

MINUTES OF THE PATERSON BOARD OF EDUCATION BOARD RETREAT

April 8, 2019 – 5:55 p.m.
Administrative Offices

Presiding: Comm. Oshin Castillo, President

Present:

Ms. Eileen F. Shafer, Superintendent of Schools
Ms. Susana Perón, Deputy Superintendent

Comm. Emanuel Capers
*Comm. Manuel Martinez
Comm. Eddy Olivares
Comm. Joel Ramirez

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

Absent:

Comm. Jonathan Hodges

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

Comm. Rondon read the Open Public Meetings Act:

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

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

**Board Retreat
April 8, 2019 at 5:30 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.

SUPERINTENDENT'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ms. Shafer: I just have a couple of announcements. I know there was a question about the School No. 13 basketball court. We have been notified that he has all the money but that the GoFundMe was for activities for the kids like those blowup things that the kids slide down and all that. He told the principal today that he has all the money he needs for the basketball court.

Comm. Redmon: Does he have a contract?

Ms. Shafer: Yes.

Comm. Redmon: The contract was submitted to the district?

Ms. Shafer: Yes. Cheryl, do you have the contract that he signed?

Ms. Williams: The other piece that he gave was the guarantee that they gave the money. That's what they said. The agreement was the contract.

Comm. Redmon: They don't have the physical contract. They just have the agreement that the money will be received.

Ms. Williams: It was a short paragraph.

Comm. Redmon: It was a quote. That's the email that we got. I just want to make sure that the actual transfer of funds has nothing to do with the district.

Comm. Castillo: I called Ms. Warren this morning and I spoke to Annette and we were going back and forth trying to figure out the verbiage. It wasn't plain, but it does make the two organizations liable for all costs.

Comm. Redmon: I just want to make sure the district is not liable.

Comm. Castillo: It says it in the documentation that the two organizations are liable for all costs for everything. It actually specifies the various things in the agreement.

Comm. Simmons: I just have a concern that he went ahead with this and secured funding without having a conversation with the district.

Comm. Castillo: He did have a conversation with a previous Board member.

Comm. Redmon: But that's not the district.

Comm. Simmons: That's not the district.

Comm. Castillo: Correct, but when you reach out to a Board Commissioner and they tell you it's good... He wasn't notified of the proper protocol. As soon as we told him he started moving around. He was told it would be fine. It could have been miscommunication, but that's what he got. As soon as he reached out to a few of us, he filed the paperwork and came to the district.

Comm. Simmons: The issue is that they're doing work. He basically went into an agreement without talking to the district. That's an issue. It means anybody can do anything they feel like doing on district property.

Comm. Capers: That's true. That's an issue, but that's not the first time it happened. That means we have to change the culture.

Comm. Simmons: The culture change is now.

Comm. Capers: Let's be consistent in this conversation. That's what I'm saying.

Comm. Redmon: Two meetings ago we sat and we were upset as Commissioners. An advertisement was put out through the district. The district members only found out because it was advertised in the public media. We had a fit about not being notified. The questions that we're asking now I'm asking to make sure that we're setting a precedent. This should have been to policy because I think we asked for this to go to policy. When people come to the district to do any kind of projects for the district, they have to go through the proper protocols. We wanted it to go to governance so we can make sure legal looks at it. It then goes on to the other committees that it needs to go to. It's not that we're picking on this individual. I just want to make sure that we're covered by all bases. When they start construction and we don't dot our I's and cross our T's, we can be held liable for a lawsuit. That's the only reason I asked where the money was coming from. He told us it was no cost to the district. Who is getting paid? How are they getting paid? That was my next question.

Comm. Capers: I totally agree. I'm saying moving forward we have to be consistent with everybody. Everybody knows this goes on in the district. We're putting stuff out. The district doesn't know. The Board votes on it. People want to do this and that and we have no idea about it.

Comm. Simmons: This is not just an event. This is construction to the district property.

Comm. Capers: Donations and stuff like that.

Comm. Castillo: It's different when an organization rents out the building goes through the proper procedure of renting out the space. I have to say Ms. Shafer has done a good job because previously it was a free-for-all.

Comm. Capers: Last year with the air conditioners, we saw it on social media before the Board even voted for it. We have to be consistent. I'm not just picking on one thing, but this stuff goes on.

Ms. Shafer: Let me just say that did come to the Board in a resolution. Unfortunately, people get ahead of everything on social media.

Comm. Castillo: They didn't have the air conditioners.

Ms. Shafer: That's a whole other issue about what folks put on social media when the resolution hasn't been approved by the Board yet. Let me just say if anyone from the community or anywhere comes to a Board member with an idea, it may be a great idea, but send them to me or Suzie. That's what happened with this guy. All good intentions, but he went to a Board member and it never got to us. Here we are a year later and we see a flyer on Facebook that there's an unveiling and we don't even know what we're unveiling.

Comm. Capers: Moving forward, we can't just look at people and say they have a date coming up for whatever they want to donate. They were holding us to a date. The Board has to take a stance at some point to change the culture around this whole issue.

Comm. Castillo: I completely agree. The Superintendent let principals know as well what procedure to follow and the information they have to give here and the policy.

Comm. Simmons: It's already in policy. Because there's construction involved who's liable for the permits. There should be architectural renderings. That all has to be

submitted and approved by the city before anything can happen. And it has to be approved by the council.

Comm. Ramirez: I don't think there's heavy construction.

Comm. Capers: They're not breaking ground.

Comm. Ramirez: Mr. Morlino went out and I'm sure he would have told them.

Comm. Castillo: It's minor. It's not like they're breaking the whole playground.

Comm. Simmons: Are they just going over it?

Comm. Capers: They're just putting a floor.

Comm. Castillo: They're going to even it out.

Comm. Capers: They're just putting a floor on there.

Ms. Shafer: They're putting a rubber floor and two new rims.

Comm. Simmons: Who's going to be responsible for maintaining that?

Comm. Castillo: Us.

Comm. Ramirez: It's a gift.

Comm. Simmons: That's not my question.

Comm. Ramirez: France doesn't maintain the Statue of Liberty. They gave it to us.

Comm. Simmons: Right, but there's a cost. When you say there's no cost to the district, there is a cost to the district. The maintenance to that type of rubber surface is not cheap.

Comm. Castillo: In the resolution that I read into the record it does specify that we do the maintenance.

Comm. Capers: When people donate playground equipment, do we contact those people?

Ms. Peron: We do. It becomes our property.

Comm. Simmons: When we say that there's no cost to the district, there is a cost.

Comm. Castillo: There's no cost to build it. There's a cost to maintain it.

Comm. Simmons: But they have to be maintained yearly.

Comm. Castillo: Correct.

Comm. Capers: It's the same thing for playgrounds and everything else.

Comm. Simmons: What's the estimated cost of maintaining the rubber surface? It's the same surface.

Comm. Capers: It is, but you're talking about a bigger surface.

Comm. Olivares: We maintained what was there before. We were responsible for that maintenance so this just takes over.

Comm. Simmons: We're talking about a different material. It's not that I'm against it. I just need to know. When we say there's no cost, there is a cost. We have to understand what we're getting into.

Comm. Castillo: I remember through one of the programs we have through facilities they come in and inspect our playgrounds every so often. It's through a program that we purchased for something else and that's one of the benefits. I know they do help with some of the maintenance on it. Would this fall into that? Technically, we're not paying an additional amount for it. It's just part of that benefit.

Comm. Simmons: I'm asking that question because if you look at Bauerle Field, you don't have the equipment to maintain that field.

Comm. Capers: That track is theirs.

Comm. Ramirez: We don't own it.

Comm. Redmon: We still have to maintain the property.

Comm. Castillo: Technically, it's ours to maintain.

Comm. Capers: Who paid for that field?

Comm. Castillo: We did. We just don't own it.

Comm. Redmon: It's owned by the city.

Comm. Castillo: Let's move on. I don't know the specifics. We can ask Mr. Morlino because I know you're the facilities chair. At the next meeting we can ask him if that would go into that same program. He will know what you're talking about. I just don't know the specific name.

Comm. Capers: When are they starting?

Comm. Castillo: Last week after approval.

Comm. Redmon: They were waiting for something.

Comm. Castillo: They were waiting on the approval.

Comm. Redmon: They got the approval, but they weren't going to start right away.

Comm. Castillo: It's a groundbreaking.

Ms. Shafer: They changed the April 27 unveiling to May 18.

Comm. Capers: Can we have Mr. Peterkin and his team come in at the next facilities meeting and do a whole presentation?

Comm. Castillo: He did it at the meeting.

Comm. Capers: I'm going to ask these other questions.

Comm. Redmon: It's already approved. What questions are we asking?

Comm. Castillo: My question was for Mr. Morlino on our maintenance side. He was up there and answered all of our questions.

Ms. Shafer: All of you received this flyer. We're ready to open the Madison K Student Drop-In Center. We already have the bilingual classes going on. The only piece that we're not going to be able to open right away, because we still need some funding, is the dental clinic and the pediatric area. If you have a minute, you might want to stop by and see that.

Comm. Capers: Are they doing a ribbon-cutting?

Ms. Shafer: Not yet. They're doing it after the break. My last item is the staff here worked very hard to ensure that the Board is informed of everything that goes on, whether it's through a committee or email whenever we have a situation like this morning with Silk City. What we can't have continue to happen is for Board members to go to the newspaper when we are being transparent in committee meetings. That has to stop. I can't stop you from doing it, but I can only tell you I've been here a long time and the perception of this district has never been good. We are trying very hard to change that with positive news stories. People aren't here who used to capitalize on doing things like that. When we come to a committee meeting and we're transparent with the information that we provide, for a Board member to take it to the paper rather than come to the Superintendent or the Deputy Superintendent is not conducive for moving the district forward and also for transitioning to local control. I would just ask if you have any questions or problems or you hear something at a committee meeting and you want to know more about it, it's not that we're hiding anything. We're coming to you with the information. But to go to the newspaper, you don't even give us a chance or an opportunity. Some of the things that are going to the newspaper really... I'll save my own comments to myself. If you could just bring it to the Superintendent and Deputy, we would certainly appreciate it as we try to move into local control and change the perception of the district. Thank you.

Comm. Castillo: We also want to make sure that it's correct. We don't want to give wrong information. Now the community is calling and we're all trying to figure out what's going on. At the end of the day, the information wasn't correct.

HIGH SCHOOL REVIEW

- **Graduation Rate**

Ms. Shafer: The Assistant Superintendent for Unit III, which is the high schools, will go over our High School Review.

Mr. David Cozart: Good evening everyone. What you have before you is a PowerPoint which represents the high school finding you have there. However, we're not going through the whole PowerPoint. We're only going over the section for graduation rates. Eastside High School is divided into three schools and Kennedy is divided into four.

The other types are offsite academies. Looking at the graduation rates you will see that over the four years the 2015-2018 graduation rates. We started off in 2015 with 78.26% and it went up to 78.27%. Our high was 2017 at 87.87%. We went down to 84.79% last year. The graduation is now done from September of the senior year to June. It's actually a four-year span. I will go over that in a second. That considered cohort. When you see each of the schools, you will see there's no graduation rate data for Garrett Morgan for the first two years. The State only reported in 2017-2018. That's why it's missing these two years. All this information you can find on the State website. You'll see these other schools from 2013 to 2017 made some increases. In 2017-2018 we had some decreases for most schools. The biggest drop is what we had with GOPA. It went from 85.35% in 2017 to 72.77%. That was the biggest dip we had in graduation rates for all the schools.

*Comm. Martinez enters the meeting at 6:15 p.m.

Comm. Simmons: Were there administrative changes?

Mr. Cozart: That was the first year. In fact, in the last two years GOPA had new leadership. The graduation requirement is 125 credits and kids would be eligible to graduate, but you have to have the right credits to graduate. The number of students who came in grade 9 who were exiting in graduation 12, where are they in grade 12? The expectation is that the kids who came to you as freshmen should leave at the other end. We know our population is very transient. We have kids coming and going. When they come to us, we absorb the cohort rate. We track it that way. The schools track kids coming and going by the cohort, not by the month they came into the school, and in doing that we have to verify the credits. These are the required credits that make up the 125. I'll give you a copy of the presentation before I leave. The class of 2019 as freshmen we had 1,838 students. We currently have 1,542 seniors. There's already a gap of 296 students that's different. Each school has the list. There are 15 kids missing from ACT, and so forth. The school goes through a regular check called a cohort management report. They check with the State to find out if kids transferred and where they went. If kids leave the district as transfers, we have to know where they went. Let's say they're going to Santo Domingo. Fine, but that's considered a dropout until we find out where they went to.

Comm. Simmons: That adversely affects our dropout rate if we don't get that information.

Mr. Cozart: Correct. We have to verify every transfer that went out. When kids go to Georgia, we have to follow up and find out where in Georgia. This time we do not give parents any information except the transfer records. That's it.

Comm. Redmon: So they don't get transcripts anymore?

Mr. Cozart: No transcripts. No report cards. Nothing! That requires the other school to ask us for the information. Then we can verify that attendance and know they're enrolled. That goes down as a transfer for us.

Comm. Redmon: How long do we have to get the report for that?

Mr. Cozart: Until we find them. We keep going for them. What we are doing now that we weren't doing in the past is we're going behind all those numbers. We keep going because we have to make sure that every kid that left us has been accounted for over that same time period.

Comm. Castillo: So when they go out of the country is where it becomes even more difficult. Once they're in D.R., you're really on your own.

Mr. Cozart: How do you know for sure they left to go to D.R.? When they say they're going there, we ask them for airplane information. Then we can start making phone calls to make sure that child has reported to school. We do the extra step there. If they left and came back, we would never know because they never came back to school. But when they actually left, we know where they went to because now we have documentation behind it saying this is where they went to. Every year we have opportunities multiple times during the year to appeal that with the State Department. We give all that information to the State and they say yes or no on the appeals. The main thing about what we're doing differently now is that we're actually going behind those that we couldn't find before and considered unverified and checking again. We check Facebook and social media. We found some kids that actually came back right here in Clifton. Sometimes we also encourage those individuals who have siblings to look at their records to see if they're still in school. Just because the older one left, we want to make sure. I used to be a credit collector. That way we have an idea of where they are. In the past, that wasn't done. Now we're going back to check. This is the number of kids we have. They started off as freshmen, which is grade 9, and what we have now in grade 12. All of these kids are not the same students, but the majority of them are.

Comm. Redmon: When we find the information when they're transferring in and out, does the percentage go back to the year they came out? Does that change the percentage?

Mr. Cozart: It goes to that cohort they're attached to. If they left at grade 11, they're still attached to that cohort when they came in grade 9. A perfect example is the situation we have at Passaic County Tech. The kids enter Tech at grade 9 and all of a sudden they excuse them out of their building and they come back to Paterson. For their records it's a transfer. As soon as we receive them, they go in our books and they come out as non-completers. It hurts our graduation rate. Their part is fine because they go out as a verified transfer. They get credit for that child transferring out of their building and we get stuck with this child with no credits or low credits. Once they come to our district and we sign them in, we own them.

Comm. Simmons: When they transfer in, do they go into the cohort?

Mr. Cozart: Automatically.

Comm. Simmons: Automatically they go into the right cohort.

Mr. Cozart: All the seniors come to us.

Comm. Ramirez: We choose the cohort.

Mr. Cozart: Right. When we go through the process, MIS gives us the information. Eric verifies it too. We check and check the cohort component because that's an opportunity for us to gain kids. What we have now is the grades. One week after a marking period each principal receives a student tracker. They receive the grades by name of all the students who received a grade less than C. Ds are in there too. All kids less than a C for English, math, and science. What you have here shows the first and second marking period grades. When I break down the information from central office,

some of the students are the same. Sometimes it's not. Some are not the same in all three sections. For example, in English we have three students that failed three English classes. This means you have three students making up English classes in grade 12. That's kind of hard. That child probably needs to go to summer school. Now they're tripling up on the English class and going to the regular schedule. This is one course of English. This is two courses of English. This is three courses of English they're in.

Comm. Castillo: How do we even handle that? We have a student who is failing three courses in English at 12th grade. What do you do then?

Comm. Simmons: They're actually taking it at that point.

Mr. Cozart: They're taking the courses all at the same time. You see in this particular case they're not successful.

Comm. Redmon: This is not through credit recovery.

Mr. Cozart: This is the course they're sitting in.

Comm. Castillo: So if they finish all of their credits and they're done by 11:00, then they stay for the extra and take another two classes?

Mr. Cozart: Yes. Students who have actually fulfilled their credit requirements are the only ones who should be considering an opportunity to have early schedules. Other ones who still need to come back for credit recovery for previous courses in the past, we ask for them to stay behind and put that course into the schedule without going to credit recovery, if possible.

Comm. Redmon: The students that are doing the auto requirements throughout the day, those that have to make up the classes, they should stay there all day. It will lessen our rate for summer school and it should be mandated.

Mr. Cozart: We encourage every year for the kids to go to summer school and each year some kids don't. We have more kids who are eligible for summer school than who actually report. A lot of times we find out that the freshmen and sophomores are the ones who are not going. In some schools they may double up those courses in the following year.

Comm. Castillo: Is there any way that we can remove the option of credit recovery to a per-case scenario? Some kids know that it's available, so they will say they don't have to come because worst case scenario they will take credit recovery. These kids are making these plans.

Mr. Cozart: Credit recovery is not as easy as they thought it was. The program changed.

Comm. Castillo: They don't know what they're in for.

Mr. Cozart: That argument held true three years ago. We changed the platform. Now you have to master the course.

Comm. Castillo: Correct, but some kids don't know that. Just the name alone makes it sound like an easy way out.

Mr. Cozart: The biggest part we have with that is going to be the physical education classes when you have kids in summer school complaining it's too hot. Every year I get parents calling saying it's too warm, why are the kids outside running. My response is that's part of the requirement and they should have passed during the school year. They continue to make it up. Physical education is one of those courses. For the past two years people have realized summer school is not guaranteed anymore.

Comm. Castillo: Why are we offering gym in summer school?

Mr. Cozart: It's a state requirement for graduation.

Comm. Simmons: Are we offering only the things that are required for graduation?

Mr. Cozart: Yes.

Comm. Castillo: The way it's conveyed to the student is that it's an easy way out so they can be lazy in this area here. It's not all students, but some because I've heard it. I don't have to do it because I can just take credit recovery or summer class. It's no big deal. I'm not doing anything this summer. This is actually the conversations that they're having.

Mr. Cozart: Because our budget in the past two years has changed the summer school structure, grade 12 gets priority and we move backwards. That also stops some of that component. Now they know it's not available for them. In summer school we take our kids first. The kids that go to the county schools as well as the parochial schools, our kids come first.

Comm. Redmon: That should be because you fit where you get in. You didn't do what you were supposed to do when you were in your district. They can come in from out of district and go to summer school.

Comm. Capers: What do you consider out-of-district?

Mr. Cozart: Outside Paterson Public Schools and a non-resident of the City of Paterson.

Comm. Capers: How many kids are those?

Ms. Shafer: Less than 20.

Mr. Cozart: We only have one student who came in as a non-resident in Paterson. Their parents signed them up for two courses. The child took up one. You receive the money and you have to give the money back to the parent. That was only one since I've been here.

Comm. Simmons: Can we charge PCTI students even if they are Paterson residents?

Comm. Capers: I say charge them.

Comm. Simmons: If my son goes to PCTI and he has to go to summer school, I have to pay for it.

Comm. Capers: Even charter schools. I wasn't going to say it, but...

Mr. Cozart: It has to be a Board policy.

Ms. Peron: We have to look at the code and see.

Comm. Simmons: I think they all should.

Comm. Redmon: Would we be able to implement it this year?

Mr. Cozart: It would have to be for the following year.

Comm. Redmon: It would be for 2020-2021?

Mr. Cozart: Correct.

Comm. Castillo: You can't have the kids from here pay for summer school.

Comm. Redmon: Why not? They should have sat in the classroom and got what they needed.

Comm. Castillo: Some of our kids are lazy. Some of them are going through some situations. We already have kids with free and reduced lunch. We know the situation in Paterson. To have some of these parents pay who probably can't afford it, it will probably move the kid back or have them even drop out. I understand that with Tech they chose to leave.

Comm. Redmon: It's not about Tech. It's about our own district. This will put the onus on some of the parents to make sure throughout the school year that their child is doing what they need to do. You don't want to pay that fee.

Comm. Castillo: Some parents won't do it anyway.

Comm. Redmon: They can do it for a reduced price. You don't have to charge them the full price.

Comm. Castillo: I don't mean it to sound in a bad way, but the parent who is not engaged in September, even if you say their child has to take summer school and now they can't because you have to pay, they may not pay it either. They might not be able to afford it and some parents are so disengaged that they won't figure it out.

Comm. Simmons: This is my argument with this not being able to afford it because I see it so much. My phone is five years old. There are kids with I-phones 10. I work every day. I can't afford Jordans. At some point we have to change the culture. It's going to hurt in the beginning, but I think it's better for us to change it before we're forced to change it. If we're forced to change it, it's not going to be good.

Comm. Castillo: It's not our fault.

Comm. Capers: Say we move forward with it and a parent doesn't pay. What would happen to that student?

Ms. Shafer: We'll send you to the house to get it.

Comm. Castillo: Some kids who can't afford it just won't get it.

Ms. Peron: And then they drop out and don't graduate and we miss educating them.

Comm. Redmon: We're still in the same predicament with our graduation rates.

Ms. Peron: Absolutely. We're in the business of educating.

Comm. Simmons: Here's the reality. At some point we have to start teaching accountability. In the workforce that doesn't work. I remember when I was in high school if you cut classes three times, you lost credit for the year and you had to take that class again.

Ms. Shafer: What you could do is phase it in. It costs \$300. Maybe year 1 everybody has to pay \$25. You phase it in and then next year it goes up and up. Our parents cannot pay \$300. They can't even pay \$200.

Comm. Castillo: The parents who don't know because they won't know, come September their kid fails and they will say they didn't know.

Ms. Shafer: I think you could probably phase it in somehow, but at a small amount and then continue to increase it.

Mr. Cozart: I just want to add to this conversation one thing. We do a great job at offering kids every opportunity possible to be successful. But because of the fact that we've given the AP courses and dual enrollment courses, there's no ownership on them. In other districts you have to pay for the same services that we have for free. Even a nominal charge people will respect us in-house as well as outside the district looking into us. We can't continue to give and not get anything back from them. There's no way in the world we can charge \$300. I know that part. But even if we charge something and say this is the fee for summer school per class.

Comm. Ramirez: Have we looked at the census data about Paterson residents and our socioeconomic issues in Paterson? We're just going to add more to the burden of these people. I'm all about holding people accountable, but making them pay \$300 for summer? Even the AP courses, you're talking about communities that can afford to pay it and send their kids to private tutors. I have friends that actually run companies that go into people's homes. These are other communities, not us. We have to open our eyes, wake up, and realize who we're serving.

Comm. Martinez: I agree with the sentiment, but it's a matter of priorities. As Kenny was saying, if your kid is disrupting class and bringing home Ds and Fs but wearing brand new Jordans, then you're a part of the problem. The socioeconomic realities are what they are, but they still come dressed with the latest phones.

Comm. Ramirez: How do you know those things are not given to them by someone else?

Comm. Simmons: Because I see the line at Foot Locker when the newest Jordans come out.

Comm. Ramirez: I don't think that's something we need to be looking at as Board members.

Comm. Castillo: I think that's a portion of the community. That might not be every child.

Comm. Olivares: In our community these parents have a sense of entitlement to this education. It is bad as it is, but just imagine these parents if you start charging them complaining and going on social media that we have the worst education and now we're trying to charge them for it. All I'm saying is to think twice.

Comm. Simmons: That's not what we're saying. I think we're talking about summer school. Summer school isn't guaranteed. Most districts don't have summer school anymore. What if we just stopped doing summer school?

Comm. Redmon: I'm sorry, Comm. Olivares. I just can't sit here and allow you to say that we're giving a bad education. From the tools that we're providing our students we're trying to have a proficient education that we can afford to pay at this particular time with our budget cuts.

Comm. Olivares: It doesn't make it any better.

Comm. Redmon: I'm not saying it doesn't make it any better, but by the same token we try to make sure we educate every child that walks through this door with the amount of money we have. That's the reason why we fight so hard to say that our kids in the City of Paterson don't get what they deserve. The mindset that you're thinking that we're giving them something that's low and inefficient has to change. If we're sitting here to represent that we're trying to make our students better and make sure this community gets better, then our mindset as an adult sitting at this table has to change. We can't be part of that solution that beats up the system saying we're being low class. When you're a person that cares about education, you'll get it by any means necessary. Everybody was not born with a silver spoon in their mouth. By the token you want to make sure that you can get a better way to find your families to get out of certain communities. The way I'm hearing you, it seems like you're downgrading what we're trying to do here and that frustrates me.

Comm. Olivares: I'm not downgrading anything. I'm saying that this is the culture that we're in. It's a reality whether you like it or not.

Comm. Redmon: It's not my reality. I'm sorry. I have to disagree with you.

Comm. Olivares: You're pleased with the education that...?

Comm. Redmon: I'm not pleased with it. I think we can do better, but it's not my reality.

Comm. Castillo: Let's focus on the topic at hand. Mr. Cozart still has to go through the presentation. Let's have Comm. Simmons ask one more question about that. I think it's a conversation that we can have depending on what we think about it. Let's finish the presentation and then we can open up for more questions.

Comm. Simmons: I like what Ms. Shafer said about phasing it in. How do we get the students and parents to understand that they are also accountable for their education? I can lead a horse to water, but I can't make him drink. What can we do so that students and parents are more accountable?

Mr. Cozart: That has to become a priority for the district and for each of the schools. That has to become a campaign push all year long. We don't want to spring it on them. It would take me the whole year to speak with the guidance counselors and school principals and have community forums throughout the whole year so they know it's a year away and coming up.

Comm. Capers: Tech did the same thing when they stopped offering summer school. They did a whole campaign in the schools. I was there. They actually had assemblies and classes so every student understood if you fail, your parent is going to have to pay because you have to go out of district.

Comm. Castillo: I think we should do a campaign on involvement as well. I can only speak about myself. My parents were never involved in my education. My brother is still in high school and my mom doesn't understand the language. I've always been the point person. When I was in school, I was basically on my own. They knew I was going to school, but that's about it. That's that conversation when people come from various countries and education is not a priority. I'm not saying all, but in some cases education is - learn how to read and write and go work or get married. That's the mentality of a lot of the parents in the community.

Mr. Cozart: That has an impact on us now. We have some kids who are 18 being put out of their homes. They're on their own now. That impacts our graduation rate.

Comm. Castillo: Absolutely. I was told to get married and have a child by 18.

Mr. Cozart: Those are the things we're doing now. There are barriers we have. Starting two years ago when we first had the summer school issue, people were shocked. It's not open to everybody. We cut our budget. We couldn't use the same amount of teachers we had. We even had to open up a course last year for courses that were not offered for doing virtual. This way we open up for all the kids coming for credit recovery to make up those courses that weren't offered in summer school. We did that last year. We kept telling them summer school is not promised to you. I've been the preacher of bad news and some schools are not guaranteed. What are you going to do now? Unfortunately, when I'm interacting with them, they're our seniors. We normally do that after the first report card. We track all the kids. Each school does a good job of tracking their kids. Here these are different numbers, but when I go into the individual sheets, I can tell you what the kids are. I tell the principals I can see the data, but you know the kid. We all have meetings around the performance. We had one young lady that went to CAHTS. She is up there to graduate, but her attendance was bad and she just came off. She had a car accident in the summertime. From there she had other issues, but she's only one class away.

Comm. Redmon: If we're really serious about this campaign, we have an adult learning school. I went to the graduation last year and to hear some of the stories from the students, I think they should also come back to our schools to talk to our seniors. I'll never forget. I think it was the valedictorian of last year's class. She talked about her trials and tribulations when she was in high school and now she has children of her own that are currently in the district and made her come back to school. She wished she could have done it much earlier. If we can get people who live in the community to give their testimony to tell them they don't have to go through those changes to make sure they stay on the right track, I think that would be a great campaign because you have real people you can talk to.

Mr. Cozart: And close to their age too.

Comm. Redmon: A lot of those adults are 23 years old that decided to come back. The oldest one was 28 years old. She decided to come back because she was having difficulty trying to help her current students in the district to have the information. If we're going to really put that campaign out we need to add that component. The only

reason I know our campaigns work is when we did Show Up. I've seen that shirt so many times and in so many places throughout this community two years after we initiated it. I think that would be a major part of our campaign if we really want to stay focused and make sure that these kids know that you might have a rough time, but we have somebody who made it.

Mr. Cozart: That would be good to hear. One of my students from School No. 26 got up there and spoke and brought tears to my eyes because what she went through at School No. 26 and then to Eastside. I was proud of her. Those kinds of stories kids need to hear because in some cases the kids feel like they can't do it and they're gone. It was different from the 1990s and early 2000s. In 21 days they were gone automatically and we didn't see them. They never dropped out, they were just not coming. Now we're stopping all that. If you want to drop out, we're going to try to make every effort to have that face-to-face with you to find out why you're leaving. It's a different touch now. Before, it was number 21 and you're gone. We didn't see you. Now we're stopping that component because we don't have the truancy officers doing that part. The principals are doing it themselves. We're having those face-to-face conferences especially with the seniors, but now we're dropping down to the juniors and everybody else. The whole team now understands we're checking the whole four years, not just their senior year September to June. That's the big difference now. We're tracking the whole four years to have a conversation. These numbers went up and down. We had two years in the 1970s and two years in the 1980s. We didn't want to go back to the 1970s as a group. More people are starting to buy into this because they're starting to understand what's at stake. That's why everybody is trying to fight to make sure who's coming to their schools. Now our schools are smaller in some aspect, but the difference is that the kids have more opportunities to connect. The principals are looking at them a lot more because now they know other people are helping them and looking for them. To me, it's disrespectful if I come to your school not knowing your data. I come asking you how you are addressing so-and-so. That means now I'm looking into your data. I'm asking you the question how you're handling this. I'm not doing it for you. You had 28 kids this marking period who failed. What are you doing to address it? Do you have parent meetings? Maybe I'm micromanaging by asking the questions. Before that question was never asked until later on, but now we're asking on a regular basis how are we doing, what are we doing, and what can we do? Sometimes the calls go out. It's not enough, but it's an added touch letting the parent know their child is in danger of not graduating and please contact your principal. I send those calls out also. It's a different pitch hearing it from central office, but calls do happen and the principals are appreciative. I use their number as a callback number so they get all these calls coming back to them. I want them to have opportunities to meet with them.

Comm. Capers: We can pitch it with the campaign due to budget constraints. If we started early, we can do that whole campaign saying we can't really afford it.

Mr. Cozart: That's true because this is a time everybody knows we're hurting. Right now the reality is we cannot do things the same way we did in the past. There are no guarantees of how much money is coming to us. We all know that part.

Comm. Capers: That will increase parent involvement big time.

Mr. Cozart: The more we keep saying this is what's happening and these are the reasons why it may help some. It may not help others. As long as we help some, it's better than helping none. We have to still make the people aware this is where we are and this is why. Tomorrow is not promised to us. As much money as we want now and we're asking for, it's not guaranteed. But if we go down without fighting, we'll never

know. If we put up a good fight, now we just hope and pray that other people at the other end will receive it. If not, then what happens? A number of kids who are not graduating high school cannot go the other way. The number of kids we had dropping out and not finishing school in grades 9-11 the 12th grade teacher wouldn't have an opportunity to see them. Making sure the kids go to summer school, get the work done in class and not have to go to summer. We're hoping to have programs after school. We're doing different things now to keep them from falling down. Again, we're going to have to make that become a part of our culture.

Comm. Simmons: I see you're about to come to the attendance. It used to be 21 days.

Mr. Cozart: It still is.

Comm. Simmons: At 21 days they go...?

Mr. Cozart: The reason Paterson used to have 30% to 40% graduation rate was at 21 days kids were just being dropped automatically with or without principal involvement. We had truant officers and attendance officers doing that. If in 21 days they didn't find you, you were gone. The old Eastside and Kennedy had those numbers. Now we don't have the truant officers or the whole attendance office anymore doing this. Principals now have opportunity to either drop the student from the roll or keep them on the roll. However, that's their choice. If we want to drop the student from the roll, we want to make sure we're doing everything possible. We want to make sure we give every kid every opportunity to be successful. That's why a lot of principals don't want to drop the student after 21 days for unexcused absences. Now they are having the conferences with them. Now they're trying to find out why they were absent from school and what can they do. Credit recovery is coming into place. In some situations, they are getting makeup work to prevent all that. In the past, the principal had no option. It was 21 days and you had a list of people who were dropped from the roll. The principal was not part of that process. Now they own that process and when they drop a student who had 21 days or more of unexcused absences, they're going to show what they did to find that child. At the same time, to justify the kid who has 50 or more days absent and is still on roll. You have to do both.

Comm. Simmons: That's my question. Is there a ceiling at which it shouldn't even be an option? A student comes to school 180 days and they miss 60 days.

Mr. Cozart: As a policy, no. The policy says we still follow the same state mandate of 21.

Comm. Simmons: It's the principal's choice. If the principal has been talking to the student and doing all these things and the student still hasn't changed...

Mr. Cozart: They can drop them from roll.

Comm. Simmons: I'm asking this question for a reason. Do we need to revisit policy?

Mr. Cozart: The policy is already there.

Comm. Simmons: Right. I'm asking if we should revisit policy and maybe come up with a ceiling.

Mr. Cozart: I don't know because 21 is still state law.

Comm. Castillo: It's 21, but you can't go over 45.

Ms. Peron: We can have that discussion.

Mr. Cozart: It's twofold. Principals are trying their best to maintain these numbers. Once they started getting 75% and above, it's hard for them to maintain those numbers. They're trying to maintain them any way possible by giving those kids extra chances to be on roll students. If they drop from roll, the dropout rate gets hit. Automatically, even if you drop them in 11th grade, you're going to get that cohort hit the next year when they become 12th graders because they're going to be listed as non-completers. People are trying to stop that path from happening.

Comm. Olivares: If you slice back where you have the high school review, taking a glance at it, it appears as if we lost ground at most schools. If you look at the last slide, we went from 88.9% to 81%. At almost all of them we lost ground. Do we have an explanation as to what happened? Do we know why we lost ground in just about all the schools?

Mr. Cozart: A lot of these situations coming from grade 9 were due to the attendance component. Some of the kids are not there. It wasn't so much everybody failing. It was the dropout rate in between where the kids dropped from roll, as well as unverified transfers. Remember, this goes back to 2014-2015. It's a four-year trend.

Comm. Olivares: It's mostly dropouts.

Mr. Cozart: It wasn't so much them not passing the classes academically. A lot of it is based on the attendance component.

Comm. Olivares: We don't know if they're improving the performance but the dropout is bringing down the number.

Mr. Cozart: It has a little bit of both in here. Academically, we can tell you the number of kids who actually passed through the grades they had, but we have to go back and see are they the same students you had in grade 9. Right now we're tracking through the cohort reports for the State. It has on track reports saying that you're on track to graduate or off track because of a grade here or there. That's not there. That's part of our cohort report. That's what we verify. We can't verify the location he went to when those children drop out. In some cases, some kids left us and went to a new school and got a new number. They got a new State ID number.

Comm. Olivares: So we just lost track of them.

Mr. Cozart: Every child has a State ID number. That number is supposed to follow you the whole time. Sometimes the school says they don't have a number for this person and they will apply for a new number.

Mr. Eric Crespo: Districts are not allowed to do that and we've caught them doing it.

Comm. Olivares: It caught my attention and it would appear as if performance is going down. I'm asking myself why this is.

Mr. Cozart: It's mixed between performance and attendance. That's the caveat. You don't see a large dip in most places, but GOPA had the biggest dip and it was due to

attendance. GOPA has the largest Hispanic population and especially the males are not graduating in a four-year time period.

Comm. Redmon: For a lot of different reasons.

Comm. Castillo: A lot of the ELL students.

Mr. Cozart: That's who it is.

Comm. Redmon: The newcomers and now you also have to make sure that they're on level and understand what their graduation material is. A lot of times the students get frustrated and they leave.

Comm. Castillo: Or they don't graduate on time.

Comm. Redmon: Exactly. They have to stay an extra year.

Ms. Shafer: Let me also say 10 years ago our graduation rate was 49%. When you keep climbing it comes to a plateau. You have to settle somewhere. Right now, it looks like we're somewhere between 83% and 88%. We're going to fall somewhere in there. We're as high as 87% and our lowest was 49%. Now we're at 84%. It looks like we're going to be somewhere in the middle of the 80s. That's usually what happens. You plateau and then you increase some more. Some of our schools were at 100% and they'll stay at 100%.

Comm. Simmons: If you look at our rate as compared to other districts around the State, we're really not that bad. We're classed close with Ridgewood.

Comm. Capers: How about compared to bigger districts?

Comm. Simmons: Like Newark? We're better.

Comm. Capers: How about Elizabeth?

Comm. Simmons: We're better. Check it. I just looked at it.

Comm. Castillo: It's on the State website.

Comm. Capers: Ridgewood only graduates 200 people. Do you hear what I'm saying?

Comm. Rondon: If a student is failing in the first marking period and you try to reach out to the parents, is there a sit-down between the student, parent, and principal?

Mr. Cozart: The answer is yes. Each school attacks it a different way. Going back to the attendance department, each school has an attendance committee that reviews all the kids' attendance. It's the same thing with the grading component. With the first marking period some principals will actually pull all the 12th grade kids who failed. They have to have a face-to-face parent meeting that same night when parents come in. The guidance counselors also meet with them too. Some schools are having the student body meeting with those kids after their first marking period and then tracking you through to find out what class you need help in. That's how we know some kids are failing health and gym. If they fail health the first marking period, then they have an opportunity to get health again during the school year. Some of the things that they have asked to do now thinking about this whole process is they want to schedule health

for the first and second marking period. That way if you fail it you have the opportunity to take it during the school year. We're not going through credit recovery and all the contracts. Each school has a different way. Some schools are doing it where the kids are mentors and they break the class up by smaller groups. Now they have the junior and senior class. They're not just looking at fundraisers for the senior prom. For the first time in many years this data is being shared with everybody in the staff. Now the principal is sharing this is what we're doing, this is our team here, this is the 11th and 12th grade team, who do you have, and what are you doing. That's starting to happen now because the guidance counselor can't do all this by themselves. The principal can't say you take care of this because I'm asking the principal what did they do, when did you do it, and verify it on the assignment sheet. Those are the things that are happening now. They review it after each marking period. I met with the whole senior class at Kennedy and we decided after the meeting to not separate them by academy. We wanted everybody coming together. I went to their meeting and they thought it was nice. Mr. Hill spoke and each academy principal spoke. I spoke and I said I want to thank the class of 2020-2021. They all got quite saying, what's he talking about? I said everybody in this room here is in danger of not graduating in June and August. There's no prom here. Call mom now and tell her there are no prom reservations and no graduation. But now you have an opportunity to do this. We did that in February during that second marking period. That got people's eyes wide open, especially with the athletes in the room too. Eastside did the meeting a week before I got there. Mr. Nieves did theirs with all the principals. I went to Kennedy and back to GOPA. They're happy to hear the message that it's not guaranteed. When I finished talking it was quiet because they thought they were marching. Then I started looking around and counting because the embarrassment was over. What are you going to do about it? The teachers and administrators were behind me. You can go see the teacher. Ask for help. Go back to them. They had to hear from somebody this is what we're doing. They take it for granted if the guidance counselor, vice principal, supervisor, and principal met with them.

Comm. Redmon: But you also put them on the spot. Sometimes when you're meeting individually with your guidance counselor you can go back and portray that you're doing the job you're supposed to. Now you put them on the spot with their own counterparts and they know they might not be walking.

Comm. Castillo: It's a reality check.

Mr. Cozart: It had to happen because of the fact that they had to have a shock value. I met with GOPA and I had a group of kids who stayed behind to tell me, "Sir, that's not me. I'm a valedictorian. I just came into the meeting to see what it was about." Kids come saying maybe they're failing, but that's not me. They stayed behind just to tell me who's who. They had to hear that same speech. For some reason they came to the meeting also. Each school is doing that component. The smallest schools have more hands-on because it's a smaller environment. You're talking about 45 kids graduating versus the 125 kids. Going back to the second marking periods, they're doing that now. School principals are meeting with the teams to review student grades.

Comm. Rondon: You said the principal and the guidance counselor can't do it on their own. Do you have teachers helping out a certain amount of students? Do they supervise everyone?

Mr. Cozart: It varies between schools. Some schools may have teams of teachers doing it for 15-20 kids. It all depends what school you go to. Each school has a team doing it. It's not just the principal and guidance counselor doing it. They are working

with teams doing the components. They have parent conferences. They're calling them in to go over with them where they are. They started doing that in the second marking period. The first marking period, second marking period and now going into progress reports. They are doing this now and have that data to support that. It's the same thing here. This is the assembly we had at Kennedy and Eastside. Credit recovery is another issue that's a big point of concern. This is the second year of our new program Ingenuity. It's the second year of the contract. The problem we have now is that we're finding out two things. Number one is trying to break the cycle of last-minute culture. Some kids are doing it, but they wait until after Memorial Day or after spring break to start racking up because now time is short. In this program you really can't do that because now it's based upon actually meeting the core standards, as opposed to a seat time in front of the computer. The kids are able to do this every day all day at home. However, they have to have the test unlocked at the school level. That's the different part. They can do all the course work outside the school, but they have to come back to the school for someone to unlock the test for them to do it there. We're still not having a lot of kids doing this on a regular basis. We're preaching to them they have to do A, B, or C. As you know, I sent you yesterday the exam schedules for Eastside and Kennedy. Eastside and Kennedy are having a second start time to allow kids to come in who are not testing in grades 11 and 12 to do a credit recovery during the daytime while the other kids are doing testing sessions. Kennedy and Eastside are doing that now regarding their test schedules. Everybody else is doing the regular test schedule component. Kennedy and Eastside are bringing in the kids later just to come in and do credit recovery and make it work.

Comm. Simmons: So the students that are in credit recovery don't psychically come to school.

Mr. Cozart: There are two ways. They have credit recovery at the school. We have some sites open after school. Eastside and Kennedy have sites. I think we have one downtown site too. That's one platform. You're not stuck to that. You can do this any time. School has to open up for you.

Comm. Simmons: Are they seniors or juniors?

Mr. Cozart: They're taking it more serious now. They know they need to graduate.

Comm. Simmons: Let's say the student is a sophomore. Do we have criteria for a student to enter into credit recovery where they don't physically come to school?

Mr. Cozart: Credit recovery is only offered to students who fail the course. You can't be a freshman at all, unless you're going to stretch it to health. Most of the time, you start from sophomore year going to senior year. Especially now with the one-to-one devices, they had an opportunity to do all those things. However, our preference has always been the seniors and trickle down to the 11th graders. The sophomores can take it. We're not stopping them from doing it, but our seat preference is going to be the upper grades. All the courses are there and credit recovery is in two ways. One is the platform on the computer where we can track that component. The other one is when the teachers work with you giving you handouts and packets. They may not have to use that computer program. They're going to the teacher to get all the work and signing in that process. The credit recovery is a whole global part. Summer school is considered credit recovery, but the platform we're using through the computer is Ingenuity. Some kids are taking the same platform. You have to understand that same platform can be used to advance courses. That platform takes into consideration that you can read the material, understand the material, and do the math. It's not easy.

Comm. Simmons: I'm playing devil's advocate. If we have a sophomore that has missed 21 days but they're taking credit recovery at home for the courses he failed as a freshman and as a sophomore they've missed over 21 days.

Mr. Cozart: If that child is doing that, that's really rare. That child will only get the credits for the course in the freshman year and not the courses he's currently in now as a sophomore.

Comm. Castillo: Then he can get credit recovery after those classes.

Comm. Simmons: Should it be that they should just repeat their freshman year?

Mr. Cozart: The cohort won't change. You're still going to be on track because they still came in at grade 9. In some schools we're giving that same freshman course in that second year. The only kids who call themselves sophomores are those kids. In actually, you may not have the credits to be a sophomore.

Comm. Redmon: But credit recovery should be offered for one year. It shouldn't be recurrent for each year. For example, you fail your freshman year and this is your first time taking credit recovery in your sophomore year. That option should not be there for your sophomore year. That would give you an opportunity to make sure you now have to learn what you failed and stay on track to make sure you graduate on time. We're not giving them any kind of onus to try to keep up with the graduation.

Comm. Castillo: I agree. It should be a one-stop deal. You get credit recovery one time.

Comm. Martinez: It creates an opportunity for them to back door. They can coast and if they don't get through it this time, I'll get credit recovery and then I'll go; and then the next year, the same thing.

Comm. Redmon: It's my fault that I failed my freshman year. Now I have to make these credits up, but I also have to make sure that I stay on track as a student to make sure that I graduate on time. Now I have to work twice as hard to make sure that I graduate on time. I should not have each year another credit recovery. Freshman year is offered to you. Sophomore year you don't get that offer.

Comm. Simmons: At some point you're going to have to make up credits anyway.

Comm. Redmon: Maybe it is offered to you again in your junior year because now it's giving you an opportunity to make up whatever you missed. In your senior year you're back on track.

Mr. Cozart: There's a certain course structure you have to take to sit down for the test. If you fail, you can't keep staying behind because at a certain grade level there's going to be a new test no matter what.

Comm. Castillo: If you fail math your freshman year, you took summer school. I know credit recovery is both. You're not allowed to take it. You take summer school. In college if you fail accounting once, I had the opportunity to take it one more time. But if I failed it again, you were on your own. It stayed on your transcript. You were able to retake it without it affecting your GPA. Once you failed it the second time, it's on there.

Ms. Joanna Tsimpedes: There are certain courses that are graduation requirements that students have to pass by code in order to graduate. When you're talking about math like algebra I, we all know that algebra I is a predictor for college and career readiness. When they fail the first year, then if they're taking summer school and they pass then go into geometry but they still struggle. Then they continue to struggle when they go to algebra II. In reality, there has to be more for the initial courses that the kids take in their freshman year in terms of making sure the students are equipped with the right tools in all aspects, not just academics. It's not just academics. High school is a big transition from an elementary school where everyone knows your name and you're someone, and then into a large class setting. You're going into a school where you had 100 kids in your class to having 1,000. It's culture shock for our kids too and they're not used to that. One of the things we've been talking about is helping the students assimilate to high school life because it is a big difference. That does have a lot to do with academics also. If the kids don't have support and don't understand what the expectations are, someone in high school is not going to do the same as they did in the elementary school to ensure you have your work. I was a middle school teacher and I was always on my kids. You gave them the opportunity. You want to show that you believed in them and they could do it. In high school you see that it starts changing and kids are now expected to become almost adults, independent, and be accountable for their learning. Whereas before they always had that little bit of a niche where they always knew someone was watching over. We have to do more in terms of preparing our kids to be successful as freshmen. If they don't make it as freshmen, that's when we start seeing our kids just digress.

Comm. Castillo: I agree in the support that the freshmen need. One thing is offering them the support and another thing is allowing them to think that summer school and credit recovery are an option for them if they just don't want to do the work or don't want to focus. We have a lot of very smart kids who do well on the credit recovery online in their own little space as opposed to in the classroom.

Comm. Martinez: They're not applying themselves until they're forced to.

Comm. Castillo: Right. There has to be a way where in a case-by-case situation we can say we're taking it away even though we can give them back the opportunity. It's such a known fact that it can be done and kids don't talk about how hard it is. They just talk about the credit recovery and it sounds good. I think it's that option of them knowing that it's there and that I can sit here on my phone during class because there are 40 or 30 kids in the classroom and I'm sitting in back of the room and it's no problem because of summer school or credit recovery. That's the mindset that I think we need to switch.

Ms. Tsimpedes: One of the things we've tried to do on our end also is after the first marking period how many kids have failed and what are we doing to support them. After second marking period we have to put parameters in place so that every marking period if we see students getting a C or below, what are we doing to encourage that child to do better and provide them more services in terms of tutoring? We have all these programs around the district. How many kids are taking advantage of them?

Comm. Castillo: But we have to pressure them into doing it.

Ms. Tsimpedes: I agree.

Comm. Castillo: In eighth grade I went in math from being A, B, and C and being completely on my own. Now there are 5,000 students and I'm little and I don't know

what going on. They pressure you not necessarily in a bad way. They push you to the direction that you have to go into and know you don't have many options here. It's either you make it or you make it. It's that kind of mentality. It's not to push our kids down. It's to make them accountable for their actions. This is what you have to do and this is your plan A, B, or C. This is your only plan. If for some reason you can't meet those expectations, then we're here to support you and see what else we can do. Once they don't think they have to meet those expectations, I think that's where our problem is. My brother is in high school and he's a pain in my neck. If he can get away with anything, he sure as heck tries. He has some of these teachers wrapped around his finger. If they can get away and think they don't have to do this, then they won't.

Mr. Cozart: Going back to what Joanne was saying, in the district we are putting a course in place for the kids at the high school level. At the grammar school level, they have intervention periods. High school intervention is really limited to the Read 180 program and the math. Their awareness is different. We've started to change the culture regarding what support services we have. The high school is all based upon performance. I have to get through this curriculum so you can pass this test. I may have to rush through because I can't go back to reteach some things. Now we're trying to change that mindset because now the numbers you had before, the principal knows those numbers and now they're asking you what you are doing with this component. We have supervisors going behind saying this is the math group. Here are the math scores for the first marking period. What are we doing here? How are you going back to reinforce lessons that you set here in the lesson plans? Those conversations are beginning to happen. How much are they going to happen in future? We can't tell you. They're conversations we having where we're monitoring lesson plans to see when you're going back to reteach based upon your scores. Now people are looking at the data across the board. I see 24 kids' names, but I don't know who the kid is. They know who the 24 kids are and the story behind them. The principals don't want to give anybody a free pass. That's counterproductive. They want opportunities to hold the kids accountable. Even going back to the attendance component one of the things they asked for us to look into for the future is where they say enough is enough and have the kids come to a body of them to apply to get the opportunity to have the credit recovery piece as well as the student contracts. That way it will eliminate people just saying I don't come to school. The principals have asked for that opportunity for us to look into for the future. We see what we have here. One thing is different, especially for the last couple years walking into the schools and going to the classrooms. Teachers are owning this because they are evaluated on this now. They're taking more of an interest in seeing what they can do. They recognize there are some shortfalls. Some teachers are coming up with suggestions themselves on how to better address the kids. They are offering their time to do different tutoring with them. The culture is starting to shift in that aspect where you're not just a number in the classroom. Some people are taking time to figure out who the name is on a paper and what they can do. We have that in place and the math department put in ALEX this year. The math supervisor every week sends out assessment reports for how much they're using ALEX and if the kid is not on it, then why? Those questions we are asking teachers now. What are we doing to address this component? What are you doing for math? How come you're not doing it here? Those questions are happening more and more with the teachers and the building principal as well as supervisors to hone in on the instruction piece. Teachers are now taking more of an onus on the numbers. One of the things that we're trying to do is the portfolios on the process of graduating. We have the other assessments. We have become an ACT assessment point for the following year.

Comm. Redmon: Will we start offering them at 10th grade? Can they take a pre-ACT test?

Mr. Cozart: I've never heard of pre-ACT. I've heard of SAT. We have ASVAB and Accuplacer. That's also for the kids who are going into dual enrollment and cover this part too.

Comm. Redmon: We don't have to take PARCC anymore. Will we be pressuring those students to take those tests?

Ms. Tsimpedes: For next year since NJSLA isn't a requirement for 11th grade, there is a science component that all 11th graders do take. That's one of the requirements. The other thing we want to do is expose our students to the different tests so that we have more students sitting for SAT, Accuplacer, ASVAB. These students can pass through these assessments. We also need to encourage them and provide them with training also because it is a new type of assessment. They may not have been privy to seeing the type of questions and assessments that they're asking. We need to prepare them better so that they can be successful. Just throwing a test at them isn't going to do anybody any good. We want them to actually feel good about taking the test and feeling like they're prepared so they can have passing scores and it can help them when it comes to making those college choices and decisions. That's what we want all our kids to do.

Mr. Cozart: We have to continue to stress the purpose of this because some people say, "I'm not going to school. Why am I taking this test?" We discussed the fact that they may want to go to school later. Then what? We have to stress the importance of future planning. The ASVAB is helping us and we also offer that throughout the year. We have 131 kids passing this already. This is going to help our graduation rates. Accuplacer is the same thing the community college uses. We do it with the dual enrollments. We have to stress to the kids that you may not want to go to college right now, but in case you do want to go, you have this in your back pocket. We are stressing to these kids to look beyond today. We're adding more of these to the kids' psyche and actually pushing them with more college opportunities. Not just community colleges, but we start talking about college drives, college shows, college fairs, and even trade schools. We want to push what they're going to do after graduation.

Comm. Redmon: Most of our students may not be college-driven. I'm thinking maybe we can have them getting ready for professions. Maybe we should add the component of civil services. You never know. Some of those students who we think may not be college material can be officers right away when they come out. Or they can be something else going into civil service jobs. They still have to take a test and we should be able to prepare them for that test and make them be successful. People are earning careers coming out of high school. It might give them an extra incentive to go back to school.

Mr. Cozart: That shows another opportunity. Some kids may not know what it takes to become a police officer.

Comm. Redmon: You can start with your local county agencies. Just to be a standard clerk you still have to take the civil service test.

Mr. Cozart: That's something we can definitely look into and add to the curriculum. Even if it's going to be another extra class like we do part of a freshman seminar that goes over expectations. It exposes the kids to career readiness. That's something that's realistic. Everyone is not going to school right away. We have to make sure they understand that they have an option a year or two down the road. If we have the score

for them, they're better prepared. The rest of it just goes into the demographics in the book so you see everything else you need. Any questions, feel free to ask me and I can follow up on some you already mentioned. Are there any questions?

Comm. Castillo: At some point I would want us after we take a look at the binders and actually read the information to have a deeper conversation about the high schools. It's the idea I had for today, but what's going on in our high schools? Are the programs working? Is there any that we should revisit? Should we give our students other opportunities? What types of courses are in there? What else can we do? What's the structure of the schools? I think it's important for us to know. I know people still only think Eastside and Kennedy are just one school. That's an explanation I go through five times a year. I think it's good for us to know where we stand in the high schools apart from just the graduation rates.

Mr. Cozart: I agree with you. For some of the programs you won't get data from this year because some of them we won't get to until next year. Our AP course enrollment went up. We still have to see how effective we are regarding the passing rates. All those things will come after the fact.

Comm. Castillo: I think we haven't reviewed Eastside and Kennedy. Are the academies working? I'm not saying that they're not, but we've never asked for an update. We've always been good at creating programs and never checking back on them. How are our academies doing? Are they working? Are kids benefitting from them? Those are all questions that I want the answers to.

Mr. Cozart: Some of this is in there, regarding the programs each school has and the tracks they have. But the hardcore data component is going to take some more time to figure out where they are. Some of those could be perceptions which we need to have some feedback from the kids. Some of the kids are going to academies for the building not for the program. We have to make sure we have a good balance of what's happening. I still think that we still have a perception survey for the kids coming and going.

Comm. Castillo: I think we should.

Mr. Cozart: That will add to us understanding what we're doing and get us more feedback. Again, in each of the binders you have the assessment and performance components. Eric was going to talk to you about those things anyway. Each part is broken down. The overall part is we need to know are they effective and are they doing the mission that they state they're doing regarding their themes. Those questions we have to come back to.

Comm. Castillo: That's a conversation that I would want to have sooner rather than later. We only talk about it once a year and then everybody forgets about it. We hear about it, but we also want to make sure that we are doing what needs to be done for these schools. I don't know what needs to take place, but it's a conversation that we want to have.

Mr. Cozart: Some of that data you won't find in this school year.

Comm. Castillo: It could be a summer retreat. We have to do a summer retreat anyway. We can just throw that one into everything else.

Mr. Cozart: Now we have the assessment data for each year.

Ms. Peron: If you want to make revisions or modifications and things like that, then the coming September would have to be a planning year. We can't change anything.

Comm. Castillo: Correct, but at least we start planning, as opposed to we want to do things differently, we want to change the color of these walls, and it's June for September, which we tend to do a lot.

Ms. Tsimpedes: We can be realistic in terms of timelines.

Comm. Redmon: This summer would be for the 2020-2021 school year.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

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

Ms. Linda Reid: Good evening everyone. I'm here in place of Rosie Grant. She usually comes to the retreats, but she's home sick today and we are both going to Washington tomorrow before the Senate to speak about the federal cuts to the IDEA. She needed to go home to be well for tomorrow morning going to Washington. The only thing that I want to say as a grandparent that has children in high school right now, the challenges that I have dealt with are all different. I don't think that you can put the ownership of kids not going to school on the parents. Some parents do make sure their kids go to school. They drop them off at the front door and the kids go out the back door. We already know that's a pattern for most kids. I don't know how many of you remember Pat Harris. She was a parent coordinator at Kennedy. She was by far the best parent coordinator that this public school district ever had. She did contracts with the students that were failing. They had to come see her every day. They had to sign up and whatever was in the contract that they didn't do right, there were consequences. It worked for her. She had a great rapport with the students and with the parents. That might be something that you might want to consider when you do your revision of the high schools. Think about making those contracts with the students and holding them accountable. Not charging the parents, but maybe charging the students. The moneys that they can't pay, maybe you can encourage them to do community service or something like that. They are the ones that are in the schools to learn, not the parents. You can't hold the parents accountable for that. If the parents send them to school you have to hold the students accountable. I think that's something that you're going to need to revisit and have a committee to sit down and hash those things out and find what you can and can't do. That's it.

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

Comm. Redmon: As a district, how many community hours do we make our students do before the graduate? We may want to put that into the requirements.

Ms. Shafer: We don't have a requirement.

Comm. Redmon: We should make that into a requirement.

Comm. Simmons: Some of our schools have it.

Ms. Shafer: But it's not consistent.

Comm. Redmon: I would like to make it consistent across the board where you have a certain amount of hours that you have to attain before you can graduate. It gives you ownership of working in the community and seeing what you're doing inside.

Comm. Simmons: You have to make an exception for those students who work.

Comm. Redmon: Right. You can do your job, but you're not working to make community service hours. When you're in college and you have to do community service hours, you work around those. I had to do 120 before I graduated.

Comm. Simmons: I know there are some students who work.

Comm. Redmon: I get that. They provide for their family.

Comm. Castillo: Let's have that conversation, but then there's always the summer when they're just working and out of school. There are ways around it, even if it's shorter. I worked full-time, so it's doable. Let's have that conversation in committee. I like Ms. Reid's suggestion of community service as a way of consequences and having the students get involved. It makes them better people, but in their minds when they're messing up they don't want to do it. It's a consequence. They'll enjoy it afterwards and eventually it will come into a policy five years from now.

ASSESSMENT DATA

Mr. Crespo: As per the Board's request on a deep data dive into the PARCC information, we're going to call it PARCC because this is prior to the switch to NJSLA. It's important to note that this data was already provided to you. We're just going to show it to you in different ways.

Ms. Tsimpedes: We looked at the data that you had received prior back in October when it was presented to you. If you recall, a few months back we asked for a Board resolution for a pilot with Link-It that was able to take our data and actually dig deeper into it and provide us an analysis that we've never had before with regards to various sectors. In front of you, you have a copy of the presentation that we're doing, but also you have a booklet. This is actually broken down more so by schools. This gives you in-depth to the different reports that we have up here, but are targeted to every school in the district.

Comm. Castillo: Is there a digital version?

Mr. Crespo: There is.

Comm. Redmon: Save some trees.

Comm. Castillo: Can you all email it to us? Two weeks from now half of the Board members would have thrown this away or lost it and someone will ask me for this again.

Ms. Tsimpedes: That's fine. We know some people are visual and like to be able to write notes. We want to do it more for aesthetics also so that you can go along with us. We can definitely have it emailed. We will email it to Cheryl and she can email it to you all so you also have a digital copy.

Mr. Crespo: The reason for the Link-It pilot is come July 1 we are in our last year of our data warehouse contract. We're looking for more affordable options that actually give us more for our money. Link-It is one of those options. We're going to take a look at four-year achievement and growth. Usually during our presentation in October, you receive three years. We will take just a brief overview of four years. Two-year achievement level mobility - we've never looked at that data before. We're going to introduce you to that and some of our sub-score achievement, proficiency by program, where are we now, what do we do over the course of the year, and where are we going. This is four-year achievement and growth.

Ms. Tsimpedes: This is one of the reasons we gave you the presentation in front of you also. I know the numbers are very small here. For ELA, Link-It provided us the four-year proficiency rate based on our students. I want to explain to you what it is that these numbers at the end here mean where you see green and red. I'm going to follow through across grade 3 ELA. In 2014-2015, we had 1,988 students who took the grade 3 ELA PARCC. Out of that percentage, 32% were not meeting. Partially meeting were 29%. Approaching were 23%. Meeting was 15%. At exceeding was 1%. As we go each year you will see they do a comparison of what the difference is. In grade 3 for 2015-2016 we saw that we had an increase of 6% of our students move from levels 1, 2, and 3 and we saw an increase in that.

Mr. Crespo: Same grade, different students. It's very important to note that.

Ms. Tsimpedes: You'll see when we go to mobility how that changes. Then we went right down to 2017-2018 and we saw for this past school year we had an increase of 4% of our students who moved from levels 1, 2, and 3 into levels 4 and 5. As you know, levels 4 and 5 are what we deem college and career ready, meeting and exceeding expectations. Based on not meeting and partially meeting we saw 0%.

Mr. Crespo: One thing that I know confused me when I looked at it is seeing negatives in green. You want the negatives in green. That's a positive for us because they're going from non-meeting or partially meeting to meeting and exceeding.

Ms. Tsimpedes: Yes, we do have the reds there. There's a connotation there that we also have room for improvement in terms of our students going year to year. This is our math and it's the same thing. The overall goal within these charts is to increase the number of students who are in levels 4 and 5 and decrease the number of students who are in levels 1 and 2. The other portion of this is the approaching, the one in the middle. Those of you in class always used to remember those who are sitting on the fence, kids how can easily get pushed over or if the right things are not in place, they can go down. We need to make sure that those students in level 3 approaching are moving to the right and not to the left. We want to reduce the students in levels 1 and 2 and increase the students in levels 4 and 5. But we have to also be realistic. A child who is in level 1 who is not meeting, we have to be real with our expectations of them. We cannot take a child at level 1 and say that we're going to get them to a level 5. But that child should show growth from a level 1 to a level 2 and 3 and so forth. It has to be attainable and achievable, measurable growth. That's important for us when we're talking about our students and what the expectations are for them in the classroom.

Mr. Crespo: In most cases prior to the year 2014-2015 we did not have curriculum for every course. Even the curriculum we did have wasn't as in-depth as it is now, having scaffolds in place, having enrichment, and having assessments embedded. That makes a difference while we look at that trajectory going up.

Comm. Redmon: The curriculum has now been in place for three years now?

Ms. Tsimpedes: Our five-year curriculum plan will be brought up on a Board resolution on July 1, which will be for the next five years.

Mr. Crespo: Part of our last five-year curriculum plan was for everyone to have curriculum.

Comm. Redmon: This might have been the fourth year because I think when we first got on the Board our first year they were implementing a new curriculum. This should be year 3 going into 4.

Comm. Castillo: Is it four or three? I remember when we got on, they were still writing.

Mr. Crespo: We also staggered the development because we couldn't create all 400 courses at one time. All of it wasn't approved in one year because we couldn't physically write 400 at one time, so we started the implementation.

Comm. Castillo: It's been three to four years of the whole curriculum being implemented.

Ms. Tsimpedes: We started the planning phase five years ago. You have to have a five-year curriculum plan in a place. We started the planning phase and within those five years, which ends now, we were able to ensure that all our curriculum is in place and all our courses have Board-approved curriculum.

Mr. Crespo: Changes of state standards from Common Core to NJASK.

Ms. Peron: That's right. We started with Common Core when we began this. Just to be clear, it has been four years and this is the end of five. All courses can't be measured by the same amount of years because we rolled into them resources as well.

Comm. Redmon: In the next five years we should be able to have more of a measurement to go on. Right now, it's too new for us to sit and compare to what we have now. Even though the next five years will be another planning stage for us, we can also start to track back where our curriculum has been to where it is.

Ms. Tsimpedes: Absolutely.

Mr. Crespo: Our new planning is enhancements. We have it in place, now let's enhance the curriculum.

Comm. Redmon: This right here would be the standard curriculum for the next five years, but we will be adding additional stuff to it.

Mr. Crespo: Anything the State may have mandated.

Ms. Peron: There are a lot of variables also that go into it, such as teacher turnover and teacher transfers, professional development, not offering teachers what they need, and the monitoring of it. Those variables take into play. Not to make excuses, but just to be real in terms of what you see in a classroom and how it's measured.

Ms. Tsimpedes: The other part talking about curriculum is we always want to keep with the times and provide students the offerings that other students across the state have in terms of new things that are coming out. For example, in math we're writing now AP stats. Some kids may not want to take pre-calculus. Some might like discreet math where they're able to do more of an analytical piece rather than working with algebra and so forth. We want to ensure that our students have the same opportunities as they do in other districts.

Mr. Crespo: New programs, like pre-AP, that are coming in 2020 for your freshmen students. That's English I, algebra I, biology, and world history. That prepares everyone for the AP classes. That doesn't launch until 2020, but we're looking into now and we're in talks with AP about being one of the first districts to offer it.

Ms. Peron: Enhancing academies in the high school beginning in the middle school with what we want to do is start developing electives in the middle school.

Ms. Tsimpedes: To make it a true middle school setting for our students so that they have different exposures and opportunities to see where their interests lie also so that when they're looking at academies, if there's something that sparks their interest and they want to further it, they can do so accordingly.

Mr. Crespo: By marking period we might give them access to different types of courses in computer science or health. Now they see they have an interest in this.

Comm. Simmons: Have students going to schools that they really want to go to.

Ms. Tsimpedes: Exactly, and not because of location, but because of program.

Comm. Castillo: And not the building their parents made them get into.

Mr. Crespo: Two-year achievement mobility - this is data that we haven't looked at in this specific way. We're going to look here going from grade 3 to 4 any student that exceeded. For example, from grade 3 to 4 we had 33. After that, going into fourth grade, 31, which is 94%, stayed on that exceeding level. We did drop down two students and they dropped down to meeting. How does this help us? As we look at teacher practice and individual student data, now we can analyze is it curriculum, is it resource based, is it for some reason this teacher struggles in this specific area where some students are dropping. Now we can actually personalize professional development for them. We can look at this data specifically. This is going to go even further. Now we can do this for every category. Here we have meeting. Prior to this one you could only go same and down when it comes to exceeding. When it comes to meeting, now you have different options. I'll give you an example on this one. Here we had 345 students, 24%. 84 went up from meeting to exceeding. 58% stayed the same. 62 dropped down. We had a net gain of going up to exceeding by 22, which is 6%.

Ms. Tsimpedes: Overall, if you look at where the separation is between math and ELA, you'll see in ELA overall out of the 2,645 students who weren't meeting, 316 of them increased. They went to exceeding. We also had 1,680 remain and 640 go down. There is good and there is bad. Let's be real. It is what it is right here. We can't hide the data. Then look at math. It's the same thing. Out of 1,797 students you had 86 increase from 4 to 5. We had 64%, which was odd. 64% of ELA stayed the same and 64% for math stayed the same. They stayed at level 4. We had 27% go down and we had a loss of 18% overall.

Mr. Crespo: It's important to notice as we go from grade 8 to grade 9 what are we losing. Now we can look at those students and where they come from. Somebody mentioned before about breaking up into the middle schools. We have three middle schools. The students leaving from those middle schools going to high school are in the mobility chart. Are they going up? Are they staying the same? Now we can look a little deeper into that. Same thing here where we had students that were on the bubble. They can go in either direction. As an example, 3 going to 4, we went up 210 students. 46% made that jump to meeting or exceeding. 76 went down. We netted 134 students for 29%.

Ms. Tsimpedes: Overall, 33% of all students in ELA, we had 1,000 increase. That's what I was talking about before. We want to make sure that they're going in the right direction. It's the same thing with math. We know math at the high school level is our sore spot. Overall, we had 17% of the students that were in level 3 go up to either 4 or 5. The district had a gain of 25% in math and ELA with students going in level 3 increasing to levels 4 and 5. The gains are being met. Yes, we have students who are regressing, but we also have to celebrate the students who are increasing. Their time and effort in the classroom and the teachers' effort are shown.

Ms. Peron: Is this all our students?

Mr. Crespo: All students. Here we have partially meeting up 54%. Going into fourth grade it's the same 37%. We were down 9%, but we have a net gain of 44%. Just to reiterate, this data is giving us an approach with teachers and students where we can understand what the problem is. The problem could be where the students struggle in a specific area. It could be the teacher struggling in a specific area. Now we can assist those teachers and team them up with other teachers.

Ms. Tsimpedes: We have to keep in mind also, as Ms. Peron just mentioned, the subgroups are involved in there. When we have our English language learners come from different countries all across the world coming to Paterson, regardless of when they came, today they're taking PARCC. Without having the academic language, they may not even understand what they're reading. They're expected to pass. When we look at the scores of our English language learners, regardless of what language they speak, there are levels 1 and 2 unfortunately. It's not fair to them that they're expected to take this test.

Mr. Crespo: After one year.

Ms. Tsimpedes: Not even one year. As I said, they come in on Friday and they test Monday. ELA gets to wait a year, but that's not enough to acquire academic language. How fair is that to a child? What are we doing to a child by telling them you just got here Friday and you're ready to take a test?

Mr. Crespo: Some students might have never used a computer before and this test is on the computer. Again, more mobility on where we were not meeting. We went up 54%. Here you only have two columns because there's nowhere to go but up.

Ms. Tsimpedes: Overall, we had a 39% increase from students who are level 1. We had 37% in ELA increase and 42% in math increase. From level 1 they went to the right, which is a positive.

Mr. Crespo: Sub-score achievement looks into math and ELA the specific areas that are assessed in each content area. For example, they use literary texts, informational

textbooks, vocabulary, writing for expression, writing for conventions. This is a four-year analysis where we went in these areas. Why is this important? If we see that there's a specific area where we're really low, we can look at the curriculum. Maybe we don't have enough informational text in there. Maybe we're not looking at vocabulary as we should. We can look at teachers. Some teachers might be high fliers when it comes to writing expressions. What are they doing right? Or vice versa, what is someone else struggling with?

Ms. Tsimpedes: This is the first one you saw. The slide was for elementary school. This is middle school, high school for ELA, and the same thing for math applies. We have the major content. Everything in our curriculum and pacing guides is coded so that teachers understand what's considered major content and additional supporting. One of the things that Eric and I were talking about when we received this data was to give it to our curriculum writers when we're reviewing our curriculum to see pockets of weakness that are there.

Mr. Crespo: Or gaps.

Ms. Tsimpedes: And also to look at the strengths that we have so that we can continue to celebrate the strengths but also build our weaknesses in terms of PD. Professional development is key because not understanding what these components mean, how key is this for a teacher to be able to see where their areas are, especially when they break it down by teacher disaggregating the data?

Mr. Crespo: One great thing we did is in the curriculum under a standard we show how this is actually assessed on the test. Many times, teachers can understand the standard, but they don't know how it's assessed. Now they can see an example. When they go to assess this standard on PARCC, this is the way it's done. Now they might make some formative assessments in their class that might mirror it so the students feel comfortable. That's elementary, middle, and high school.

Ms. Tsimpedes: Proficiency by program. When we talk about program, it's a different type of program we're thinking of. We have in there our different subgroups. We have our LEP, special education, general education, section 504, gifted students, as well as free and reduced. Keep in mind a child who is in free and reduced may also be gifted and may also be a 504. They can sit in multiple pots here. It's not like one child is only identified as once. This is for ELA. It has the breakdown of how the subgroups performed when it came to the four years of testing.

Mr. Crespo: We can be specific now on program analysis. Is the program being implemented working or not?

Ms. Tsimpedes: That's for ELA and this is for math. It goes back to showing students coming into the country not prepared. You're a LEP student who's never been in an English class and never even seen a graphing calculator. Then you're thrown this on the first day of testing and saying, "Here you go. Fly with it."

Mr. Crespo: To succeed in algebra I you should have a 1,000 Lexile level, which is really anywhere from seventh to ninth grade reading level. Even though it's math and it's numbers, it goes a lot further than that.

Ms. Tsimpedes: There's a lot of reading.

Mr. Crespo: Where are we now? Just like we reported in October what we're going to do this calendar year, this is what we did. All principals, central office staff, and teacher cohorts from all schools experience PLC training. In PLC training you look at what you want the students to know, what are you going to do if they don't know it, what are you going to do with the students who already know it. Then you're going to have a plan of action. We implemented our new reading program k-5. We had our professional development over the summer to build capacity. Our supervisors came down and they went standard by standard, building by building, and grade by grade to show each teacher from the grade levels where they performed well and where the students might have had some gaps. Content support - our supervisors, their coaching, their PD, and different data analysis that they did.

Ms. Tsimpedes: As we know, math is an area of weakness and one of the things last year that Ms. Shafer did was provide the funding to have a math intervention program first time in the high school for our students. The teachers and the administrators received the data. We're on them about time on task because the more students use the program with fidelity they bridge the gaps that they have. You can't expect a child to be successful in the limited amount of time that they have.

Ms. Peron: And you're always looking at the usage.

Ms. Tsimpedes: I'm the worst one. I'm on everybody. Emails are going out left and right. Why are your kids not using it?

Ms. Peron: She monitors the usage of the program.

Ms. Tsimpedes: Now that we have one-to-one, I'm not accepting excuses at this point because we're giving you the tools your students need in order to bridge those gaps. We had the high school textbook adoption for all of our math courses, including our enrichment courses that we have for pre-calculus, calculus and AP. We revised our math instructional model based on the feedback I received going into the buildings and seeing how teachers are instructing in the classes to make sure they have the right tools and they're providing the students with the right tools necessary to be successful. One of the things we're doing this year in the summer is we're going back to when we used to have a summer bridge program for our eighth grades going into ninth grade. I wanted to bring it back, but I wanted to bring it back just for math this year kind of like a pilot. I want to see how it's going to do and I want to track those specific kids. If I get 200 kids to come, that's 200 more than have ever gone before. I want to track those students through their freshman year and see their progress in regards to how they're doing with their algebra skills. Based on that, I want to increase it next year, looking at their scores and perhaps making it more widespread where we have half, if not all, our students going to the summer bridge. It's going to be a two-week program two hours a day. The students are going to be working on the intervention and also on the skill set we've identified to be pertinent to master pre-algebra and algebra I.

Mr. Crespo: And approach it a little differently. We've discussed a reading specialist being there. We already said you need 1,000 Lexile level. Having them push in to help out with the specific domain vocabulary.

Comm. Castillo: Just a quick question. For PARCC strategies, when do they go in to speak to the teachers?

Ms. Tsimpedes: Because Ms. Shafer wanted to make sure that all teachers had received it, we have documentation from grade level meetings, PLCs, and data team

meetings that the strategies were provided to the teachers and that the supervisors and administrators went over with them so the teachers understood what the task was at hand. When we rolled this out in December, the supervisor in turn had a month to make sure everyone in their buildings had received it.

Mr. Crespo: After that, going to monitor is it being used.

Ms. Tsimpedes: That's the most important piece because how often do you get a document and then you leave a meeting and put it on the backburner and leave it there? One of the things that we did this year was looking at our supervisors submit logs to us. What do you do now? They will put in that they went back in the classroom, modeled with the teachers, co-taught, or had lessons plans. They also provided job-embedded coaching on the strategies that the teachers didn't feel comfortable with because they may have been an area of weakness for them as well.

Mr. Crespo: It wasn't the same for every teacher. It really depended on what they needed.

Comm. Castillo: When would you be able to see how the reading program is working and the change in the students?

Mr. Crespo: We're finishing up the third marking period now.

Comm. Castillo: We didn't get rid of it.

Mr. Crespo: No. We will have grade level reading data. For each grade, what percent of the students are reading on grade level at that time period? We will have that for the third marking period. Where are we going? Now that we have this data, what kinds of things are we going to be able to do? We have the ability to identify teachers' strengths and weaknesses. Now that we see exactly the domain that they're struggling in, if students reach their class and really jump to another level or now go down, we can identify that and assist personalized professional development, job-embedded coaching, and look at areas of the curriculum. Do we have any gaps? Are there any issues? Is there anything confusing? Do we need extra resources for a certain area of the curriculum? Determining strengths and weaknesses of our resources - is what we purchased and implemented working or not? Personalized disaggregation - it was very difficult for teachers to take the PARCC data and make something that they could really work with. Now we're doing that. Monitor effectiveness of the program, whether it's a gifted program, a bilingual program, or even a program that we've purchased and that we're implementing.

Ms. Tsimpedes: One of the things that we were able to get through Link-It was disaggregation of the data by the teacher. Teachers often just see their percentage of how many students passed and nothing further. Now they can dig deeper and actually look at the kids and how they performed. Your students' performance overall is indicative of how your performance is also. As much as we want, it is tied to the teacher. I always believe a teacher's weakness is a student's weakness. This allows the teacher to be able to self-reflect and the supervisor can provide professional development, PLCs can be formed around it, they can go to other peer for support. Student years in district - Eric and I were saying how do students fare that have been in our district since kindergarten and kids who come to us in eighth grade for a year and so forth?

Mr. Crespo: One to three years. They came in middle school or high school. What does that look like?

Ms. Tsimpedes: How does the educational track from kindergarten to a high school student really benefit a child in Paterson? They're so quick in high school they don't want to stay with us. They want to go into other schools and other settings. Do our students who stick with us have a better overall record than students who come to us just for a short period of time and leave us?

Mr. Crespo: Let's say they've purchased some kind of program such as Study Island or something like that. We can actually now get the data from Study Island and analyze if their time on it is working for that student and that school. Do they want to spend the money next year now that we can show them data that actually tracks it?

Ms. Tsimpedes: Same thing for our program. Even with our math intervention programs one of the key things that we want to do when we get the scores back in the summer is time on task for using the intervention program. How did that fare for a child? If a child was a level 1 last year, did they increase? Did they move to level 2 and 3? To see the mobility in terms of our student achievement based on the program. If kids are not using the program and they stayed where they are, that's more evidence to the teacher. These children have 50 hours in the system and were able to move. These children had two hours. Look at the difference and they stayed where they were. This gives us more ammunition to show to the teachers that this works and also to show the parents your child had so many hours here and they were able to move forward. All the programs we have are able to be accessible at home. They're internet-based. It's not like they can only use it on our server and so forth. It's important to promote these aspects to our parents to say there's help for them when they go home. The first thing people say they can't do is math.

Comm. Martinez: In looking at these programs that the kids are taking at home, how are we able to compare the use of time to what they're doing on these programs to their actual production? In other words, is it showing you what exact standard they're working on and then we can go back and correlate that to their performance in that given area?

Mr. Crespo: They can do it right on the standard or on the actual grade level reading, one of those two, if you wanted to look at it like that.

Ms. Tsimpedes: It also tells you in terms of the math program and how long it takes for a child to master a program.

Mr. Crespo: Or how long they should stay on it.

Ms. Tsimpedes: How many hours does it take them to master? Let's say their time on task was 50 hours in the system, but it's 1.45 minutes for them to master a topic. The longer it takes for a child to master a topic obviously the less topics they will master. Again, we have to remember students learn at all different paces. I would rather a child take the time and understand what they're doing than to just breeze through it and then in the end have nothing to show for it.

Comm. Martinez: Are the scholars given the framework to go home and work on specific areas or standards based off a pacing chart?

Mr. Crespo: You can assign it. If you notice a student is struggling in X, Y, Z, they can get that while another student can get A, B, C.

Ms. Tsimpedes: In math there's a pathway. A child takes the initial progress check and it puts a child on a pathway. We recommend that the teacher doesn't deviate from that pathway because let's say you're working on this skill set while we brought you a textbook resource to help you with grade level. The intervention program is to help build the gaps that the children have coming into your classroom. We've been recommending to our teachers before a child goes on to work on task, we need them to work on the intervention piece. That is what's going to build the gap, not working on grade level when they don't understand what three years ago they were learning. That's why I have been telling the teachers this is an intervention program. The resource here is for your on-grade level material.

Comm. Martinez: I don't want to assume, but I'm going to assume that they're working backwards in the sense that they know what's going to be covered in certain areas and they're going to work backwards to ensure that by the time scholars get to that point all that material has been covered.

Ms. Tsimpedes: When they print out reports they're able to see the pathway or the trajectory for the child based on what they had done initially. It's not you're relying only on a program for intervention. You have the data. What are you doing with that data also to help you and your class in order to plan instruction? In math we know the scores are very bad. Let's be real. It's not just one child in the classroom that is not getting it. It's multiple. You can't move forward when you have more than half the class behind. We always tell the teacher you have to look at the prerequisite skills and where they come from. That's where our supervisors come into play and that's also where our curriculum guide shows where the originality is of that standard. You might be in an algebra II course, but that standard originated back in seventh grade. When teaching the high schools, teachers have to go back and really dive into that standard and bring it to a level of understanding for the child so then you can build on that gap.

Mr. Crespo: Finally, the high school graduation pathways. Now we can look at a precursor if we see certain struggles in the middle school and where we're going to have a problem at the high school. Or we can actually guide someone to the right assessment that will get them to where they want to be. That's forthcoming.

Ms. Tsimpedes: I know we gave you a lot of information.

Mr. Crespo: We will get you that digitally.

Ms. Tsimpedes: If you look through the data and you find you have questions, you're more than free to let us know. I know it is a lot of information and when you're looking at the individual schools, questions may pop out at you more than they are right now.

Comm. Simmons: Do you guys spend a lot of time on this together? They complete each other's sentences.

Ms. Tsimpedes: Right now we spend a lot of time together. He's learning my lingo and I learn his lingo. It has to be like that because we have to be all in agreement what we want for our students to achieve and what we want our teachers to do.

Mr. Crespo: Absolutely.

Comm. Castillo: While we review this material, if we have any questions and we want to put them together, I do want to have that retreat in the summer. I think it will all start correlating. If we have questions, just email them to Cheryl or me. That way we can get a list of questions together so we can be prepared for the next retreat because it will all intertwine.

Mr. Crespo: Depending on the time in the summer we will have current year data.

Ms. Peron: That's true.

Comm. Castillo: We want to wait for you guys to get the current information, that way we can see it through.

Ms. Tsimpedes: Because we have lesser students testing we should be able to get the test results earlier in June. Once we're given the okay to start disaggregating the data, we can have it ready for you by August.

Comm. Castillo: I'm going to try to get all our retreats done as soon as possible because we won't have a retreat at the end of September or October. We're not having a retreat while I'm planning my wedding.

OTHER BUSINESS

Ms. Shafer: I have one last announcement before you go. Tomorrow night is the second strategic planning meeting at 6:00 at Kennedy High School. I think you all received an email from New Jersey School Boards. They don't do a separate strategic planning session for the Board. It's part of the community outreach. It's one strategic plan for the district inclusive of the Board, the community, the staff, and those are all the individuals that went to the first meeting and will be there tomorrow night.

Comm. Redmon: We also passed that information on when we did the Parent University on Friday. All the parents that were there and via Facebook, we made sure they know.

Comm. Castillo: I know we have a retreat set for next Monday. We actually got through all the information. We have to do the Donaldson Hearing training on the 29th. We're going to reschedule the 15th meeting because NJSBA, Kathleen, and her attorney can come on the 29th to give us that training. Also, for our next retreat we have the district goals update. It's just an update because we have to review our goals in the summer at another retreat. Ms. Shafer is going to give us a memo with all of the updates, which will be just in time before her evaluation. If there any questions, then we can discuss them.

Ms. Williams: So you're not having the 15th?

Comm. Castillo: No. We're switching it over to the 29th because we got through all this material. We will get the memo from Madam Superintendent, whenever she can make it available. Then we will go into the information on how to do the evaluation. We will cross that bridge when we get there. Are there any other questions?

ADJOURNMENT

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

The meeting was adjourned at 8:18 p.m.