kinds of changes that would tell me that our curriculum is being mastered, not just rolled out as good as it is. It's being mastered by our students and that they are developing critical thinking and analytical skills to perform. That's what the test in science showed us that we weren't being able to do and that's the kind of thing that I want us to find ways to attack. I'm looking for that kind of result, saying this goal for curriculum and instruction has been accomplished. You've done xyz in that area and these are the results that demonstrate that.

Comm. Capers: Dr. Hodges, just to add on, I think this is the basis of what we need to do for ELA and math as well. Just looking over our assessments from 2017 and 2018 in math, we didn't even hit over the 30% mark. For ELA, we didn't hit over 40%. I think this should be the foundation that we should use for science, math, and ELA.

Comm. Hodges: That's why we should combine four and six together.

Comm. Capers: Yes, my suggestion is we tie ELA, math, and science into four and six based on the conversation we're having.

Ms. Tsimpedes: I just wanted to also reiterate. I know Dr. Hodges had brought this up a few months ago at another meeting and it was giving our students the opportunity to mimic the type of tests they would see when it comes to state assessments. The one thing we are afforded to do this year which we really haven't been afforded in the past is

with the new learning management system that we have OTIS our students will be taking their benchmarks digitally, which is exactly what students see when they do take all of their assessments on the summative level for the state. That will also give students the opportunity to become more familiar and also provide that time for the district to have quicker data in their hands when the items are digital versus having paper and pencil and waiting for things to be scored. We're able to elaborate as Ms. Peron had said. It's about the critical thinking about the open-ended extended responses for our students. That's something we have to continue to work with our students in developing that with our kids.

Comm. Hodges: That's exactly right, yes.

Comm. Capers: Can we tie those things together? Can we tie those three things into four and six?

Ms. Tsimpedes: So, you want to focus on just math, ELA, and science and put that into four and take six and combine it into there with a qualitative and quantitative piece?

Comm. Hodges: Yes.

Ms. Tsimpedes: Okay, we'll work on that.

Ms. Warren: Goal four is not content specific. That was all content areas.

Comm. Capers: Say that again. I'm sorry.

Ms. Warren: Goal four was not limited to any particular content area. It was all content areas, walkthroughs, observations, any type of instructional feedback.

Comm. Capers: Got it. I get that and I understand, but those are the focus because our numbers and percentages there are very low.

Comm. Hodges: Yes. We're hoping that our good curriculum can better be maximized on by improved instruction and program. Obviously, professional development will be extremely important. You address that with the reopening plan.

Comm. Capers: You're combining that so are we putting a 10% increase on walkthroughs or emphasis on those three content core areas or all of them?

Ms. Warren: I'm sorry. I'm not clear on your question.

Comm. Capers: I think our regular goal number six was going to be like a 10% increase in terms of supervision and walkthroughs. Now are we changing that to those three content areas or are we doing all of them?

Ms. Warren: If you're suggesting that we focus goal four on those three areas, we can certainly do that.

Comm. Capers: Also, what does the district need to support? What support would it need as well? That's what I would like to see as well.

Ms. Warren: Understood.

Comm. Hodges: We have one goal in the box so far. The percentage of graduation rate, I had the same question that Mr. Capers had in terms of the number of students that that represents. What would that be? I would like to know that before I commit myself. A 2% increase in a graduation rate, I don't know what that means so I can't agree to that because it doesn't say anything to me. I'd like to have a significant increase. I am aware though that we are facing the issue with the Coronavirus and that makes it harder to do some things, but I'm not sure that 2% is sufficient.

Comm. Capers: I just need to see the other data to commit myself as well.

Comm. Hodges: Did you have one additional?

Comm. Capers: The new goals I had we kind of put in for ELA and math, and the answer to the high school restructuring. We have to wait on the graduation data. I'm okay with the reentry.

Comm. Teague: I'm satisfied with the plan that they have in place for special education. I'm good. I'm just listening right now.

Comm. Capers: For special education, is a goal of ours for all of our kids that have IEPs and special needs that receive services, can that be an ongoing goal as well?

Ms. Coy: That's a mandatory mandate through the government. If you put it in as a goal, it's mandatory in the IEP.

Comm. Hodges: I guess the choice is do we call number one an actual goal.

Comm. Capers: I don't really think that's a goal. We sat through meetings about this and it's already being implemented.

Comm. Hodges: It would only be the implementation part of it that would be the goal. It has to be done anyway.

Comm. Capers: Yes. Like Ms. Coy just said, that's a mandatory thing.

Comm. Hodges: Right. High school restructuring would be another goal then?

Comm. Capers: Yes, definitely.

Comm. Hodges: I guess we'll look at a reevaluation of all the academies to number one determine their value, and number two to determine the fidelity to the curriculum or to the proposed curriculum. Are they producing what they say they're supposed to be producing? I guess the overall structure of the high school program, is that what you are offering?

Ms. Shafer: Yes.

Ms. Peron: Dr. Hodges, we had talked about also looking at the current themes and the current programs that we have at the academies. If we were to keep them, we would strengthen them by adding internships and other like activities to those programs and increasing our partnership whether it be with a corporate organization or a higher education placement. Like in SET, it's a school of education and training so we would strengthen our dual enrollment, and we would strengthen our partnership with a higher education university. If it's childcare or careers in teaching we would develop

partnerships so that our students would have different opportunities to explore the career. We would assess them and if students are interested in them, then we would strengthen them in different ways that they are not. We talked about how many certificates. How many kids leave with a certificate or an added piece on their resume because they attended this academy? What is marketable about that or what can they take? Some of them gear right to a career or some of them go into a university. There are different pathways that they can take. We have that. I provided that to you. But we can most certainly begin with just revisiting all of that information and talking about where we want to start and how we want to do it. I also want to incorporate and I want to add the students to this because I really think it's about them. Lots of times adults think that we have the answers for them and they have their own answers. They are well aware of what the world is like out there today and their interests. So, I can't leave them out.

Comm. Hodges: I agree that they should have a voice. I do not agree that they are well aware of what's out there. That's the problem. We have not exposed our kids to engineering, different types of engineering. They have no idea about it. That's a major fault of our system that we don't expose kids to a variety of opportunities and careers. We don't. They have no idea. They don't see engineers in their neighborhood. They don't see engineers in school. They don't see engineering programs. Engineering is a wide variety of different programs. Who's discussing nuclear engineering with students in Paterson or materials engineering or civil engineering? When are they being exposed to any of that? Electrical engineering?

Ms. Peron: Let's survey them.

Comm. Capers: I think the high schools need to reflect today's job market.

Ms. Peron: Absolutely.

Comm. Capers: It has to reflect today's job market. I'm talking about the career field in science, math, and all those other things. It needs to reflect the job market. If we have a school of technology, what type of coding are we doing? Are we doing app development? Are we doing all of those different things? I think our technology school is doing Cisco technology, I believe.

Ms. Peron: These are conversations that we can have once we adopt these goals and this goal particularly. These are the conversations that need to continue. We need to set certain activities so that we incorporate our students, what they know and what they don't know, what they're aware of, what they need to be aware of and things like that. We certainly have to develop those tools and we have to gather that data.

Comm. Hodges: Two areas which we don't have the funding for, but I'm just going to put it out there on the table. Since we are being forced into using devices for all students, then that would be computer language training across the board as a goal down the road, not today or this year but down the road teaching languages to students across the board.

Ms. Peron: I am in agreement with you.

Comm. Hodges: I've received complaints that people who are born here can't get jobs in our city. I mentioned this to the Superintendent. They can't get jobs in our city because they don't speak Spanish.

Comm. Capers: Is this a curriculum? Can we offer this k-12? Can that be a goal?

Ms. Peron: We have a curriculum. It's a world language curriculum.

Comm. Capers: K-12?

Ms. Peron: Yes, k-12.

Comm. Capers: Can you just talk about it a little bit?

Ms. Peron: Is that what we're here for? I mean I can talk about it. I can, Commissioner. I'm trying to be efficient with this particular meeting.

Comm. Hodges: Those are some things that we need to talk about because those are needs in our community and we have the computers. It's long overdue. We should have been doing this a long time ago, decades ago. Now, since we're forced to have the equipment, let's plan to put in place instruction down the road where we can utilize that equipment for more than just handing out our curriculum. Let's teach kids how to use that equipment in a variety of different ways. What's that going to cost? What would you need in terms of teachers? Let's talk about that going down the road.

Ms. Peron: Noted.

Comm. Hodges: We have the high school restructuring plan, we've got the improvement of the supervision of curriculum and instruction, and we're going to hold out for the improvement of the graduation rates until we find out the data?

Comm. Capers: I agree. Yes, to answer your question.

Comm. Hodges: Mr. President?

Comm. Capers: I think he left the meeting.

Mr. Zaydel: I think he's having technical difficulties. I'm just checking with him now.

Comm. Hodges: Comm. Arrington?

Comm. Arrington: Mr. President, can you hear me?

Comm. Hodges: Mr. President is not at the meeting. I was asking if you had any concerns or are you in agreement with what we've discussed so far.

Comm. Arrington: Yes, I'm in agreement with everything, Dr. Hodges. The only thing I would have liked to see a little bit more of is community/parent engagement with the Infinite Campus. I think our numbers are really low there and I would like to see that number go up. But that's the only thing I have, Dr. Hodges.

Comm. Hodges: Mr. Teague?

Comm. Teague: You guys know my main concern has always been special education and my questions were answered tonight. So, I'm pretty good.

Comm. Hodges: We have two goals and we're waiting for the possible third goal. We're already accepting the reopening plan as being a plan in place. We're going to

make a restructuring of that as time goes on, but it has to be submitted anyway. I guess the question is the third goal which is the graduation rate which we are putting in advance.

Comm. Capers: Are we voting on these goals tonight?

Ms. Helewa: No, you are not. We're trying to get some draft language down for the goals. That's what this conversation is about. I also want you to keep in mind that around March of next year the first part of your Superintendent's evaluation will be on progress towards the district goals. If you have a district goal articulated for a particular area, you miss the opportunity to visit that area of concern in the Superintendent's evaluation. I appreciate all the work and care you are taking to make sure that you get goals that are acceptable to the entire Board, although we don't have all the Commissioners with us tonight, and also administration. I'm also wondering if there is any other input. From what I understand, you have two goals that are ready to go, another goal that will likely be other draft language we'll come back to you from administration going forward. If there's any more talk on district goals, we certainly entertain it but we also were looking to set Board goals tonight too if the Board is interested. Again, I want to be efficient as well, but I certainly don't want to truncate any important conversation that needs to go on.

Comm. Capers: Everyone that's on the call, are we all good with the district goals so far, the two that we came up with?

Comm. Teague: Yes, so far so good.

Comm. Arrington: I'm good, Capers.

Comm. Capers: So I think we can go into the Board goals.

Ms. Helewa: Okay terrific. I'm going to do my sharing screen again. Please excuse me. I'm going to take the agenda off for now. These slides are just to kind of jog your memory a little bit about Board goals. District goals are an absolute must. Board goals are optional which you probably realize. They deal with governance issues. The Board needs to be able to actualize them all by itself without any kind of input from administration or staff. These are the Board's goals. Some of the questions that might help you in deciding what Board goals you might need, if you need any, or what kind of professional development needs the Board or individual Board members need. What governance skills that you are particularly proud of. Ones also on the flip side that may need some bolstering or that may need a boost or a deeper dive into what you are doing in those particular areas. Sometimes this works out and sometimes it doesn't, depending on the district goals. Are there ways that you can set a Board goal in place that would support a district goal or the strategic plan? Another thing that I want you to keep in mind as we talk about the Board goals is what your Board goals were for last year. I went back to the memo from when I last visited you to do this. One was to complete your Board self-evaluation. One was to examine the effectiveness of your committee structure. And the third was to talk about what kind of professional development might interest the Board. Commissioners, you would know better than me. How did you make out on these goals last year? Did they work for you? Did they result in any marked improvement? Were you able to accomplish them or make any kind of progress on them?

Comm. Hodges: I think we didn't have complete participation to examine the effectiveness of the committee structure. We were forced to make changes that are

perhaps less effective for the Board in my opinion in terms of reducing the number of committees. We combined some big committees like facilities and fiscal, which are important to look at individually, particularly facilities given our major facilities concerns in this district. We did restructure the Board committees.

Ms. Helewa: Just so that I know I'm getting it right, you did combine some committees among them? You combined facilities with finance? Is that accurate?

Comm. Hodges: That's right.

Ms. Helewa: I'm not looking at your policy manual or your bylaws, but that is a Board decision that you can make.

Comm. Hodges: It's not a Board decision.

Ms. Helewa: Yes, I heard you say that and I'm wondering what is up with that, if I'm being direct. How did that happen? The committees typically belong to the Board. That's a Board issue.

Comm. Teague: Key people aren't on tonight so we're at a loss right now because key people aren't here.

Ms. Helewa: But are you telling me that the committee structure does not wholly belong to the Board of Education so possibly this is not a valid goal? I'm not familiar with your bylaws. I'm familiar with typical bylaws. Perhaps it's different in Paterson.

Comm. Hodges: I think that this was an assessment in terms of our governance profile by the state and we were told that we had too many committees and we had to cut them out and combine them. This was the determination. The result was the combination of fiscal and facilities which are two important committees in and of themselves.

Ms. Helewa: Wow. Okay, I got you.

Comm. Hodges: It was not the Board's decision that was what was imposed.

Ms. Helewa: So, committee structure was examined, just not by you all.

Comm. Capers: It wasn't a Board decision.

Ms. Helewa: Excuse me for asking because maybe I should know this, but maybe you don't know the answer or maybe there is no answer. When will it be a Board decision? When will the committee structure belong to you? Do you all know?

Comm. Hodges: It should have already. In the years until we got control, it did belong to us and we managed very well, but that changed.

Ms. Helewa: That's fascinating. Your road map was written for you and you are traveling along it. I guess you are making the best of it because you have to. Thank you very much for updating me on that. That is very interesting. How about Board goal number three? How did you do with finding opportunities or options? Did you have the ability? For full Board professional development, to have information sessions or things like that.

Comm. Hodges: We had retreats.

Ms. Helewa: How did that work out?

Comm. Hodges: They were interesting retreats.

Ms. Helewa: Great.

Comm. Capers: Yeah, we had retreats.

Ms. Helewa: Very good. You would say that it was accomplished and how did it work? Do you feel that that advanced the needle on your governance at all or was it a worthwhile goal? Is it something that you'd like to make a multi-year goal?

Comm. Capers: It was a good discussion. The topics were good.

Ms. Helewa: The Board self-evaluation is something that used to be required but is not any longer. It is still absolutely a best practice and NJSBA as you know has an option for doing that online. Unlike the Superintendent's evaluation, the Board self-evaluation anyone can participate in it. No one is conflicted from participating. Any Commissioner can and should and it's also available year-round on the website whereas most Superintendent evaluations start in earnest in March and they move forward through July. You can do a Board self-evaluation at any time. I know that a couple of Commissioners actually have already gone in and done it. If you wanted to try and do the Board self-evaluation for this year, that's still an option. The question becomes what are you going to do with the Board self-evaluation if you think that would be a worthwhile exercise? I'm a fan of it but this is not my Board, this is your Board. What are your thoughts on the Board self-evaluation?

Comm. Hodges: If led properly, it is very useful. I'm trying to understand the role or how the Board is supposed to function.

Comm. Capers: I agree.

Comm. Teague: Same here. I agree with Dr. Hodges on that one.

Ms. Helewa: Fantastic. Shall we make that one of your goals? Do you want to have a Board goal about completing the Board self-evaluation and perhaps devoting a session, perhaps a retreat or part of a meeting, to examining the results of the Board self-evaluation?

Comm. Hodges: We can do that.

Comm. Teague: What was that retreat that we did before? What was that again, the one where they were telling us to be quiet?

Comm. Capers: That was the Board retreat. He just paraphrased it. That was the Board retreat we did. He paraphrased a little bit.

Ms. Helewa: Okay. Board self-evaluation sounds like a goal. Do we want that for a Board goal for this coming year?

Comm. Hodges: Sure.

Comm. Capers: Yes, I think any evaluation for this Board is great.

Ms. Helewa: Agreed, for any Board actually. The other thing too is that you do want the Commissioners to complete it with about the same amount of time because I have some Boards where some complete it in January and then another person completes it in July. There are two different circumstances. Would you like to put an end date on that or should we leave that open? I know you have four or five Commissioners on the call tonight.

Comm. Capers: I say leave it open.

Ms. Helewa: Leave it open?

Comm. Teague: You mean the date itself?

Ms. Helewa: Yes. Are there any other thoughts? Are you good?

Comm. Teague: Yes.

Ms. Helewa: Beautiful. Committee structure, we talked about that already.

Comm. Hodges: When we get local control back we can reevaluate the committee structure.

Ms. Helewa: Sorry, I didn't hear everything that you said. Would you mind repeating yourself?

Comm. Hodges: Once we get local control back and the state is no longer playing that prominent role in what we do on our Board then we can reevaluate our own committee structure and put it back where we need it.

Ms. Helewa: Yes, and if you need any kind of resources about committees, I've got to be honest with you. It's something I talk about all of time and my colleagues do. We have tons of resources on optimal committee structure and operations with NJSBA. Just keep that in mind.

Comm. Capers: Do you offer that professional development around committee structure?

Ms. Helewa: Absolutely. Should be append something about a full Board professional development with an eye towards the future configuration of the Board or something like that?

Comm. Hodges: Yes, that's fine.

Ms. Helewa: Beautiful. Are there other areas of governance that you think should be addressed by a Board goal? Do you have any other ideas? Are you running dry on ideas for Board goals?

Comm. Capers: That's basically it. Committee restructure, that's an important one. The evaluations that we have to go through, the retreats that are good with the Board and with the district as well.

Comm. Hodges: Helping the Board understand the importance of their questioning the administration. They can understand that we are there to drive the sense of urgency educationally for our community.

Ms. Helewa: You do set the vision for the district. That's what you guys are about. You talk in terms of a broad educational vision of your kids and something that's unique to Paterson. That's not Hawthorne's vision, that's not West Orange's vision. It's Paterson. Also, to understand what role the Board takes in accountability. We had a lot of talk about action plans tonight and some very robust action plans were presented. I know that they are going to go back and change, but what does the Board do knowing that there is an action plan out there? As President Simmons mentioned, we don't approve the action plans. That could be another area. Correct me if I'm wrong, Dr. Hodges, but I think that this all leads into what is optimal Board member performance. It keeps within your lane but keeps driving your vision forward to fruition.

Comm. Hodges: The sole purpose was to get deliverables that we could measure, to deliver a measurable outcome that the Board can assess. That was the whole purpose of that conversation. To tell me that you have an action plan is fine, but what does the action plan mean and how does the Board measuring its effectiveness? That's what we're looking for.

Ms. Helewa: I think that's kind of what I'm saying. The Board members need to know a little bit more about their role and how to perform at optimal. Is that a fair statement?

Comm. Hodges: Yes.

Ms. Helewa: We can append that to goal number three although it seems like we'll have two goals, the Board self-evaluation and options for full Board professional development focusing on understanding and optimizing your role as Board members and as a Board of Education for the children of Paterson.

Comm. Hodges: That's fair.

Ms. Helewa: Great. Are two Board goals a sufficient number for this year? Are there any other thoughts?

Comm. Hodges: We still have the effectiveness of the committee structure.

Ms. Helewa: You still want to keep that?

Comm. Hodges: Yes. That needs to be reviewed once the state is no longer a factor.

Ms. Helewa: That's coming up. It's an appropriate goal for your 2020-2021 school year. Where we are with Board goals?

Comm. Teague: Concerning Master Board Members, how do you go about getting into that, to try to get the full effect?

Ms. Helewa: I sure do. Thank you very much for asking that. NJSBA is the premier provider for professional development for Board members. Certainly in the city, I think in the whole country. We have different levels of achievement for individual Board members and for Boards of Education as a whole. As an individual Board member, there are different levels of certification that you can move up to and you as a Board member are completely responsible. On our website, there's a new Board member one

for people who are brand spanking new, but there's also a Certificated Board Member, then you lead up to Master Board Member, and then you go all the way up to Certified Board Leader. You accumulate credits, you take different types of professional development along the way, and you make sure that you go to workshop when you can. It really is a very rewarding process because as you go through it you are able to choose the areas that are of most interest to you as you accumulate your credits. You also need to go to county meetings which are always great. They are also online now so they are easier than ever to get to.

Comm. Capers: We don't get the Passaic County ones too. I haven't seen them.

Ms. Helewa: Guess what? There's one going on right now and I'm missing it for you guys. If you guys want to sign off and hop into that after we're done, you can. I was thinking we were going to be done by 6:00 and I was going to start that one which started at 6:15, but that's okay.

Comm. Capers: Kathleen, what is Dr. Hodges considered? A master Board leader or he's up above that?

Ms. Helewa: I don't know offhand. I'm sorry. Unless you can wear a medal around your neck, I don't know.

Comm. Teague: Dr. Hodges is the Yoda of the School Boards.

Comm. Hodges: I'm just a Master Boardsman at this point.

Ms. Helewa: That's a great point. Thanks for mentioning that, Dr. Hodges. Your credits do wait for you so it's not like you have to rush, except for the one that's available only for brand new Board members. The other ones you can take a fair amount of time to get to. Comm. Teague, I hope that answers your question, but we have that section on our website that I'll put in my memo to you. You can review all of that. I will also tell you though that the Board itself can determine that it wants to achieve Board certification. That is something that the entire Board works on together. I have to tell you that is your friendly field service representative coming out to different meeting and discussing different areas of governance that are of interest to you, one of which is clearly committees. We can knock that out. There are a certain number of credits that you accumulate each year. Usually it takes about three or four years to get that kind of certification and it really is an honor in two senses of the word. Number one is that it really does take a lot of work and a lot of team building and Boards that come into this process and come out with that certification are all the better for it. That should be honored and it is by your community. It really is a nice event to have that at a Board meeting and also announced at a county meeting. In the other sense of the word, it's an honor but it doesn't come with extra state aid. I'm awfully sorry but that's kind of where it stops. Sometimes Boards forget that our organization is here to back you up. We are here to give you the kind of information you need before you need it. I encourage at least looking into becoming a certified Board or starting the process which would actually dovetail really neatly with Board goals number two and number three.

Comm. Hodges: We've already done that.

Mr. Zaydel: Excuse me, everybody? Thank you very much. I just got notice from the Board President that he's unable to get back into the meeting so we should end the meeting at this point.

Ms. Shabazz-Charles: I didn't want to interrupt but I just noticed that there were only four participants and I was going to say the same thing. We need five. He texted you? That's funny. I literally just looked and saw only four Commissioners and I was going to say the same thing. So, we have to stop the meeting and if you want to continue, we'd have to get another Commissioner because the bylaws require five.

Comm. Capers: I think we're done, though.

Ms. Helewa: Thank you very much for your hospitality. I appreciate it. It was nice to see you all.

Ms. Peron: Thank you, Kathy. It was nice to see you. Good night everyone.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:20 p.m. due to a lack of a quorum.