

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

December 11, 2019 – 6:42 p.m.  
Administrative Offices

Presiding: Comm. Oshin Castillo, President

Present:

Ms. Eileen F. Shafer, Superintendent of Schools  
Ms. Susana Peron, Deputy Superintendent  
Robert Murray, Esq., General Counsel

Comm. Emanuel Capers  
Comm. Jonathan Hodges  
\*Comm. Manuel Martinez  
Comm. Eddy Olivares

Comm. Joel Ramirez  
Comm. Nakima Redmon, Vice President  
Comm. Robinson Rondon  
Comm. Kenneth Simmons

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

Comm. Simmons read the Open Public Meetings Act:

The New Jersey Open Public Meetings Act was enacted to insure the right of the public to have advance notice of, and to attend the meetings of the Paterson Public School District, as well as other public bodies at which any business affecting the interest of the public is discussed or acted upon.

In accordance with the provisions of this law, the Paterson Public School District has caused notice of this meeting:

**Workshop Meeting  
December 11, 2019 at 6:30 p.m.  
Administrative Offices  
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. Castillo: Good evening everyone. I want to welcome you to the December 11 workshop. It is freezing outside and it's very cold in here. From my understanding, the unit on this end isn't working at all, so it's just going to get colder so if you can just have that into consideration as we move along the presentations, into public portion, and throughout the night.

**PATERSON READERS, TOMORROW'S LEADERS**

Ms. Shafer: Welcome everyone. If there are any children in the audience, we have the cart set up for the books.

## **PRESENTATIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS**

### **Vaping Campaign**

Ms. Shafer: As you all know, our substance abuse statistics went up significantly at the last presentation. When we looked at them specifically it was around vaping. The policy committee changed the policy and going back in September we got a stakeholders committee together. We've been meeting every two weeks around putting together a vaping campaign and that's what you're going to hear about tonight.

Ms. Joanna Tsimpedes: Good evening Commissioners. One of the main focuses this year we have with our substance awareness is the campaign on vaping. It is a campaign that is across the nation. We felt it was very important for our students, as well as adults, to understand what vaping does to our health. Under the direction of Ms. Shafer, we had a committee of various stakeholders inclusive of district administrators and outside community partners who you'll see through the presentation. We have been meeting twice a month and discussing how together we can have a partnership to ensure that our students, families, and community members know the dangers associated with vaping. I'm going to turn it over to Laurel who will present to you "Escape the Vape."

Ms. Laurel Olson: Good evening. I'm new to the position in the district. I'm replacing Kathy Lepore who retired. I stepped in in May and I took over full-time over the summer. One of our main initiatives that I've taken over and spearhead is our vaping campaign. You'll notice the title of our PowerPoint is "Escape the Vape", which is our district slogan. I'm going to define vaping for you. We're going to review the statistics of the department from 2016 forward, the Paterson Public Schools action plan, and everything that we're doing so far, our district policy, educational presentations, anti-vaping committee, the contest that we're doing, and our future goals. I'm also going to give you some cessation resources. What is vaping? Vaping is the inhaling and exhaling of vapor or E-juice, which turns into vapor, which is then inhaled and exhaled back into the environment of the user. Vaping was created by companies as a way to quit smoking. However, it is not FDA-approved. There are other methods of smoking cessation, including gum, lozenges, nicotine patches. These other companies that have started coming out with vape pens did not go through the FDA process. However, they are being sold nationwide. Smoking combustible tobacco is still the leading cause of death. Why are we tackling vaping? It is a nationwide epidemic amongst our youth. One in three high school students are now using nicotine products. That relates to 4.7 million teenagers. One in eight middle school students are using nicotine as well, and that's 1.5 million. A total of about 6 million students worldwide are using vape pens and getting addicted to nicotine. In New Jersey there are 2,500 youths that become new smokers every year. I'm just going to have Joanna set up a brief video for you. It's about two minutes so you can see the issues that we're tackling with our youth.

### ***Video Presentation***

Ms. Olson: As you can see in the video, it's really taken over. They are creating challenges that adults don't even know about. I didn't hear about the nicotine challenge until I saw the video. This is why it's so important to educate these kids, community, and families about this. A lot of the assumption is that it's safer than smoking traditional cigarettes. I want to take a look at the statistics for our SAC department. Last year we spiked. We had 515 that came to our department due to vaping. Of the 354 students that were found positive, whether they were in possession of a vape pen or tested positive for marijuana in their urine, 61% of the write-ups that we did that came out

positive were related to vape pens. K-8 schools had 85 and the high schools had 129. We had 214 last year, which caused us to take a look at what we were doing as a district since 75% of those kids came back drug-free. It is a nicotine epidemic that we're trying to face and control here. That goes back to what kids know. They don't really know too much. They did a study at [drugabuse.gov](http://drugabuse.gov) and they found that 66% of these kids believe that it's just flavoring or water vapor inside these products. They have no idea that there's nicotine in there. They have no idea that there are other poisonous chemicals inside of them and you can infuse them with marijuana as well. We had our first death in August. Now we're three months in and there are 48 people who have passed away strictly from a vaping-related illness. Even the sicknesses jumped very high as well. We started with about 100 and now it's over 2,200 people sick nationwide. There are 80 active cases here in New Jersey. The youngest person to check into the hospital was 10 for vaping. 77% of the reported cases to the CDC are under the age of 35 so it's really focusing on this youth demographic. The CDC continues to work closely with the FDA in states who are reporting these numbers to try to find out what the exact cause is that is making everybody sick. Our mission is really to educate everybody in our community, starting with the students and going to the parents. I've met with many different groups here in Paterson. We looked at everything in July and we decided to change our policy with regards to substance abuse and vaping for the opening of the school year. Based on the statistics from last year, 75% of them were drug-free. This is just a look at our procedures. This is taken strictly from our smoking policy. Electronic smoking devices or vape pens will be confiscated from those pupils found to be in possession and will not be returned. If it appears to an educational staff member or other professional upon confiscating such items that the student may be currently under the influence of alcohol, drugs, or any psychological component they will be sent out for drug testing. The difference between years prior and this year is that we're not automatically sending out since it has been shown to be a nicotine-related problem. Back to the educational presentation - this is a list of everything that I've done so far. We've presented to the high school student group, middle school group, parents, vice principals, and all of School No. 27 staff. I went into the community and did a presentation for grandparents who are acting as parents raising their grandchildren. Teachers and religious leaders - we're trying to hit every single group. Today all the district principals were trained. The presentation that they received will be funneled down to the schools for the teachers to use in their classrooms. The anti-vaping committee meets every two to three weeks. It's made up of many different members of the community and our administration. We have Paterson Police, Passaic County Sheriff's Department, Municipal "Alliance, the Paterson Coalition against Substance Abuse, clergy members, and other City of Paterson representatives. All give input into what we can do to help our youth stay vape-free. In full swing right now we have the art contest with the "Escape the Vape" slogan. Grades 1-8 are assigned to do a poster using that slogan and some reference to anti-vaping. Our high school kids are assigned to do a PSA video about anti-vaping. The end date is in January and then there will be judgment happening with students here in town. The ceremony will be before the Board meeting in February at John F. Kennedy High School. We also put out a district vaping website which is up and live now as of last week. If you go to our main page on the left-hand side you can click on anti-vaping campaign. This will come up and there are a bunch of tabs you can scroll through. There are resources for youth, parents, printables, most current news articles, helpful websites, and all information about our vaping campaign as well. Our future goals include to begin to incorporate the use of Aspire for students with multiple vape offenses. Aspire is a smoking cessation program. It's an eight-module program. It takes a couple of hours to complete. Through that they learn the dangers of nicotine use, whether it's combustible tobacco like a cigarette or an e-cigarette. It was created by the University of Texas Anderson Cancer Center and it is a bilingual program. We'd also like to pursue grant opportunities, secure speakers at

vaping assemblies, and try to begin and establish a student-led vaping team. You can have students teach parents and students teach other students. If you have a group of high school kids to go down to the younger grades because everybody loves to talk to a high schooler when you're younger. There will be revisions to our health curriculum for next school year in 2020-2021 to make it mandated in our health classrooms. I just want to give a shout-out to our communications department for getting everything done so quickly. They've been nothing but helpful. I wanted to leave this up on the screen. These are some local resources to help people stop smoking and vaping. If there any questions, I'd love to answer them for you.

Comm. Hodges: This is an emerging danger that's getting out of hand. What has been the reach out to the city to work with them and use their television program to have some sort of activities to collaborate? I think we need to get ahead of this. They don't watch ours, but they do watch the city's. I'm wondering what has been our outreach to the city to work with them about discussing this during City Council meetings. That's how we reach the parents. You may get to them this way, but you'll definitely get to a larger percentage of them by going to the City Council.

Ms. Tsimpedes: We do have representation from the City of Paterson on our committee. There are various city members that we do have. Even today, we had a presentation that showed how you can map. We had two specialists who came in and had a presentation on how they've done work across the state. They have the consent of the schools. Someone says we'd like you to come in and work with our school. They work with our students. They mentor them. They talk to them about the influences of vaping and what it does, as well as substance abuse. They will map your schools, where vape shops are located within the vicinity of the school. They showed us a demographic for Monmouth County. It was shocking to see right next to the schools you had various bodegas that had the sale of vape materials in there. This is a resource that was brought to us by the City of Paterson today. If you want to share more about the presentation and the work that they want to do with Paterson Public Schools.

Ms. Olson: I was able to get in contact with these people from NJ Civil Ops. They come in and do this for free. I got the information through the Paterson Municipal Alliance Program. As Joanna has stated, they will come to our city and map out for us where all these vape shops are in the vicinity of the schools and then in-depth in the schools target areas to look for like bathrooms. Perhaps the third-floor bathroom is more of a hotspot than the one on the first floor.

Comm. Hodges: Again, getting the information out to the public is the real issue. If you were to go to City Council meetings and have this kind of discussion while it's being televised, that gets the attention of 40,000 people as opposed to what's happening now. This has really gotten bad. I didn't realize just how bad with your presentation. According to reports on the news this has gotten very serious and it is extremely dangerous because of the ignorance around it. Getting to the parents directly - I know the efforts you're making right now, but making sure that a substantial amount of the population is aware of it by putting it in front of them on video either every other month or whatever it is so it becomes an actual campaign that parents are aware of. What you're doing in the schools is fine.

Ms. Tsimpedes: We do have a contest. Our elementary students are doing an art contest, but our high schoolers are creating a video and perhaps after they're judged those videos can be shared throughout the city. We can even present them at the City Council if allowed and on different venues including the local Paterson channel. It's our

own students creating these videos. Who better than our own talent putting out there what vaping is doing, along with the presentations that we have? Laurel does present to the various stakeholders in the community and puts out the alert, but that is definitely an option that we can take into consideration and bringing it to a larger population so there are more viewers.

Comm. Hodges: I definitely would suggest going to the City Council and having a presentation by the school district.

Comm. Castillo: The human services side has participated with the students. The division of health will be coming on board because we were working on a different campaign. We're coming on board for the vaping. The health and human services committee is also working on a resolution to help the school district, not only to inform, but to educate and maybe even have some oversight over some of the businesses. There's also a bill that just came from the assembly as well. It's in the works of being voted on. It will help with some of those regulations. At least the city is trying to get all that information to then join in and talk about what the expectations are for the businesses, information for the families, as well as the education that they're partnering with the school districts to provide for the students.

Comm. Hodges: The more you talk about it on television, the better. That's the thing, making people aware that this is going on. There are a lot of people who aren't aware of just how dangerous this is.

Comm. Castillo: It's a thing now. Other municipalities and towns are working to find the best avenues to educate the community, but also to find some sort of regulation and help them on that. We've been doing some of that research on how to explain it. It's something new and sometimes just explaining it like that to a big group of people isn't necessarily capturing what the problem is. They don't see the harm in it, especially when you have the conversation of the hookahs that most of our students and families see everywhere. They don't understand that the vape pens they buy online through Amazon have other ingredients that cause even bigger harm. It's that explanation and finding all that research. The city will be partnering with the school district to spread that information through a presentation in the City Council. Then we can move on to videos and things for the website.

Comm. Hodges: I would suggest more than a presentation. I think it needs to be frequent in order to capture enough people and make them aware that it's very serious.

Comm. Castillo: There's another campaign launching as well that will allow for the conversation to go on for a longer period of time. We're going to have this and we're going to join the vaping through wellness as well for the spring. It's something that people will be hearing throughout the year.

Ms. Shafer: We met with middle and high school students on two separate occasions and parents. All of them were shocked to know that vaping is worse than smoking cigarettes. Everyone thinks that it's the lesser of two evils. We presented to the principals. They can now go down to the teachers and also the PTO. We do need to get as much information out because a lot of parents think it's okay and that has to change. In fact, it's much more serious. There was a video we showed the kids where there was a 16-year-old male athlete who had to have a double lung transplant from vaping. He was just fortunate that he could have a double lung transplant. We might also consider taking the presentation to the City Council. We've done that before.

Comm. Olivares: In terms of demographics, do you have a breakdown of the groups where this occurs with more prevalence? We can at least sensibly approach the communities that are at a greater risk.

Ms. Olson: I do have a running tally list of all the vape pens that we've collected and the schools they've been collected from, but I don't have that information with me tonight. If that's something you'd be interested in, I'd be happy to provide it for you.

Comm. Olivares: It seems to me that we should target those communities that are more at risk, the kids who are using with greater frequency than other kids for whatever reason. I don't know until we have the breakdown. It would be nice to know so that we can target those communities from the very beginning since this is a new phenomenon.

### **District Goals Update**

Ms. Shafer: Back in August and September we finalized district Board goals. Tonight, you're going to get an update. We're given an update every few months. We have a couple of presenters. Goal #1 is Susana Peron and Will Graulich. We'll move right into each goal.

Ms. Peron: In preparation of the goals that were set by the Board, Goal #1 was to have cabinet level administrators develop a plan to redesign the district high schools to operate more efficiently and effectively. The redesign will include a guidance plan to expose elementary students to possible career opportunities and high school program offerings. The plan may require the recruitment of non-traditional teachers. Pathway recommendations of the high school redesign plan will be presented to the Board by June 2020. That was the language of Goal #1. The update for Goal #1 is that we have set up a committee with several stakeholders that are included in discussion about what the design and the restructuring would look like. The proposed plan was presented at the Board retreat. It was a broad plan. It was to be taken into different phases throughout different years. From the conversation of the Board retreat, phase one may be that by June 2020 the restructuring of the high schools will include the administrative restructuring. Because of that, we have to collect a lot of data. The district is in process of collecting and analyzing the following information for both complexes at Eastside and John F. Kennedy. We've been collecting all of this type of data. I'm just going to give you a couple of them. How many administrators do we have at each school? The administrators include the principal of operation, the principal of pathways, teacher coordinators, supervisors that are shared among the high schools, and vice principals.

Comm. Capers: Are we looking at all the high schools? Or is this just Eastside and Kennedy?

Ms. Peron: Right now, this is just Eastside and John F. Kennedy.

Comm. Capers: I thought we were looking at all the high schools. I have the minutes.

Comm. Castillo: When we had the conversation about possibly restructuring the high schools because of the amount of personnel, the suggestion was that we were going to look at the two big high schools and see if it was viable. Dr. Hodges suggested starting with one and not two. The idea was to look into that conversation.

Ms. Peron: The administrative restructuring is first and the collection of all this goes across just for the two complexes. We can certainly take a look at all of them and put together the information for all of our high schools. We can take a look and collect the

information, but to begin with a restructuring of every single high school in the district is a massive undertaking. We're collecting all the information that you see listed here. We're taking a look at each of the academies within the complex and collecting the internships, partnerships, SAT scores, retention, suspension, transfers, and all of that. We are developing options for an alternative administrative structure. We're looking at the possibility of sharing core content area teachers within the complex because that doesn't completely happen at the two sites. We are scheduling a restructuring retreat to discuss this information that is being collected in January. Are there any questions? Goal #2 speaks to the level of assessment growth. It was discussed that we take the grade spans from 3-5, increase levels 4 and 5 scores in ELA and math percentage points as measured by the New Jersey Student Assessment, which used to be the PARCC. However, an update to this goal was that we develop an achievement plan and be specific for elementary and high school. We have a focus for elementary. We have actions under each of the elementary focus and then of the high school. The Board never came up with a percentage for the points because you did not have the baseline information at the time when you decided to make this a goal. We were waiting on the baseline information, which were the scores from 2018-2019 to come in from the state, which we now have.

Comm. Castillo: Can we wait until after the presentation is complete to have that conversation about the percentage of goal? That might take a little while. All put a note to it so we can come back after the presentation is complete.

Ms. Shafer: Goal #3 is the five-year long-range facility plan, David Cozart and Neil Mapp.

Mr. David Cozart: Good evening everyone. The district will complete the five-year long-range facility plan inclusive of enroll projections and academic program for the old Paterson Catholic site and present to the Board by June 2020. This is a two-pronged goal which was to be completed by June 2020. However, the first portion of the goal which needs to have a five-year facility plan is not due until May 2021. Our current plan is still functional until May 2021. We will use this time period to actually start the process to begin all of the programming, conversation, procuring of services and have it ready for Board approval for April 2021 to be able to submit to the State by May 2021. The second part of this goal is to actually discuss the programming options for Paterson Catholic. Before we go into that component, we wanted to let our general audience know what a five-year long-range facility plan is. It's an assessment of our facilities to ensure that we maximize our buildings' capability and capacity based upon our educational programming needs. We have to make sure that our buildings are maximized with all the educational programs that we expect to have in those buildings. We have to make sure the programs we have in place can exist in our buildings. If not, what do we need to do to modify our buildings? How can we improve them? Do we need new buildings? The plan would go through all those components along with the demographics from the city and everything else that entails. It's a detailed plan that involves a lot of input from the community and different agencies within the city, as well as the Board regarding the department of facilities, business office, as well as the academic services. It's collaborative effort. Again, that's part of the five-year long-range facility plan process. Tonight, we're going to focus on the second portion of it, which is the programming of Paterson Catholic. Paterson Catholic was a former high school. It became a charter school and now it houses our middle school as swing space for Don Bosco. It has three floors when you include the basement level. When you look at the building, there are a couple of plans that we will propose and investigate throughout the community process. One program is to have a high school educational hub based upon STEM pathways. Another option is high school educational hub with

vocational pathways. Another option is what we hear from this process. The community may give us a third option or maybe a combination of others. This process is also going to discuss opportunities along with the restructuring programs we have in place now, as well as our district facilities consolidation committees. It takes a lot of time to go through this whole process and figure out what's going to happen. It's a ripple effect from one building to another building. We've got the community component. We're going to look at these two options and any other options that the community gives us back to say we want you to consider this location to have this program. The second part of that is going to be the athletic fields. They are going to be used by the community as well as the school district. Are we going to have grass or turf fields? Will the fields be lined for football, soccer, or softball? The next two slides are the layout of the building. The basement has one large room which used to be the old music room. Now they use it for different locations. We have one large room. The locker room is downstairs. The rest of the rooms downstairs are storage spaces and a laundry room. That's in the basement. It also has one office in the girls' locker room, which could be used as an athletic office if you need to. The first floor has 13 classrooms of at least 750-800 square feet. One room is 360 square feet. There are four restrooms, three storage rooms. The large areas are the kitchen, cafeteria, and gymnasium. The majority of the offices are located on the first floor. One thing this building also has already prepared for us is this man trap, which is a security feature we're trying to look at for other schools. The man trap allows you to come into the building and get buzzed in. You come into a glass area and you can't go beyond that spot. You're coming from outside into an area and you have to be buzzed in to go further into the building. That's a security feature that the State has asked us to look into for securing our buildings. We're looking at that part to go into the security plan for all the schools. How can we duplicate that and retrofit our buildings to have a man trap in all our buildings? Whether we purchase it or build it through facilities, those are the different options that we're looking into. That's one thing that's unique about this building. The second floor also has administrative offices, child study team offices, and in-school suspension office. They have a very large media center which has two offices inside. Then you have 27 classrooms of 750-1,450 square footage. You have one classroom which is designated at 360 square foot, four restrooms, and nine storage rooms. That's a nice sized building. When we go through these options, some people may not have seen the inside of Don Bosco or Paterson Catholic. We want people to have the opportunity to have a little tour so they can visualize what we're looking at going actually into the building. Ultimately, I want to go into the building in the springtime to have a tour of the building. We need the community to do this component. We can't do this by ourselves or in isolation. We have three major committees. The first is called the district steering committee. This committee basically consists of district cabinet members and staff members from this building. The purpose of this group is to review our existing plan, which is the 2015-2020 plan, to figure out what was already completed and what needs to be revised. This plan will also identify any kind of resources we need to secure or procure for the future programs and we have our meeting dates. It starts in September and it goes all the way through May of 2020. The information coming from this group will be shared with the community group. The community group is 31 members. The individuals consist of district individuals as well as people from the community. They're teachers, administrators, parents, and students. This committee's first meeting will be held this month on the 16<sup>th</sup> at Eastside High School. That will be the first public forum. This committee also consists of members from the Board of Education, which is the facilities committee that was recommended by Madam President. This committee will review the information, share information, and develop more information for us. This is the main piece of the body because this is the body that represents the whole community. This group will then turnkey the information to our community forums, which will be open to anybody in this district who wants to

come to them, but they will be members from our community steering committee who will lead that discussion. It won't be someone standing up there like me or Mr. Mapp saying this is what we're doing. Members of the other committee will be a part of the steering committee that will be facilitating and answering questions from the body. We have one plan for February 10 and March 16. The first one was scheduled for January, but we jumped the gun by having it now to talk about this process. We had planned for January, March, May, and June for Board presentations. For the committee meetings we have December, January, February, March, April, and May. We will discuss in every facilities meeting our plan and what's the status. The goal of this process is this year we want to make sure we have everything that we need in place to move forward and be ready to have a comprehensive detailed plan with funding identified for next May. This year by the end of June with the information we have from the other committees we should be able to give you back some recommendations for what you want the instructional program to look like for Paterson Catholic for next year. That will still be a work in progress because that space may change next fall as other committees are still unfolding their processes. At least we will have this component this year. We will start the process off and by June you will have one document saying we're recommending these two or three proposals that are coming from the community for the educational program. However, nothing will be formalized until the final year when we have the rest of the plan come together. We have the plans from Paterson Catholic as well as the completed five-year plan. What we have now is basically a review. Our finished plan should have a master plan of the whole district, which means there's going to be a large volume of work that needs to be done. It's not what we had last year, which was a smaller plan. We have a large volume of detailed work regarding all of our schools with demographics and enrollments to actually incorporate all the new construction going on in the city. That will all be included in that document. We have more information because as we know we have new construction in the district. Where are kids going to go to school? How many kids are going to be in each area? Are we going to have schools mapped the same way? Are we going to create middle schools? All those questions have to come about. We're starting that process now because we don't want to have anything rushed and turning in a small document when we know our plan should be volumes. That's our goal, to really go back to the previous plans we had and have a large volume of work that says this is what we need to do. But we want to be realistic to say we want to make sure we can provide and deliver what we're asking for them to do.

Mr. Neil Mapp: I just want to summarize what he said - the goals identified, the long-range facilities plan, and also conceptualizing a program for old Paterson Catholic. What we're also attempting to do is a districtwide master plan. A master plan along with the long-range facilities plan says where in five or ten years we want all of our identified programs to land and what are we doing with the complement of buildings we have in the district. Along with the demographic study that's going to be done with the five-year long-range facilities plan and our master plan in process to say after curriculum identifies which programs are viable in the next five years we will be able to say where they land and what we do with underperforming in terms of facility locations like School No. 14, School No. 17, and School No. 19, the smaller schools. What do we do with that land? Do we demo and build new? Do we repurpose? That's what the master planning session will do. We need input from curriculum to identify if they have their druthers and all the money in the world. If they had Disney money, what would our curriculum look like? What would our programs be? Where would we like to house those programs? That's what the long-term goal for this effort is.

\*Comm. Martinez enters the meeting at 7:30 p.m.

## **Pre-School and K-12 Expectation Guides Update**

Ms. Shafer: Goal #4 was the update and dissemination of the grade level expectations. We have them from pre-k through 8. That is Nancy Holtje, Nicole Brown, and Joanna.

Ms. Tsimpedes: Back at the August I&P meeting we had brought the work that we were doing with the revisions to the actual standards that were updated by the State to include in updated expectation guides. As of this point, Academic Services has been meeting with Family and Community Engagement as well as the Department of Early Childhood to ensure that we all have the same goals and expectations when it comes to what we want to provide to our parents in order for them to help our children at home. We included in our guides this year homework tips, study tips, learning at home strategies, and tips for success. One of the big pushes that we had as part of the strategic plan is social/emotional learning. Pre-k started having that in their guides last year and we followed suit in k-8 and have started to implement them in our expectation guides for this year. We looked at the standards and we made them parent-friendly. Some of the wording within the standards from the State may not make sense to a person who is not in the education field. They're just not relevant to it. We ensured that in language, math, science, and social studies certain terms were made parent-friendly for them to understand. Family and Community Engagement will meet with the executive parent teacher organization to obtain parental feedback once we have the booklet completed. On September 16 at the Board meeting the Deputy Superintendent had sent a survey link to the Board of Education for feedback regarding the draft that was sent out to them with just the specifics to the standards. It was not a finished product but more of a starting product so that we could see if we were going with the right approach. A plan is in place for expectation guide dissemination, which we will see in the presentation after this. We will give you a more in-depth PowerPoint presentation of what the guides will look like and what they will include following the Board goal presentation.

Ms. Nicole Brown: Now we're going to get a more in-depth look at what the guides look like for pre-k through 8. Some of this has already been covered in the last presentation. All of the guides will illustrate what the grade levels are learning at that grade level and should be able to do by the end of the year in English language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. We've also embedded social/emotional learning development at those spectrums, tips for success in school, how we can extend the learning to the homes, practical application of what those standards are for the students, and real-life examples at home, homework, and study tips. How can the families help to engage their learners at home with what they're doing in school and homework, how to help them be a better student in terms of studying, and then also talking to your child's teacher because we know that the connection between home and school is critical for success. I'm going to give you a quick tour of what the guides look like. For the purpose of the presentation we chose grade 3 since we had shared with you what the students are expected to do on the NJSLA for third grade. This gives you an idea of what the standards look like. For language arts it's broken down into the four domains. We have reading, writing, language, speaking, and listening. For mathematics it's broken into the domains of operations and algebraic thinking, numbers and operations, base 10 and fractions, measurement and data, and geometry. For science it's broken into life science, physical science, earth and space science, engineering, technology, and application. For social studies it's broken into history, geography, economics, civics, citizenship, and government. This is an idea of what parents would see in parent-friendly language. I did not read the other disciplines, but just to give you an idea of one, for history to demonstrate through art and writing,

understanding of holidays and traditions celebrated by different cultures around the world. Then we move into social/emotional learning.

Ms. Nancy Holtje: Good evening. Social/emotional learning is deeply rooted in early childhood education and is interconnected with the development in the physical and cognitive domains. As we heard before, social/emotional learning has now made it to our district strategic plan. Parents will be given parent-friendly examples of what do we mean by social/emotional learning. Children have to demonstrate self-confidence and what does that look like, self-direction, express their feelings, have positive interactions with other adults and children, and have pro-social behaviors. Following this all the guiders will have tips for success. Parents can have a quick reference as to what role they can play in their child's education and what they can do at home. That is also reinforced when they meet with the teachers at report card and conference times. They should be given easy activities that you can bring into the home and practice the skills that are needed. Then there will be a section for homework and study tips so that they can set their child up for success at home.

Ms. Tsimpedes: One of the things that has come up numerous times through presentations is where our students are expected to be as a graduate. We've put together what is a portrait of a graduate. Our graduates are communicators, collaborators, critical thinkers, global citizens, and goal-oriented. They are communicators that apply effective reading skills to acquire knowledge and broaden perspectives. They speak in a purposeful manner to inform, influence, motivate, or entertain listeners. We saw that happen in the November Board meeting when we had students from International come and talk and were vocal about communicating how they felt about what was being said of them. They use technological skills and contemporary digital tools to explore and exchange ideas. They're collaborators who respect divergent thinking to engage others in thoughtful discussion. They analyze and construct arguments and positions to ensure examination of a full range of viewpoints. They seek and use feedback from others. They're creative and critical thinkers that engage in problem-solving inquiry and design of innovative solutions to overcome obstacles to improve outcomes. We see this as kids perform at the high school symposiums that we started at the STEM expo where they're putting their best work forward and showing others that they have talent. They demonstrate divergent and ingenious thoughts to enhance the design/build process. It's something that we're promoting across our grade levels. They evaluate ideas and information sources for validity, relevance, and impact. They're global citizens who contribute to solutions that benefit the broader community, who promote environmental stewardship, who demonstrate empathy, compassion, and respect for others. Again, we saw that last week as they came out to the Board meeting and rallied for what they believed in. They're goal-oriented individuals that engage in healthy and positive practices in relationships to promote overall physical and mental well-being. They use time and resources wisely to set goals, complete tasks, and manage projects. They're making the most of what the world has to offer. I don't want you to take our word for it. I want you to take the words from our own graduates. These are words from our alumni. This was the work that Gilman did with the students he has worked with through the years.

Mr. Gilman Choudhury: A few of our students have all shared the same idea, the sheer fact that it was their staff, principals, and teachers in the building. They not only wanted to just impart knowledge, but also wanted to make sure they had a really good relationship. If you have a teacher that believes in you, that's all that counts. Ahmet was a former BTMF Academy valedictorian. He's now finishing his final year. He's finishing college in three years. Currently he works at Livingston Township as their IT part-time. He's going to be doing full-time once he graduates in May. He said,

“Whenever presented with group projects, I jump at the chance to do them. Paterson Public Schools taught me how to collaborate effectively with fellow peers. Successfully working on projects with groups of people is key for the industry I plan to work in.” Another student, Luis Dominguez, was the ACT Academy valedictorian in 2016. Just to give you the heads up, he's going to be working for Boeing in May. He got the offer already. He said, “I have interned at various companies throughout my college career. Each of them has required me to be an effective communicator and listener. Paterson Public Schools helped me learn the ability to speak and listen, which is crucial in the engineering field.” He will be there making planes for Boeing soon. Ahmet will be working for IT at a municipality in the State of New Jersey. These are two of the examples of the great students we have. This is Jefferson Mendoza. He was valedictorian of STEM Academy. Currently he is a biomedical engineer at Dartmouth College. He had a horrible stutter that he was able to work through because of the compassion that his teachers had. He now has learned a new language. He speaks French. He went to France to do a study abroad program. He is in his third year. He worked at the San Diego Health Department and you're going to hear a video right now about all the amazing things Paterson Public Schools did for him.

### ***Video Presentation***

Mr. Choudhury: There's another video as well. This is Amel Hassan. About four years ago our Deputy Superintendent Ms. Peron had an opportunity to take students to MIT. This young lady begged and asked if there was a way she could be part of the trip. Ms. Peron had that young lady go instead of her because it was an extra seat and she would have rather have the student to go. This young lady is currently at Emory University. She's studying human biology and wants to be a doctor someday. She wants to work back here in Paterson. She actually received a transfer option to Cornell University but she decided to stay at Emory instead. We're going to look at a video right now of how appreciative she is of Paterson Public Schools.

### ***Video Presentation***

Mr. Choudhury: There's one more video from another student. This young man's name is Shamir Willis. He was number three of ACT Academy in 2017. He's right now a junior at Rutgers University studying computer science. As you're listening to exactly what he's saying, it's important to remember that it was adults behind him – teachers, principals, staff, the nurturing environment, the Superintendent, all the way to the custodian – who made sure he had the best path to success.

### ***Video Presentation***

Mr. Choudhury: I just want to make this reference point that these kids are a reflection of the adults of the community that they come from. We hear all the time what are our kids really learning and what are they doing. You have hundreds, if not thousands, of examples of students that are doing great and amazing things and are going to make the City of Paterson better and make us proud. What does reading 20 minutes a day in the morning relate directly to where Shamir is right now? I will tell you those building blocks matter. Those little things that we do when we prepare the community, parents, and neighbors is going to ensure that people like Shamir, Jefferson, Ahmed, and all these kids that are going to say they came from Paterson Public Schools. They're going to show everyone that if given the right amount of resources, love, and relationships these kids can soar. I'm going to give it over to my boss, Mr. McDowell, who is going to explain about the distribution of the guides.

Mr. Kemper McDowell: Let's give a round of applause to Gilman. He does not want to say that, but he spends a lot of his spare time mentoring these children. Each one of these children will tell you it was because of the adults, but somewhere around there was Gilman yelling at them. If you recall the kids with the vests on, those are Gilman's kids. We appreciate everything he has done. Now we're going to talk about how to disseminate the guides to parents. It's not complicated. We have a lot of options. As our first option, we're going to provide parents at back-to-school-night and PTO meetings with a friendly guide. These guides will be translated into our major languages as usual. They will be vetted by focus groups of parents to make sure the jargon and phrasing is understandable. Not only do they get the message in their hands, but it's something they can understand. We have targeted the first back-to-school-night opportunity. We will make copies. We will do some demographics. We will make sure that schools with a particular demographic get enough copies for that and they can do whatever they want. Some schools may choose to have them at the classrooms. We will have them ready in mass volume. Secondly, we want to provide a downloadable copy of the guide. After the first activity parents can go online and they can download a guide in their language of the particular grade span. It will also be available for principals and other staff. Thirdly, for the sake of making sure that parents can understand, not only are children visual beings, but parents are also. Where appropriate, we want to create a few video presentations of the jargon and content of the guide. We may have a parent sit with a teacher and maybe talk about some of the things that you may find in the guide. A parent can click on and get an understanding. If we get savvy with it, we can even do voiceovers in various languages so that parents can understand what's going on. Lastly, we want to lean on our community partners. We want to get guides to our churches and businesses. Maybe we can create kiosk opportunities where we can take one slot at City Hall and also take advantage of the various committee meetings that are going on to get suggestions from community and agencies on how to further disseminate. We want to leverage our community partners to try to get this out to the city. Are there any questions?

Comm. Castillo: Do we want to have questions on this? Or do we want to start from the previous presentations?

Comm. Hodges: I've forgotten most of the questions I had for the other presentations when we do it this way.

Comm. Castillo: You're supposed to jot them down.

Comm. Hodges: I do want to ask Mr. McDowell something. One of the reasons for having the expectation guide was to confront the parents with an understanding of the level of performance that should be expected of their children. The question which has to somehow be formed in their mind is whether their child is performing at that level. Where do they confront that question? If you give them a sheet a paper, unless there's an actual question for them which specifically asks that question then that may not occur. How do we get that message across and that conversation started? That's the driving point.

Mr. McDowell: Your point is how we teach the parents how to use this document.

Comm. Hodges: That's exactly right.

Mr. McDowell: After back-to-school-night it can be used at report card night to match up whether or not my child is on track with some of the expectations when assessments are given. You have a good point. We need to make sure that not only do we include

the document, but also show parents how to use it. One of the best ways to use it to ensure that your child either is ready to undertake what's coming in front of them, especially after the grade is over did I get everything, or am I on track for getting everything that I need.

Comm. Hodges: What is the plan to do that? It may not have been developed yet, but that's the important feature here. We need to connect the parent with the understanding that your child needs to be online and are they. That's the question they need to be asking.

Mr. McDowell: Some schools may do it differently. Some schools may explain that. If I may indulge the committee, maybe we can incorporate a section for how this document should be used. It goes over with the parents how to use it and maybe in the video presentation we can talk to them about how to use this document to the benefit.

Comm. Hodges: Unless they're all doing it at the same time and it is not being done.

Comm. Castillo: I don't remember from I&P. There is a page.

Ms. Peron: It's in the introduction section which talks about why we use this guide and how you can use this guide. It tells the parent we're giving them important information on how to monitor their child's progress. Also, it's letting them know pointed questions they can ask their child's teacher about their performance. Each of the content areas by grade level will have the specific skills and objectives that students should be mastering at the beginning and at the end of the year.

Mr. McDowell: We may be able to expand that. What comes to mind is the "ask the right question" workshop that Rosie does. When parents go into that meeting, they make sure they know what they need to ask and what they need to compare with.

Ms. Peron: It talks about helping your child meet the standards and then talking to your child's teacher. Here are some questions you may want to ask to learn about the standards. Can you show me examples of work that meet the standards? Does my child show interest in reading and writing? How are you planning for my child's individual needs? Those are pointed questions that will be added to each of the guides for parents.

Comm. Hodges: Is this happening? Are teachers being confronted with those questions? If that's not happening, the district should be checking to see whether it's happening. If you just have it in there and no one is paying attention to it, it doesn't matter. It's meaningless. There should be a check to see whether or not this is being an effective document or whether or not the teachers are being confronted with these questions by parents. If it's not happening, then you need to modify your approach. That's what I'm looking for.

Ms. Shafer: We changed the approach now and modified it because in the last expectation guides, we didn't have all that information. Now that we have that information, we're just going to start launching it. This isn't something you can just hand a parent and let them run with it. You have to hold forums and parent meetings. We have the Parent University where we actually go over the document and you walk them through or role play so that they can see as a parent these are the things they want to ask and this is what they want to know. You want to see your child's work based on some of these questions you want to ask. These questions that we now have in there are reflective of the expectations. We need to model for the parents so they

understand, not only are the expectations listed by grade level, but also how do you now take that document to back-to-school-night and use it to say how is my child doing with this expectation here because I see them struggling at home with whatever it is. We need to be able to model for the parents how to use it.

Comm. Hodges: If you have said that one of the biggest problems we have in this city is the home and community environment, then you have to attack that aggressively. The expectation guide is one of the tools, but it's an active tool. It's something that you really have to work and make sure it's being used. Unless you're checking with your teachers to find out whether there's actually that conversation taking place then you're not really attacking it the way you need to.

Ms. Peron: I think maybe we would need to talk to teachers and principals after the first parent report card night and ask them are parents coming with pointed questions. Is the guide being talked about and discussed actively? I think we should then collect that information to see if this is going to be a living document that we do that.

Comm. Hodges: That's exactly what I'm looking for.

Ms. Peron: I get it.

Comm. Castillo: I want to thank you and commend you. I know it was one of our goals and it was a speedy turnaround. I want to thank Madam Superintendent and the staff for getting it done as quickly as you guys did. Are we also going to teach our students how to use it? There are some students, especially in high school, that want to know what they should have learned in high school. Some of our students are very self-sufficient. They want to be involved and they want to know what they're supposed to be learning from their teachers. I think it would be great for our students to learn how to use it as well.

Comm. Capers: On page 3 under the English language arts component, one of the key components is cursive writing. I think that should be a big expectation up here that I don't see.

Ms. Brown: We can add it, but it's not part of the ELA standards when we look at the NJSLs. We took this just from the ELA portion of the standards that are written. Yes, cursive writing can be addressed, but it doesn't fall under there. We can add it to the guide.

Comm. Capers: But it's a district standard.

Comm. Hodges: It is.

Ms. Tsimpedes: I understand that. The goal when we created this was to say what is it that students are being assessed on? What is it that they have to master as per State expectations on NJSLs? We do have different expectations on all levels. Handwriting, as we all know, even at the state level is being discussed as being mandatory. We're ahead of the curve because we do have the curriculum for it and we're looking at purchasing additional materials such as paper and resources for teachers to use in the classroom. Even though you don't see it here, it is part of the district expectation that we have with regards to what students should be doing from k-6.

Comm. Capers: Where is that expectation? Is it high?

Ms. Tsimpedes: We can put another page in here that talks about the handwriting and what they do every grade level and what the expectation is for each of the curriculums that we have for handwriting. That's an easy addition. We can send you a draft.

Comm. Hodges: More important than that, I don't go to many schools lately, but I have not seen cursive writing up on bulletin boards in the hallways, which means you're not using it. You have manuscript, but you don't have cursive writing. It's not being used by the students to the extent that it needs to. If you're not taking notes with cursive writing, then they're getting the block, which is not adequate. It's not a skill that they're learning and using in the classroom. If you don't see it on the bulletin boards then that tells you that it's not being used or learned to the extent that you want.

Ms. Tsimpedes: You're right and that's one of the things that we're looking at, lesson plans to see how it is implemented in the lesson plan and when are they teaching it. That's something we're doing as a district for ourselves because we do want to make sure all our students are learning cursive. It is important and it is one of the expectations from the district that our students be able to write in cursive. The other piece of it is to ensure that the teachers are teaching it in the classroom and that our students are actually practicing it.

Comm. Capers: And going home to practice in homework so parents know that we want to teach this to our students. It's been shown in tests and homework.

Comm. Castillo: Comm. Capers, I think Ms. Tsimpedes said she would add it. If you give the Superintendent a few, she's going to go into another topic that will enhance that as well. After this presentation she has another one that will go on to that same conversation.

Comm. Capers: Okay. I know we do it, but I don't think it's communicated well to me or I'm not understanding it. Under the communicators, it says here use of technology or contemporary digital tools to explore and exchange ideas. How are we doing this? What are we doing? Is that a high expectation, infusing technology in our students' education?

Ms. Tsimpedes: Currently we actually have digital learning professional development happening in cohorts for the schools that are one-to-one. For example, today we had a session and we have a session tomorrow.

Comm. Capers: How many teachers?

Ms. Tsimpedes: From every school? We're asking up to four teachers from each academy and the elementary schools that have the one-to-one to also send up to four. We understand substitutes are a concern. We had a presenter at the Superintendent Institute, Mr. Eric Scheninger, who actually presented to the administration about how important digital learning is and how it can be used as a resourceful tool for our students and even for ourselves as educators to motivate our students and to teach them how to learn using technology, and to engage them. They're actually going through that. Then to ensure that there is follow-through the principals of these schools that have teachers going will be coming to a PD by Mr. Scheninger which will talk about what the teachers have been learning and what the administration should be seeing in the classrooms as a result of the PD. These teachers who are going we are deeming them as the go-to people in their school so that they can turnkey the information. Obviously, we can't take everyone out of the building. But if we train four individuals, they can be the spearhead in their departments and turnkey that information.

Comm. Capers: Under the digital learning concept, how do we measure our kids' learning ability in English or math? Is it working? If we're going in this direction, is it a better model? How do we measure that?

Ms. Tsimpedes: It's fairly new still. We have to roll out the use of it for kids to be able to go home with it and utilize for homework and projects. We're making strides in that with being able to have the one-to-one with our students in the classroom and then from there when they go home, do they have technology and devices to actually follow through with the work. Some may have technology at home and some may not. Some may have WIFI and some may not. Once we have that in place, you can then see how many students are creating project-based learning activities and how many are doing everything digitally versus paper and pencil. Once we provide that resource to our kids to take home with them, it's measured by what's only in school. We see them taking assessments more online now. Yes, they're doing projects more online. You see that, but I think the ultimate goal is when they actually take their device home and are able to complete assignments. You can see how much usage there is also at home with that.

### **District Goals Update**

Comm. Castillo: Let's go back to the district goals update presentation. I don't know if there are further questions, but I would like to go back to Goal #2 where we have the conversation about the recommended percentage point increase. The conversation from I&P and recommendation was actually the number we had before we removed it, which was a 3% increase combined. I want to open the discussion.

Comm. Simmons: This was during a discussion in a retreat.

Comm. Castillo: When we set up our district goals.

Comm. Simmons: We put in the percentage and then we took it out.

Comm. Castillo: Correct. We had originally 3% and then we took it out because we were waiting for the numbers. We received those updates during the last retreat. We just didn't have this conversation and the administration is now bringing it back.

Comm. Hodges: 3% isn't that high. Let's be very clear about that. It isn't that high. If you want a goal, you want to reach as high and strive towards it. 3% is not very high, particularly when we consider where we are and how long we've been here. You need to push significantly a little harder than that. You need at least 8% to 10% as a goal.

Comm. Redmon: What is your suggestion? When we did this in the retreat we kicked around several different numbers, but we didn't come up with a concise number. What would be your recommendation?

Comm. Hodges: I'd like to see the data.

Comm. Redmon: We did see data.

Comm. Hodges: Then I'll simply say at least 7%.

Comm. Castillo: When we have this conversation, we do need to keep in mind that we have larger class sizes and that's also going to be an issue this year. Obviously that doesn't excuse everything, but we do have to make sure that we're having a

conversation that it's a goal that we can reach moving forward. I wish it could be 20%. I wish we were at a whole different level, but we want to set expectations that are smart, that we have the potential to reach, and at the same time in those conversations we're not saying that our kids didn't reach 7% and they're failures again. I just want to make sure that if we're having a conversation that we're taking all of these things into consideration.

Comm. Hodges: But if you don't push hard then you don't get there. The idea is to have expectations for them and for your staff. I can understand the reasons we don't get there, but if we don't even try to get there, then you're not going to. Even though you don't have staff, those students deserve to be pushed to that level. They deserve that striving. Without that striving, you have 3%, which is over 12 years. That doesn't get you very far when you look at where we are now.

Comm. Martinez: While I agree with the premise of what you're saying, Dr. Hodges, at the same time we want to set the goal to be something that is attainable. The presumption there that I'm not crazy about is assuming that we're not going to push them hard. Of course we're going to push them hard. If we set a goal of 3% to 5%, that's a percentage. That's a mark that's attainable. That's not to say that we're not going to push for that 7%, 8%, or 9%. If we set an unrealistic goal, in theory that sounds great, but the data and the reality don't speak to that. A 3% to 5% increase in looking at the data is reasonable. That's attainable. That's not to say we hit that and then we take our foot off the gas. We're going to keep going and push beyond that, but we have to be realistic in the factors, the data, and all the elements in the equation. We have to consider that. We can't just throw that out and say we're going to go for high. We have to be realistic with it.

Comm. Hodges: Is 3% realistic? Or is 5% realistic? I'm good on 5%.

Comm. Martinez: We haven't even seen the presentation or opened up the discussion. Can we hear this and then get into that?

Comm. Hodges: She asked for the percentage.

Comm. Castillo: I think 5% is a fair number considering all of the variables that we have. I haven't had the conversation with the administration, but I think it's a place that we can go. It's not 10% and it's not 3%. It's still reachable. It's still pushing our students and staff towards a new time. I think it's good. I understand what you're saying. The 10% seemed a whole lot.

Comm. Hodges: I needed to move the conversation off the 3%.

Comm. Castillo: For god's sake, we're agreeing.

Comm. Hodges: Seriously, I do think we have bright students here. I think one of the problems is we don't challenge them enough. That's been a problem for quite some time. I'm not trying to burden the Superintendent and the staff, but I do think that putting some tougher numbers in there is about due. I know that our finances speak against that. However, a goal is a goal and there are reasons to fall short. But if you don't try, then you're not going to get there.

Comm. Redmon: I forgot what I was going to say.

Comm. Hodges: Then you must be agreeing.

Comm. Redmon: I think we all agree, but sometimes we have to take in mind that our students are trying to achieve what we're setting here. We want to make sure that they have in presence that they're doing something correctly. Most of the time when you see it in the media, our students are getting beat up left and right. Sometimes we have to make sure that they maintain who they are and try to achieve what the district is trying to push them to do. I'm not saying that our students are lacking what they're supposed to do, but they need to have that motivation that they can achieve and make sure they get praises behind that achievement. Sometimes they don't get those praises and everything that you hear about the Paterson School District is always negative. We want to change the culture and make sure they get the quality education that they deserve.

Comm. Hodges: The way to do that is to actually expect it to happen. That's what I'm trying to push, the expectation that we want high standards here.

Comm. Redmon: I agree with you, Dr. Hodges. I understand where you're coming from. It's been 12 years, but we can't build Rome in one day. We've been here for 12 years, but we're now changing the ball. We have people that are on the same accord that are also trying to get things accomplished. I'm not saying that we don't agree. I think 3% was low, but a happy medium of 5% is good and is attainable.

Comm. Hodges: The long-range facilities plan is tied to what you want to do with the curriculum. There has to be some definitive conversations about what we actually want to see done before you really flesh out the long-range facilities plan. That's going to change what that plans says. Unless the Board has really gotten to address the kinds of things we want to see in those schools, the long-range facilities plan is going to be reflective of what we want to do with the curriculum. That has to be discussed and fleshed out and strong determinations made as soon as possible. In addition to that, I still wanted to know what a Paterson student is supposed to be able to do and have when they graduate. The expectation guides are a step towards that, but is that your answer? Are the expectation guides a sense of what they're supposed to do and what a Paterson student is supposed to achieve?

Ms. Shafer: It's twofold. It's the portrait of a graduate as well as the expectation guide.

Comm. Hodges: Okay. I'll just stop there.

### **Other Business**

Ms. Shafer: I want to just take a few minutes to talk about \$5.1 million that the Governor allocated to us through the emergency aid application. I certainly want to thank the Governor and the Commissioner for considering us. We did receive the highest amount. I want to thank Rosie Grant and the Paterson Education Fund for constantly standing with us as we went to all of the budget hearings and fought for our kids and families in the district. Some of our own folks like Ms. Peron and Mr. Matthews worked extremely hard in the summer to get that application down to Trenton in a timely manner. As you know, the Board approved it the day before it was due. It was a lengthy application. They came back to us in September with two questions. We responded and never heard again from them. In a perfect world, \$5.1 million would be used for one-time costs. That would really be the smart thing to do. When you don't do that, you're adding now to the following year's budget. Unfortunately, we don't live in a perfect world here in Paterson. We have an urgent need in our schools to put teachers in front of children and that's what our job is all about, not only mine but the Board's.

Certainly, the cost of meeting those needs far exceeds \$5.1 million. As you know, we asked for \$24 million. We worked since Friday and over the weekend and the beginning of this week with our assistant superintendents and principals, not for a wish list, but we looked at class sizes. We're bleeding and we need to stop. It is a Band Aid. There's no doubt about it. With the amount of class sizes we have that are over the recommended State class sizes, we need to do something in some of the buildings. We compromised and we did some one-time costs and some personnel. We still have about another \$24 million worth of needs because not everything can be done. I just want to give to the Board a draft of what it looks like right now. You can see that it's one-time costs as well as personnel. I just want to go through it line by line. We have talked about this for a number of years. I know I'm preaching to the choir, but when our kids are not able to do basic experiments in a science lab, we continue to ask for funding so that we're able to refurbish those labs. We allocated another \$400,000 to those labs. We have a textbook plan right now that is at \$10 million because we are so far behind. Your five-year curriculum plan should match your textbook plan. We have not been able to implement that because we don't have the money for textbooks. I just met with teachers last week and the main conversation was a middle school math textbook for the kids. We now can get a very good price with professional development to get all of our middle school math textbooks. That's at \$800,000. The price goes up after the first of the year. We have been trying for close to a year now to move the dental clinic from the Department of Health to the Madison Center so that our families and students would be able to have dental checkups. That's \$32,000. We're going to be able to do that now and then we're going to put close to \$1.9 million into health benefits. I'm glad the handwriting came up because we have \$200,000 for handwriting resources. There are instructional materials that you need if you're going to do handwriting correctly and we have not had the opportunity to buy those resources. That comes to \$2.4 million. Then we have \$2.7 million which will be in the areas of personnel. We have kindergarten classes that are well over the recommended number and we cannot lose those children. That builds the foundation for them. We need nurses in every building and a nurse to cover when a nurse is out. If a nurse is out or goes on medical leave, now we have a school without a nurse for a period of time because we're sharing. People are running back and forth. You can see the rest. A business teacher, a biology teacher, the automotive teacher, science, art, a BD teacher for special education students, a grade 2, a lot of art and music that needs to come back, ESL, and a Substance Abuse Coordinator. We are having so many issues around vaping that we need to bring one back. We eliminated five last year and we need to bring one back. That's what it looks like at this point. It is a compromise, but I could not spend all of it on personnel because that's just not fiscally responsible. But I also could not spend it all on one-time costs because class sizes are way up there and it's going to impact teaching and learning for our students. We owe them that. I would like for the Board to give me feedback. If you have any recommendations that you would like, we would like to get this moving as quickly as possible.

Comm. Castillo: I might as well go around the table because I'm sure everyone has questions. The Superintendent, Deputy, Business Administrator, Ms. Coy, Comm. Redmon, Comm. Martinez, and myself went down to Trenton last Friday and we had a conversation with the Assistant Commissioner of Finance. Mr. Matthews brought the current budget and what it would look like for next year. He made a projection for where we have been and where we're going in the next budget cycle. We went to have a conversation on possible resources, ideas, or anything that they can provide. They can see the issues we have in Paterson and the financial instability and if they can offer any supports in that. After an hour and a half meeting we walked out with nothing apart from we're doing a better job. Mr. Matthews and the Superintendent have changed the culture and perception of Paterson. It's not what we expected at all from the meeting.

The one thing I can say I took away was the way that Paterson is conducting business has changed. I think it was one of the things that were affecting monies coming into Paterson. In a previous time, the State did not think that we were budgeting in the best of ways or we weren't using money wisely and we weren't projecting as we should have. It's the one thing they did say. They said that they took all of our recommendations and would get back to us. Mr. Matthews can speak on if they do get back with recommendations on the budget presentation that we gave them. It does seem that it's a different conversation that we're having with Paterson. In the past, it just seemed like we weren't organized. That's the perception I received. I don't know if whoever else went got something else, but that was something that they did speak about. We need \$63 million for next year and they do acknowledge that it's easier for supports and services to be provided to Paterson when you have this conversation in November and December, as opposed to going to the State in May and saying we're short \$60 million. I'm not sure if anything will come out of it, but I do know it's a different conversation that's being had. I think we're being taken a little more seriously than we have in the past. I'm not happy with the meeting because I expected more from that, but I do understand that they took the presentation and all the information and will get back to us with possibilities on things that we can do to close that gap. They're now more knowledgeable of where we are financially at last for the next year.

Comm. Hodges: Since the State monitored us, they were in charge and they received all our data. Who did they tell that we weren't budgeting well? Was that communicated to the Superintendent? Was it communicated to the business administrator? Where was the communication from the State which suggested that that was a problem?

Comm. Castillo: Dr. Hodges, I wasn't around. I have no idea.

Comm. Hodges: They can tell you that now, but when did they communicate that to the district that they were in charge of?

Comm. Castillo: That was a whole different administration and some of us were not even on the Board. If that communication happened, I'm probably sure it didn't happen.

Comm. Hodges: I'm sorry I wasn't there because I would have asked that question. That's a question that should have been asked of them.

Comm. Castillo: They did say they had various conversations with the previous superintendent and the business administrator. They did have that conversation and they even spoke about several scenarios in several meetings as examples.

Ms. Shafer: There are a couple other things I want to say before I finish up. People are under the assumption that we have money that we're not spending. I want to just go through those items so it's very clear that when you are in a district as big as we are with buildings that are over 100 years old, there are certain pots of money that you do not touch. It would not be fiscally responsible. We have \$1 million in emergency reserve. You never touch that in a district like ours. If we have a school where the heating system goes down and we have to replace the boiler, we need to be able to keep that building running as quickly as possible and that's why you have emergency reserve. If you have a roof cave in, that's why you have emergency reserve. To use that \$1 million would not be fiscally responsible. They said we had \$2.9 million. Our auditors and business administrator reported at the last Board meeting from the auditors that that \$2.9 million in surplus is \$1.7 million. That money gets put into next year's budget. You would not use that money this year. There is \$1.9 million in over-budgeted amounts for vacant teaching positions. That means that there are some teaching

positions that are hard to fill like math, science, chemistry, biology, physics, bilingual, and nurses, that you cannot find at step 1. Right now, physics teachers, chemistry teachers, and nurses are naming their salary because it is not only hard to fill in Paterson, but it is hard to fill in the State of New Jersey. We budgeted certain positions at a higher rate. If you didn't budget it, that would not be fiscally prudent either because we know that we would have to pay these folks more money and people come with years of experience. If you had 10 people who are budgeted at \$51,000 as a starting salary and you had to pay them \$61,000, you're already at \$100,000 over budget. If you keep going, and we have over 200 vacancies a year that we fill, you can very easily dig yourself into a hole. That's why we don't touch the \$1.9 million, which is in vacancies and hard-to-fill positions. We had \$129,000 from transportation aid and that money is going to be applied to the district's 2019-2020 revenues. We had \$905,000 in extraordinary aid and that will be applied to our surplus. Out of our budget of \$600 million it comes to a little over \$5 million and that is money you just don't touch in a district this large. You may hear that out in the community or wherever and I just want it to be clear that there's not money laying around here that we just decided not to use and then went and filled out the emergency aid application.

Comm. Capers: Thank you for all who took part in drafting this up and worked long hours to try to allocate this the right way. I know we spent a lot of man hours and burning the midnight oil to get this. I thank everybody who fought for this to get here. I do have some concerns when it comes to what we call emergency aid in the area of personnel. I do like the one-time payment for science labs, textbooks, and education that's going to touch the kids. I know you're a big advocate for performing arts. I don't want to run into the same problem we did a couple of years ago. The Murphy administration gave us \$20 million and in your first year as a Superintendent you brought in a lot of stuff like music and arts that our kids didn't have for years. We added that on to a sinking ship and the following year we had to cut it. Now we're getting emergency funds and it seems like we're trying to bring that back. We're not going to get the money we expect to get this year or next year. I counted eight different art teachers. I know our schools need it, but I think we have more emergency needs in this district. This comes out to \$800,000 in teachers that I think we're going to end up cutting at our next budget year. I don't think they're going to be here. I don't think we're going to have that money to rehire them for another year. We need to rethink our process to look at other emergency needs. We have infrastructure and education problems going on in this district where \$800,000 could be allocated to. We need to take a different look at this. I just don't want it to be a deja vu moment. We should add this money to more one-time items and look at more items where we have other emergencies.

Comm. Castillo: Mr. Matthew, can you jot down some of the recommendations from the Board members as well so we can further discuss in finance or with Ms. Shafer?

Ms. Shafer: I couldn't agree more. Like I said earlier, in a perfect world one-time costs would be great. This is not my list. This list came from principals of what they need in the building to relieve class. Your art and music are all providing all of your classroom teachers with preps. Right now, we're not doing that. This isn't because I like art and music. They all have physical education because it's a law and a requirement. Art and music were the first to go, but now they need that to cover the preps and to decrease class sizes across the board.

Comm. Hodges: That just raises a question about next year. Is this money recognition that the level of expenditures of the district has reached this new level so that it won't go backwards next year? Or is it just emergency funding for what they consider to be an

emergency problem this year, which they won't fund next year? That in its face is wrong. The formula is not being met. Even though you do go ahead and put these art teachers, as Mr. Capers has stated, next year if we're not funded at an equivalent amount then they're gone and we're in the same situation. While I'm very appreciative of the efforts of the staff, Board members, and other community groups that went down there, something has to change in the State's understanding as to what our true educational needs are and our requirements that they require educationally. That needs to be made very clear to them. They're not being met by the funding that comes from the State. I'm particularly concerned because of the amount of money going to teachers, which may not be in place next year. If you're a potential teacher looking at where you want to get a job, why would you come here? Unless we have a well-defined record that says this is going to be addressed, then why do it this year? That's a real problem and I would rather take the money and put it into prospects until we get a commitment from the State.

Comm. Redmon: Based on the meeting we had on Friday it was told to us that we're not going to be funded next year. It was told to us that we were not going to be funded and we should start thinking of outside sources for how to fund our school district. They brought up other districts across the state, in urban and suburban areas, and they made sure we understood this is a budget crisis that is going on throughout the state. They already expect that we're going to be in the hole. They praised us for coming down, being proactive, and starting our budgetary process early. They also told us that we weren't going to get the funding. What you're hearing now is basically what it is. We have to start thinking outside of the box because they already know we're not going to get the money.

Comm. Hodges: When do we have this finance meeting? That's the discussion that needs to take place.

Comm. Redmon: They thanked us for coming down and being proactive. They were really happy that we started our budgetary process much earlier than other districts. They thanked us for identifying the cost factors that are making our budget go into a deficit. They identified that. They understood certain things that are going back and forth. We might not have liked the outcome, but we did have a true conversation about the budget for the first time in a long time.

Comm. Capers: What were their cost drivers?

Comm. Castillo: No, our cost drivers.

Comm. Redmon: Instruction and program. It was presented by Mr. Matthews.

Comm. Castillo: The one thing that we did get from the Assistant Commissioner is they have no idea what Paterson is getting next year. It only comes from the Governor. Once he releases his budget, then they know how much money is allotted. From there they do their work.

Comm. Hodges: What about the requirement by the State to provide a thorough and efficient education?

Comm. Castillo: I feel like you were there because we were asking the same questions. He said five times that through the funding formula the Governor did promise to fund all of the school districts adequately.

Comm. Hodges: But they haven't.

Comm. Castillo: Correct.

Comm. Redmon: We stated it at that meeting. We made sure that we were on the record as saying it, but also regurgitated what the President just said to us. Based on the formula, this is what the districts are getting and at the State level there is no emergency aid. Once the funding comes in, they go right back out.

Comm. Castillo: This is something that we can talk about for hours. I want to focus on recommendations for this specific money and then we do have a date for the retreat. On January 9 we do have a retreat to have this conversation. We will go in-depth and also have more detail for the actual budget as well. That's when we are ready to move into further conversations.

Comm. Hodges: There's one on curriculum and one on finance. Which one is it?

Comm. Castillo: The finance one.

Comm. Hodges: Again, I have to agree with Mr. Capers on this. You can't fund teachers. There are other one-time projects.

Ms. Shafer: I just want to be clear with the direction. We are not going to address any class size issues right now and we're just going to do one-time expenditures. If that's the direction, then that's what we'll do.

Comm. Castillo: I do understand the personnel recommendation. Were some of these positions budgeted for this year?

Ms. Shafer: No.

Comm. Castillo: If we hire this personnel back, will we be RIF'g them in May? Are there some savings in the budget because of money left over from this year so we can possibly keep some of these teachers?

Ms. Shafer: The personnel listed here at \$2.7 million is really \$1.35 million because it's a half a year. Half of the expense will go into next year's budget. You're going to have to find another \$1.3 million added to the \$63 million that we're at right now.

Comm. Hodges: So we're going to try to hire these individuals for this school year.

Ms. Shafer: Right. I don't know if everybody understands. We have over 1,000 classrooms over the State recommended class size. These positions don't cover 1,000 classrooms, but they are at the top of the priority. These are at the top that are critical. If we want to do one-time costs, then we have those as well. We do need to hear from the Board what direction they want to go in.

Comm. Castillo: I understand the personnel issues that we have and the classroom sizes. If we go into the direction of personnel then the type of personnel is what I'm having the second guessing on. Though art and music teachers are great, they won't reduce class sizes.

Comm. Capers: They will. I agree on that part. This is only going to be for half a year. Next year they're not going to be here. We're going to be in the same boat.

Comm. Castillo: I got you. I'm confused about something else.

Comm. Capers: I agree with the administrator that it does reduce class sizes. I'm on board with that.

Comm. Martinez: Not to belabor the point, I do agree with what has been stated. My only concern is that it's just not sustainable. Essentially, what we're doing is we're going to bring these folks on only to have to let them go again, which is going to lead to another headline which perpetuates the unfortunately stereotype that we're currently living in right now. Teachers are not going to want to come to this district because you're getting hired for one year if you're lucky and then they're going to let you go. By doing this we're only perpetuating that. In an ideal situation we want to do it this way, but it doesn't play longer term. In the short term it's absolutely what we need. But in the long term it's not beneficial to do this because it just perpetuates that stigma that we have on us right now.

Comm. Olivares: There's nothing really I can say that hasn't been said already. We should look at items such as refurbishing the science labs. This is something that is permanent. Once we do that, this is something that we keep and can use for years to come. We should put more money into programs like that. That's what I feel. To conclude, we're in a crisis and until we talk about serious litigation and suing the State we're not going to get anywhere.

Comm. Ramirez: Everything possible has been said, but I would urge the Superintendent to prioritize some of the personnel items. I do believe some of these people need to come back like the pre-k teachers, kindergarten teachers, and some of the science teachers. I'm a big proponent of art and music, but if we can't have it right now, we can't have it. I don't think all the money should go to one-time projects, though. We do need to bring some teachers back and then we should look into partnership with the city and the county in terms of a SAC position. There are resources on the county and city level that may be able to work with the school district and we don't have to bring a full-time SAC back on to our salary lines.

Comm. Simmons: I agree with everyone else. I think we need to look at what's a priority in the personnel space and what we absolutely have to have. I'm not a fan of filling positions. If we went this route, are we realistically bringing someone in by February just to RIF them in May?

Comm. Redmon: Everything that was said was great, but we also don't want to set a precedent when we try to recruit teachers to come to this district. We set a precedent of them coming to our district not sure if they're going to come here for a year and then we start to get the bottom of the barrel of talent. That's exactly what we're doing. We're going to get the ones other districts don't want and then out of our emergency need we start to take them on. That's not right because we're not giving our students a fair shot when it comes to the best teachers to put in the classroom. We're just setting a precedent that we're not doing it right. Unfortunately, I understand everybody's needs here and we do want to lower class sizes because we're operating at a dangerous rate. But we want someone who can be a quality instructor in front of those kids that we say we want to educate properly.

Comm. Simmons: If we're looking at one time and then narrowing this down, is it possible to put some of this into a savings for next budget year? I know there was conversation about lawsuits against the State. This is probably not going to be popular,

but Newark got \$4 million and Jersey City didn't get anything. Do we really want to sue the State when we got the most?

Comm. Castillo: I do agree with everything that has been said. I do agree with Comm. Ramirez. The one-time purchases are great, but the task that I want to give the Superintendent and the BA is if not all these personnel, are there some people that we can bring back and keep for next year according to some of the Superintendent's priorities in other areas? For example, kindergarten teachers - over 24 kindergarteners in a room is a lot. When you speak about emergency aid from the state, it's facilities, ESL, and special education. These are the three main components of what emergency aid is used for according to the State. These are just seven people that I see. I have to go through the entire list. There are seven or ten that we can bring back, especially for the lower grades in special education and ESL. If there are ways to make sure that they are on, I don't think we still know what it looks like and how many teachers will be RIF'd. Hopefully, I want to say none, but there are some priorities and some things that the administration is bringing forward of some cuts or savings that can possibly go into personnel. Though I get that you don't want to hire someone and RIF them, I don't necessarily think it's a decision that we can make right away. I do understand the importance of personnel. I do get everyone's reasoning behind it. Mr. Matthews, can we look into that and the savings that you're proposing towards personnel, especially to those key elements of kindergarten, ESL, and special education?

Comm. Capers: Let me just clear it up. In the beginning when I first stated, there are 23 personnel actions here. I proposed to bring back 14 of them. The only 8 that I cut was art, music, and one computer teacher. Math, automotive, biology, kindergarten, and nurses I think are all needed. I think that's big. BD teachers, grade 1, and resources teachers are all important. I do want to agree with Comm. Simmons. If we cut 8, we save \$800,000. We can put that into our savings right now. I think that would be fiscally responsible as a district. That's the approach we should be taking while we're facing the financial cliff right now.

Comm. Olivares: Madam Superintendent, did you say this is just a draft?

Ms. Shafer: Yes.

Comm. Olivares: Then it's good that we talk about these things. At least now you can put together a list that is more realistic now you know what it is that the Board is looking for. I suggest you come back with that list. The problem I'm having is the problem everybody else is having. We hire these teachers for a year and then we let them go. Where are we next year? At least if we take care of problems, like the science labs, then they're there in perpetuity for years to come. We don't have to worry about all these teachers we're going to have to let go anyway and it's insignificant. The class sizes we're going to bring down as a percentage is insignificant.

Comm. Ramirez: Madam Superintendent, I know there was an assemblywoman who put in legislature to put the handwriting into the curriculum. Is there funding for that to be included in the curriculum once that law is passed? Maybe we can take out the \$200,000 for handwriting and move that to personnel?

Ms. Shafer: My experience with the State is every time they put a new regulation in, they give you less money.

Comm. Castillo: I understand this is extremely important and I know there is a policy within the district. Talking about our finances and being in a financial cliff, is that a

conversation of removing the \$200,000 for the cursive handwriting resources and possibly adding it to personnel that we may need?

Ms. Shafer: I wanted the entire \$5.1 million to go to personnel because it's about kids and class sizes, but it's not fiscally responsible. So I split it and now I'm going to take direction from the Board. If you want to do all one-time costs, I have sitting in front of me \$24 million of one-time costs.

Comm. Capers: Can we get a list of what are the one-time costs?

Comm. Castillo: It's on top. That's the question that I'm having. I understand handwriting and cursive is very important, but cursive or teachers? How are you implementing these handwriting resources if you have no one to help you implement them? For a teacher to teach cursive you can't have 34 kids in a room. It's difficult. I'm just trying to have a realistic conversation. I'm not taking the importance away from it. I think all of our students should learn to write in cursive, but when we're in a financial cliff and we're in a situation where we're faced with cursive handwriting or staff, in my mind staff is the priority, but that's just me.

Comm. Ramirez: I would agree.

Comm. Simmons: I've had conversations with employers around the city. One of the biggest complaints is that students can't even sign their name.

Comm. Castillo: Commissioner, I completely get it and I'm not saying that cursive writing is not important. I'm also saying that people are signing their names electronically on contracts. But that's a whole other conversation. I digress on that area. If you're talking about cursive writing or giving our students someone to teach them...

Comm. Simmons: Is that body going to be sustainable? That's the real question.

Comm. Castillo: We don't know if it's sustainable. That's why I'm charging that before we have the final conversation for the BA and the Superintendent to look to see if some bodies would be sustainable with the budget solutions that he has to close the budget gap. We haven't given him the opportunity. If more bodies are sustainable, would we be okay with moving this item to produce more bodies this year?

Comm. Simmons: If you're not getting more money, it's not sustainable.

Comm. Hodges: You're halfway through the year. You need to go out and hire teachers who somebody else didn't hire. Most of the teachers who are desirable have been hired already. You're looking at an application process and then bringing them in. You have February, March, April, and then on May 15 they're gone.

Comm. Castillo: We don't know that.

Comm. Simmons: Yes, we do.

Comm. Hodges: My first question was whether or not there was going to be a definite increase in the budget coming to Paterson. If they don't recognize that this level is too low and they've not said that, then you have a problem. All you're going to do is put out a list for February to hire whatever. I want the teachers. I really want the class sizes down. I really do. But what's happening is the level of staff that you're getting is not

what we actually need. The amount of training that goes to these people who are coming in is going to be shortchanged dramatically. Then they're gone.

Comm. Castillo: Before we move on, since it's 9:00, I would suggest that we go into public portion and then we can resume the conversation. Is that okay with everyone?

## **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

**It was moved by Comm. Redmon, 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 Madam Chair, Board members, staff, and community. Congratulations on pulling off the Marching 100. That was phenomenal. Which leads me to say arts is a core curriculum content area. It's not an elective. I was disappointed that I didn't see it in the expectation guides. I ask that you revisit that and add some arts expectations for our kids, if that's possible. I didn't see the details, but I also didn't see a reference to any culturally relevant curriculum. That's something that I also would like to ask you to consider and then with the questions in the guide to offer some open-ended questions. They should actually all be open-ended to encourage dialogue and relationship-building between parents and teachers. I was a little bit stuck on the percentage discussion. I'm sorry Dr. Hodges isn't here. There's always some confusion and I think we need clarity about whether we're raising 5% or five percentage points. 5% of 10% will get you to 10.5%, whereas five percentage points will get you to 15%. I need and I think some other people will ask for some clarity there as we're goal-setting and reporting. The \$5.1 million is good under any circumstances. It's certainly more than we had before. It doesn't meet our need. It does not provide for a thorough and efficient education as of 2017. Someone called for information and reminded me of this number. We were \$280 million underfunded. \$5.1 million, while I appreciate it, feels like hush money. The question was raised how do we sue when we got the most? Because we still didn't get what our kids deserve. We still go at it. We'll continue to fight for more and I hope you'll continue to fight for more and not settle because you got the biggest pot of what they're calling the extra pie because they didn't fill the first pie in the first place. I support the Superintendent's choices. Which of you would say I can't feed my family today because I don't know if I'm going to be able to feed them tomorrow? Our kids are starving. They need those teachers now. They need those things now. They need relief from 40 kids in the class now. I would not say don't hire teachers because you can't sustain them next year. Let's hire the teachers. Let's give our kids what they need. It's about the kids. We can go after the State for more money next year. Never stop. If it takes going to court and carrying it to the highest court, let's do it. There is a court decision that says the State has this responsibility to give our kids what they need for a thorough and efficient education. Finally, I'm going to Pittsburgh to the presidential candidate's forum which is being co-sponsored by one of our alliances, the Journey for Justice Alliance. If I get the opportunity to ask our candidates who are running for the office, I would ask them to fully fund IDEA and Title I because if those federal programs were fully funded, we would not be in the position that we're in now. Join me whenever you can in this advocacy because our kids need it. Thank you.

**It was moved by Comm. Ramirez, 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.**

## Other Business

Comm. Hodges: I'm in virtual agreement with Ms. Grant, except for the point where you hire teachers for three or four months. That's a problem to me. We have to spend money to train them and then they're gone. They're only going to be here for a short amount of time. You've gone from September to January without them. You're going to put them in the classroom for a brief period of time and then they're gone again because you can't hold on to them. Unless we can somehow convince the State this is not the level it needs to be at all. We're nowhere close to that. We have had short-term money in the past. It was deemed to be most effective to go after projects that you could take in and that would remain over a time period, like the planetarium. Things along those lines you're building and it stays here. Ms. Shafer, you said we have 1,000 classes that are not within the specs of the State? How many classes do we have overall? The overwhelming majority of our classrooms are overcrowded and we're talking about trying to cut 60 or 70 of the classrooms to be reduced in size. I'm assuming that the conversations with the State are not going to stop. Somehow there needs to be a message sent from this Board to the State that while we appreciate the \$5.1 million, it still jeopardizes our kids educationally and still falls short of the Supreme Court mandate of a thorough and efficient education. If you don't at least start here this year, you're further jeopardizing our children and we're not going to stand for that. I don't know how to do that other than... Well, there are ways to do that, but we have to do it. We should be demanding more. Jersey City is a whole other situation because they have a tax base problem. We're in a district that has been listed as one of those that should get a thorough and efficient education and adequate funding under the formula to provide that and we're not there. One-time projects make sense. The nurses you can probably hold on to. Four kindergarten teachers, you can only guarantee that you're going to hold on to them between now and June.

Comm. Castillo: I agree. I understand that next year will not look like what we want it to look like. I think we should give Mr. Matthews and the administration the opportunity to present to us if there is any remote possibility. Last year we were able to not touch special education. We didn't make any cuts in special education. Maybe we can add a BD teacher. We didn't make as many cuts in ESL last year. Maybe we can add that and sustain it. We might not fix the problem or hold on to everything, but I think we need to have the conversations if there are any that we can hold on to, how can we make that happen? That's all I'm saying. I think I want to task that to the business administrator. I'm not saying that we're going to get all of the money. I thoroughly believe we need to advocate for that. For right now, these positions are needed and then we can task the administration how many of these we can keep until we can make a final decision. We do have another meeting next week. I don't know if that's sufficient time. Maybe there we can have a different conversation on anything that they can present to us. I just don't want to say we're not going to do personnel and that's it. I'm not comfortable with that.

Ms. Shafer: Just looking at the list I would suggest that we do 10 positions. That's one nurse. When someone is out, we don't have a building covered. People are travelling back and forth and you could have an emergency somewhere. Out of the four kindergarten teachers, I would suggest that we do two. The other two are going to be helping all the classrooms as teachers because they don't have space. Two teachers and to IAs and we have space to open up two new kindergartens. At Don Bosco they don't have a middle science teacher. The BD teacher at MLK is special education. The resource teacher at School No. 16 is special education. The resource teacher at Norman S. Weir is special education and the one ESL. That's eight teachers and two

IAs. Then we can either use the rest of the money for one time or put it into next year's budget.

Comm. Olivares: I don't think she included the automotive.

Comm. Castillo: No.

Comm. Olivares: We all know not all students go to college. They need to learn something like that. I feel it is very important to keep that.

Comm. Castillo: Ms. Shafer, do we have an automotive program?

Ms. Shafer: Yes. I just don't think that is a priority with everything else. If we had the money, we could put it in. All these are priorities. I'm not going to get into what is and what isn't. I just list it. If we don't want to do all of them, then I listed 10 that I think we should do and the one-time costs. For the remainder, the Board can decide if you want us to look at more one-time costs or if we put it into next year's budget. If you put it into next year's budget there's a possibility the 10 positions that we selected and agreed upon may be able to be funded. Again, those 10, instead of being \$1 million, it's about \$500,000 for the half-year.

Comm. Capers: I do agree with Comm. Olivares. I used to work at the automotive shop at Eastside. It's been about three or four years now since that program has been shut down because of the teacher. They didn't have anybody to work or teach the kids. To bring that back right now as an emergency funds, they haven't had it in years. I think we do need this program, just not right now. Nobody has been in there in three years. I think going forward that's something we need to address and I think that program needs to get back going. Right now, as an emergency, I don't think that's wise.

Comm. Castillo: We're speaking about the restructuring of the high schools and since it hasn't been up for a few years it is part of the conversation. To add one right now without putting in resources is going to be a little...

Comm. Capers: Exactly. That teacher is going to be cut and those teachers are really hard to find. Teachers with these types of backgrounds and certifications are going to be really hard to find at this stage of the game. Most of your automotive teachers are already working. To find someone and then RIF them in two or three months is not a good idea. I don't even think the district can find someone right now or someone is going to apply because that person who is going to apply knows that they're going to get RIF'd. I don't even think it's worth even applying. It's going to be in the paper that we're hiring with emergency funds. Who's going to want to take a job like that?

Comm. Hodges: How do we get out of that? It's the truth. That is the reality. It's unfortunate that we have to bring it out here and discuss it, but it's going to happen.

Ms. Shafer: It is about those 29,000 kids who are out there that are in classes of 36, 38, and 40 kids now. That's the problem. Whether we can sustain it or not, we need to make that decision. Either stop the bleeding now or we're going to be just as bad as everybody else and say we can't do it. I understand because we don't know. We don't have a magic ball to say whether or not we're going to be able to fund it next year. Some of those kids won't be here next year.

Comm. Castillo: It's the same conversation we have if our kids aren't performing the way we do at testing. Granted, it's December. The school year is almost over, but at

the same time we say we want to reach 10%, but what are we doing to support those students? I get that financially we're in a tough situation and it sucks, but I go back to my original proposal. The business administrator has heard everyone's recommendation. Let's let the administration see what they can do and then come back and give us the information. We can talk about this literally all night and we're not going to get to an actual conclusion. All of our recommendations and opinions are great. I know everyone is doing it for the best interest of the school district. But now let's send it back to the administration and see what they can come up with. Then we can revisit this conversation.

Comm. Capers: I just want to be clear. What is the Board charging the administration with? We didn't take a collective vote. I know it's a draft, but what are they taking out and putting back in?

Comm. Ramirez: Whatever they feel is a priority they're going to leave. They're going to take out everything that they think there was a consensus about amongst the Board and then come back to us.

Comm. Capers: That's what I was asking. What's the consensus?

Comm. Ramirez: They will present that to us and then we will take a look at it again and throw it back to them or go with it.

Comm. Capers: What's the consensus?

Comm. Castillo: We're going to see how much of these personnel we can actually hire and keep. He's going to look through his initiatives to possible cuts and solutions to see if maybe we can sustain all this personnel. Maybe there are seven or eight that the Superintendent mentioned that through his priorities or savings we would be able to sustain and keep them.

Comm. Hodges: Does this \$100,000 include training for the teachers that are coming on? Or is that just salary and benefits? There's more money because of the professional development that we need to do. That's not listed here as any of those costs.

\*Comm. Olivares leaves the meeting at 9:29 p.m.

## **RESOLUTIONS FOR A VOTE AT THE WORKSHOP MEETING**

### **Resolution No. 1**

Whereas, the Paterson Public School District approves the payment of bills and claims dated December 11, 2019, beginning with check number 220510 and ending with check number 220530, and direct deposit numbers 419 and ending with 442, at a total amount of \$7,057,887.07;

Be It Resolved, that each claim or demand has been fully itemized, verified and has been duly audited as required by law in accordance with N.J.S.A. 18A:19-2.

**It was moved by Comm. Ramirez, seconded by Comm. Redmon that Resolution No. 1 be adopted. On roll call all members voted in the affirmative. The motion carried.**

**Paterson Board of Education  
Standing Abstentions**

Comm. Capers

- Self
- 4<sup>th</sup> and Inches
- Westside Park Group
- Florio Management Company (ACES Program receives donations)
- Insight

Comm. Castillo

- Self
- City of Paterson
- Transportation

Comm. Hodges

- Self
- Jumpstart
- City of Paterson

Comm. Martinez

- Self
- New Jersey Community Development Corporation (NJCDC)

Comm. Olivares

- Self

Comm. Ramirez

- Self
- Berkeley College
- City of Paterson

Comm. Redmon

- Self
- Historic Preservation of the City of Paterson
- County of Passaic

Comm. Rondon

- Self

Comm. Simmons

- Self
- Family

**Resolution No. 2**

WHEREAS, the Alternative High School offers Physical Education and Health courses to meet graduation requirements with a current student enrollment at one hundred thirty (130) students with a projected enrollment of two hundred twenty-five (225) students;

WHEREAS, the current facilities at 350 Market Street do not sufficiently meet the needs of all the students in the physical education/health classes, specifically in regards to adequate indoor space for the myriad of activities for a full school year;

WHEREAS, one Physical Education class period (1:10-2:30) held at the Boys and Girls Club facility, and this does not meet the needs of the other scheduled classes during the day those class periods occurring daily from 7:42-11:46;

WHEREAS, to meet the facility needs for physical education, the YMCA of Paterson will exchange the use of their facility for the Paterson Public School, alternative high school at the YMCA in exchange for the YMCA's use of facility at Paterson Public School, School 20 in the evenings for the YMCA afterschool program for Paterson students;

WHEREAS, there are available times for the YMCA to accommodate the need for indoor facility use for the physical education classes for the students at the alternative high school, at no cost;

WHEREAS; this arrangement will provide the alternative high school the use of the YMCA facility for the following times: Monday, Wednesday, Friday, 7:42-11:46 and Tuesday and Thursday, from 7:42-9:02 and 10:45-11:45;

WHEREAS; this is in alignment with District Strategic Plan: *Goal 1, Teaching and Learning*, "To create a student-centered learning environment to prepare students for career, college readiness and lifelong learning (Obj. 1); *Goal 2, Facilities*, "To enhance and maximize learning opportunities provided by first-class facilities and technological improvements that prepare students for 21<sup>st</sup> century learning (Obj. 1) *Goal 3: Communications and Connections*, "To establish viable partnerships with parents, educational institutions and community organizations to support PPS educational programs, advance student achievement and enhance communication (Obj. 3 and 5)

LET IT BE RESOLVED, for the 2019-2020 school year, Paterson Public Schools, Alternative High School will use the YMCA facilities during the above-mentioned times, in exchange for the use of School 20 for the YMCA afterschool program.

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

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

#### Comm. Capers

- Self
- 4<sup>th</sup> and Inches
- Westside Park Group
- Florio Management Company (ACES Program receives donations)
- Insight

#### Comm. Castillo

- Self
- City of Paterson
- Transportation

#### Comm. Hodges

- Self
- Jumpstart
- City of Paterson

Comm. Martinez

- Self
- New Jersey Community Development Corporation (NJCDC)

Comm. Olivares

- Self

Comm. Ramirez

- Self
- Berkeley College
- City of Paterson

Comm. Redmon

- Self
- Historic Preservation of the City of Paterson
- County of Passaic

Comm. Rondon

- Self

Comm. Simmons

- Self
- Family

### **Resolution No. 3**

WHEREAS, the Strategic Plan for the Paterson Public Schools, Goal #1: Objective 4 ; will expose students to many different real-world experiences, allow them to think broadly and learn how to solve the problems they see within the walls of the classroom and on the athletic court;

WHEREAS, the Eastside High School girls basketball team wishes to participate in Dreams Holiday Classic to be held December 21 - 22, 2019 at Bishop McNamara High School, 6800 Marlboro Pike, Forestville, Maryland 20747;

WHEREAS, the District is committed to exposing student-athletes to opportunities that can further their personal, athletic and social development in various areas; therefore the team requests that the Board support the efforts of providing participation in this one day trip that takes place during non-school hours;

WHEREAS, the proposed trip in which students voluntarily participate will include: basketball showcase competition, campus tour of Towson University, 8000 York Rd., Towson, Maryland and admission into Towson vs Marshall basketball game;

WHEREAS, the athletic department will finance transportation pending board approval, lodging and meals shall be financed by student-athletes (12), staff (5) and security (2);

- Departure: 12/21/19, 9:00 a.m. Return: 12/22/19, 5:30 p.m.
- Lodging: Residence Inn Largo Capital Beltway, 1330 Caraway Ct., Largo, Maryland 20774
- Transportation Account #: 15-000-270-512-051-000-0000-000 - Carrier pending approval

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, which the Board of Education approves this overnight field trip to be held Saturday, December 21, 2019 through Sunday, December 22, 2019. It is affirmed that the coaching staff will chaperone and is paid as per P.E.A. contract

(July 2017 - June 2022 Schedule C - Part 2 Athletic Salary Guides, Group B) as this is a part of their regular coaching assignment. They are as follows: Head Coach Brandon Pilgrim, 1st Assistant Jarel Lowery, and Assistant Tatyana Crawford. May the Board of Education approve the overnight field trip, at its discretion to allow parents to attend as chaperones at their own expense: Samar Fontan, Stephanie Brown-Cobb, Sedrina Austin and Yadria Torres.

**It was moved by Comm. Redmon, seconded by Comm. Martinez that Resolution No. 3 be adopted. On roll call all members voted in the affirmative. The motion carried.**

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

#### Comm. Capers

- Self
- 4<sup>th</sup> and Inches
- Westside Park Group
- Florio Management Company (ACES Program receives donations)
- Insight

#### Comm. Castillo

- Self
- City of Paterson
- Transportation

#### Comm. Hodges

- Self
- Jumpstart
- City of Paterson

#### Comm. Martinez

- Self
- New Jersey Community Development Corporation (NJCDC)

#### Comm. Olivares

- Self

#### Comm. Ramirez

- Self
- Berkeley College
- City of Paterson

#### Comm. Redmon

- Self
- Historic Preservation of the City of Paterson
- County of Passaic

#### Comm. Rondon

- Self

#### Comm. Simmons

- Self
- Family

**Resolution No. 4**

WHEREAS, on March 15, 2007, the State of New Jersey adopted P.L.2007, c.53, *An Act Concerning School District Accountability*, also known as Assembly Bill 5 (A5), and

WHEREAS, Bill A5, N.J.S.A. 18A:11-12(3)f, requires that conferences/workshops have prior approval by a majority of the full voting membership of the board of education, and

WHEREAS, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:11-12(2)s, an employee or member of the board of education who travels in violation of the school district's policy or this section shall be required to reimburse the school district in an amount equal to three times the cost associated with attending the event, now therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education approves attendance of conferences/workshops for the dates and amounts listed for staff members and/or Board members on the attached and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that final authorization for attendance at conferences/workshops will be confirmed at the time a purchase order is issued.

**CONFERENCE/WORKSHOP REQUESTS**

<b>STAFF MEMBER</b>	<b>CONFERENCE</b>	<b>DATE</b>	<b>AMOUNT</b>
Emanuel Capers Board Member	2020 Advocacy Institute Washington, DC	February 1-4, 2020	\$2,133.62 (registration, transportation, lodging, meals)
Jonathan Hodges Board Member	2020 Advocacy Institute Washington, DC		
Emanuel Capers Board Member	2020 NSBA Annual Conference Chicago, IL	April 4-6, 2020	\$3,327.28 (registration, transportation, lodging, meals)
Jonathan Hodges Board Member	2020 NSBA Annual Conference Chicago, IL		

**Total Number of Conferences: 2**  
**Total Cost: \$11,046.18**

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

**Paterson Board of Education  
Standing Abstentions**

- Comm. Capers
- Self

- 4<sup>th</sup> and Inches
- Westside Park Group
- Florio Management Company (ACES Program receives donations)
- Insight

Comm. Castillo

- Self
- City of Paterson
- Transportation

Comm. Hodges

- Self
- Jumpstart
- City of Paterson

Comm. Martinez

- Self
- New Jersey Community Development Corporation (NJCDC)

Comm. Olivares

- Self

Comm. Ramirez

- Self
- Berkeley College
- City of Paterson

Comm. Redmon

- Self
- Historic Preservation of the City of Paterson
- County of Passaic

Comm. Rondon

- Self

Comm. Simmons

- Self
- Family

**GENERAL BUSINESS**

**Items Requiring a Vote**

***Instruction and Program***

Comm. Castillo: Instruction and Program met on December 4. I was present. We spoke about PARCC and NJSLA data to reflect the growth in language arts. It was about the presentation that occurred today. It was presented to the I&P committee for those who had questions. Approve a partnership with the Division of Learning for vision and screening. This would give an opportunity for students from pre-k to third grade at School No. 5, School No. 10, School No. 18, School No. 28, Dr. Frank Napier, and Senator Lautenberg to have access to vision screening. They would have free screening and glasses as well. This is a service provided to the students in that area. We also approved the partnership with National Winter Activities for students who

participated in winter sports such as skiing and snowboarding. We did this last year. The students had a great time and they will be going again this year from January through June. That will give students from School No. 2, School No. 8, and Norman S. Weir the ability to participate in that. The minutes have been submitted to the drive. They have been uploaded. The meeting ended at 5:40.

### ***Operations***

Comm. Ramirez: Operations met on December 4. Present were Comm. Capers via phone, Comm. Rondon, and myself. Comm. Simmons did not join us that day. We had Ms. Powell, Ms. Vainieri, and Ms. Payne with us. We discussed O-1 through O-5. We went over some concerns Comm. Capers had about the "How is My Driving?" signage on the school buses. Ms. Vainieri is going to do some research with regards to the legislation that was passed requiring that and which of the bus companies are actually implementing it. We also had some questions about some observations we made at the most recent Thanksgiving football game. The minutes were uploaded into the drive. Ms. Powell did answer most of our questions today via an email so we will have that uploaded into the drive as well.

Comm. Castillo: Just out of curiosity, the signage on the school buses...

Comm. Ramirez: Yes. There's a "How is My Driving?" number to call in case you want to report any buses flying.

Comm. Castillo: Are you calling the company?

Comm. Ramirez: Yes. The company should have a number where people can report drivers that are not actually driving safely, which is the same for New Jersey Transit and a lot of companies.

Comm. Castillo: I just don't know how beneficial that is.

Comm. Ramirez: I know. Ms. Vainieri is doing the research because there was something in the legislature. One of our biggest vendors was questioned and they said that the State is actually not enforcing it yet. She's not quite sure if it actually made it through the legislature. She's going to report back on that.

### ***Fiscal Management***

Comm. Castillo: Fiscal management actually met three times since our last meeting. We did have a conversation about the health benefits, which was a presentation that was already given to the Board at the general meeting. We spoke about the budget, but those presentations were also given by the business administrator and the use of YMCA. On November 21 we met about a washer and dryer initiative that Ms. Payne brought to us, which discussed the plan to have two washers and dryers installed at Great Falls Academy to provide assistance to students and families as they help improve attendance. We had a conversation about the business office operation to make sure that more of the operational information is coming to finance so that we can have conversations of what the budget will look like moving forward at a sooner time. Also, requisition rationales were being implemented to all the departments so if you're asking for money it's more of a detailed document of why that is being done. We spoke about the fund balance. All minutes have also been uploaded to the drive.

## ***Personnel***

Comm. Redmon: Personnel met on December 3. Presiding was myself. Members present were Comm. Castillo and Comm. Ramirez via phone. Member absent was Comm. Simmons. Staff present was Ms. Shafer, Mr. Matthews, Mr. Rojas, and Mr. Murray via phone conference. We discussed grievances. The district will discuss in length grievances pertaining to two employees with the resolution the district recommended. We talked about the department reorganization with Mr. Matthews about food services for 2020-2021. Mr. Matthews also discussed the need to build the capacity within another department, but we told him we'd get back to him on that. We also had a job fair on December 5 at 4:00 p.m. in the central office cafeteria. We talked about the true vacancies, which was 62 at the moment. We also talked about the Insight fill rate. On December 3 it was 94.5%. We talked about the Board packet. If you need any information regarding personnel, you can also look at our personnel drive. Everything is updated. The reorganization chart is up there also. I'm concluding my report.

## ***Governance***

Comm. Martinez: The governance committee has not scheduled a meeting for this month.

Comm. Castillo: The governance minutes have been submitted to the drive.

## **Committee Reports**

### ***Facilities***

Comm. Castillo: Facilities met yesterday.

### ***Parent/Community Engagement***

Comm. Castillo: Parent/Community Engagement hasn't met.

### ***Government Joint Education***

Comm. Castillo: Government Joint Education hasn't met.

### ***Policy***

Comm. Castillo: Policy has not met.

### ***Technology***

Comm. Castillo: Technology has not met.

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

The meeting was adjourned at 9:40 p.m.