

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

May 14, 2020 – 5:00 p.m.
Remote - Zoom

Presiding: Comm. Kenneth Simmons, President

Present:

Ms. Eileen F. Shafer, Superintendent of Schools
Ms. Susana Peron, Deputy Superintendent
Boris Zaydel, Esq., General Counsel

Comm. Vincent Arrington	Comm. Manuel Martinez, Vice President
Comm. Emanuel Capers	Comm. Joel Ramirez
Comm. Oshin Castillo	Comm. Nakima Redmon
Comm. Jonathan Hodges	Comm. Corey Teague

The Salute to the Flag was led by Comm. Simmons.

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:

**Special Meeting
May 14, 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: On Monday night we had discussion around the plan from the Superintendent and the Business Administrator. Does anyone have any questions?

Comm. Capers: Can Madam Superintendent just give another overall for new listeners and the Board about the budget?

Comm. Simmons: Do you mean the plan?

Comm. Capers: Yes, just a brief summary on what's going on.

Ms. Shafer: Good evening Board and community members. We started building this budget with a \$63 million budget gap. We then received \$24 million in state aid. \$12 million of it went to charter schools and \$1 million went to PCTI. That left us with \$11 million of state aid to go to the \$63 million budget gap. That meant that we had a \$52 million budget gap that we needed to close. We cut central office budgets by \$21.9 million. We cut 17 central office positions, both part-time and full-time. We consolidated positions when folks resigned or retired from central office. We had a deficit of \$14.6 million. At that time, we were looking at eliminating 243 teachers. We then received \$11.6 million in COVID funding. We took that COVID funding and \$3.6 million is going to devices, \$1 million for PPE sanitizing supplies for buildings, and the remainder is going to be used for technology, special education, and loss of learning for our students with instruction. I'm happy to say that from Monday to now the business office worked extremely hard to put together this budget. We are now down to 47 positions that we need to RIF. We did not have to cut anything from the school budgets that we had mentioned earlier on Monday. What we're going to do is monitor our retirements and use breakage. That means when you have someone retire, you'll be able to fill the retirement position, but you will take the savings from the salary because a retiree will make more money than a new teacher. That's called breakage. We will use breakage to bring back these 47 positions. That's how we got from where we were at a \$63 million gap. This continues because, as all of you know, we have not been properly funded for a long time. I know Governor Murphy is trying to catch us up, but trying to catch up from eight years of underfunding is very difficult. We did not want to eliminate any teachers, and that's how we started out with this budget. This is where we are right now. Within a week going from 243 to 47 is much better and not touching any school budgets is also very good. We're confident based on the number of retirees that we have every year that we will be able bring back those 47 positions over time.

Comm. Simmons: Are there any other questions?

Comm. Capers: How many retirees are we expected to have this year? What has been the trend in the past?

Ms. Shafer: The trend is usually around 200. From the time that we struck the budget, which was in mid-March until this week, we had 40 retirees. We will just keep chipping away at this until we get those positions back.

Comm. Capers: So we're only cutting about 63 teachers and with the brakeage we're bringing almost everybody back.

Ms. Shafer: We're eliminating 47 positions. As the retirees come in, you build up breakage and then you're able to bring back those positions.

Comm. Hodges: How many administrators did we let go?

Ms. Shafer: I don't have it broken down by administrators, but in central office there were 17 positions. When administrators leave in central office, either we don't fill the position or we consolidate it with another position.

Comm. Hodges: There's confusion in the community about us being overstaffed.

Comm. Capers: We're top-heavy.

Ms. Shafer: Last year we eliminated 29 supervisors and 23 vice principals. If you were to look at other districts, we're on the low end of administrative costs.

Comm. Simmons: Are there any other questions?

PUBLIC COMMENTS

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

Ms. Rosie Grant: Good evening Commissioners, Madam Superintendent, staff, and community. Thank you for this opportunity. I was really hoping to speak after the Board vote so that I could react to it. However, I appreciate speaking nonetheless. We all know that this budget does not provide for a thorough and efficient education for our children in Paterson. However, at Paterson Education Fund we understand the constraints under which you are voting. We understand that local control is at stake. We certainly do not want us to return to state control after 27 or 30 years of suffrage. Your vote will be as is as you need it to be, but I just want to acknowledge this does not provide for a thorough and efficient education. We're going to stay on advocacy. We're encouraging the community to join us in that advocacy for full funding. We know we had no money before COVID, yet they managed to find it for emergencies. This is an emergency for your kids. Like local control, our children's future is also at stake. I encourage everyone when we put the alerts out to join us in the advocacy. The state has short-funded us by somewhere around \$300 million and the feds have short-funded us by not fully funding Title I and IDEA. Thank you for this time, and we will be working to bring more resources. Thank you.

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

RESOLUTION FOR A VOTE:

Resolution No. 1

WHEREAS, the Superintendent of Schools forwarded Paterson Public Schools' preliminary 2020-21 budget to the Commissioner of Education and the Passaic County Executive County Superintendent of Schools for review and approval on March 18, 2020; and

WHEREAS, the 2020-2021 budget for the Paterson Public School District was prepared consistent with the New Jersey Quality Single Accountability Continuum (NJQSAC) focusing on quality performance indicators in all five areas of school district effectiveness: Operations Management, Instruction and Program, Fiscal Management, Personnel and Governance; and

WHEREAS, the 2020-2021 budget was prepared consistent with the district's revised Fiscal Policy 6220 addressing budget preparation, with primary consideration given to educational priorities identified by the Board and Ms. Eileen Shafer, Superintendent of Schools, and;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education adopt the 2020-2021, budget submitted by Ms. Eileen Shafer, Superintendent of Schools, which budget reflects an increase in the local tax levy and use of banked capital adjustments available for 2020-2021 to support the general fund as reflect herein;

	2019-20	1-Feb YTD	2020-21
	<u>Pre-Budget</u>	<u>Actuals</u>	<u>Budget</u>
Maximum Travel	\$291,954	\$49,946	\$321,669
	<u>Budgeted</u>		<u>Local Tax Levy included</u>
General Fund Revenue			
Local Sources	\$ 58,683,962		\$ 54,495,247
State Sources	\$ 467,787,019		\$ 0
Federal Sources	\$ 1,709,175		\$ 0
Withdrawal Emergency Reserve	\$ 1,000,000		
Budgeted Fund Balance	\$ 3,723,018		
Excess Surplus	<u>\$ 1,712,308</u>		<u>\$ 0</u>
Total General Fund	<u>\$ 534,615,482</u>		<u>\$ 54,495,247</u>
Special Revenue Fund (net of operating budget transfers)			<u>Local Tax Levy included</u>
State Sources	\$ 54,895,190		\$ 0
Federal Aid	\$ 26,301,281		\$ 0
Transfer from Operation Fund:			
Pre-K Special Education	<u>\$ 2,741,443</u>		<u>\$ 0</u>
Total Special Revenue Fund	<u>\$ 83,937,914</u>		<u>\$ 0</u>
Grand Total Revenues	<u>\$ 618,553,396</u>		<u>\$ 54,495,247</u>

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Superintendent of Schools hereby fixes and determines that the amount of money necessary to be appropriated for the use of the public schools for the 2020-2021, School Year is \$618,553,396 of which \$54,495,247 is the General Fund local tax levy; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Superintendent of Schools will authorize the reallocations and modifications needed to present a balanced 2020-2021 budget with an adequate amount of funds to provide for a thorough and efficient education; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Superintendent of Schools shall hereby forward to the Commissioner of Education of the State of New Jersey the budget statement, budget statement certification, form A4F (Certification and Report of School Taxes, 2020-2021 School Year) and supporting documentation as required by statute and code; and

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

It was moved by Comm. Martinez, seconded by Comm. Teague that Resolution No. 1 be adopted. On roll call all members voted as follows:

Comm. Arrington: Yes.

Comm. Capers: Yes.

Comm. Castillo: Pass.

Comm. Hodges: No.

Comm. Martinez: Yes.

Comm. Ramirez: No.

Comm. Redmon: Yes.

Comm. Teague: Yes.

Comm. Castillo: Yes.

Comm. Simmons: Yes.

The motion carried.

**Paterson Board of Education
Standing Abstentions**

Comm. Arrington

- Self
- Family

Comm. Capers

- Self
- 4th and Inches
- Westside Park Group
- Insight
- Jersey Kids

Comm. Castillo

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

Comm. Hodges

- Self
- City of Paterson

Comm. Martinez

- Self

Comm. Ramirez

- Self
- Berkeley College
- City of Paterson

Comm. Redmon

- Self
- Historic Preservation of the City of Paterson

- County of Passaic

Comm. Simmons

- Self
- Family

Comm. Teague

- Self
- YMCA

OTHER BUSINESS

Comm. Simmons: Thank you everyone for all the hard work. I know this was a trying time considering all that is going on. Thank all the Board members for your input and patience through this process.

ADJOURNMENT

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

The meeting was adjourned at 5:29 p.m.