

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

March 19, 2019 – 6:27 p.m.
Administrative Offices

Presiding: Comm. Oshin Castillo, President

Present:

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

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

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

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

Comm. Redmon read the Open Public Meetings Act:

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

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

**Special Meeting
March 19, 2019 at 6:00 p.m.
Administrative Offices
90 Delaware Avenue
Paterson, New Jersey**

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

Comm. Castillo: Good evening everyone. I would like to welcome you to our March 19 meeting. It's a very important conversation and I'm glad all of you are here so that we can hear your opinions and your sentiment. I do want to say that we have an executive session that we have to run into, so I just want everyone to be aware.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS BY THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

Ms. Shafer: Good evening everyone and thank you so much for coming out. This is an important meeting where we vote on the budget. Let me just quickly give you a summary of where we are with the budget and how we got to where we are. Cost

drivers are items in the budget that we have no control over. There are things like salary increases, special education, transportation, gas and electric bill, out-of-district tuition, charter schools, and Passaic County vocational school. All those things come out of the budget right off the top before we're able to do anything and you cannot change those numbers even if you wanted to. Those are fixed numbers that we call cost drivers. The cost drivers in this budget that we're preparing were \$43 million. The State gave us \$13 million. If you do the subtraction, we now have a \$30 million deficit. Keep in mind when they gave us that \$13 million, before we even put it in the bank, they took \$9.6 million for charter schools. Then they took close to another \$1 million for PCTI.

*Comm. Martinez enters the meeting at 6:34 p.m.

Ms. Shafer: In actuality, we got \$2.4 million to cover cost drivers of \$43 million. Never mind doing anything that is good for children or staff. We didn't even get there yet. The Board, along with the administration, had put together priorities that they and we felt the students and the staff needed. That came out to be \$52 million. The reason it was so high was because over the past eight years we were short funded \$280 million. If you were here, you remember the programs that we could not continue and the staff members that we RIF'd, to the tune of 526 teachers and staff. They were let go from the district over those eight years. It's hard to recover when you eliminate programs that teachers might be right in the middle of and when you can't bring back 526 staff members. Class sizes went up. Materials were not there. Textbooks could not be purchased. We have outdated textbooks and resources. The list goes on and on. When the State took over in 1991, the first they eliminated was art and music. It took us 27 years to bring back art and music for our children. No other district in the world waits 27 years for their children to have art and music. I don't know of any. If someone does, let us know. Now they had it this year because when the State gave us \$20 million last year, we put it right back in the schools and we were finally able to bring back an elementary art and music program in every school and finally a nurse in every building. If you remember prior to that, nurses were being shared and god forbid a child or staff member became ill in a building where the nurse now had to get in her car and get there. We were finally able to do those things where that \$20 million went right back into the schools. We can't continue those programs. That was \$20 million they gave us. This year they gave us \$13 million. There's a differential of \$7 million, and don't forget they took \$9.6 million for charter schools. We can't continue with what we put in place and we can't do any of the priorities that our children have been waiting on for so long. We have two tracks in the City of Paterson. We have the charter track, where children have the resources and everything they need. Then we have the public school track where we are always cutting. Those children can live next door to each other right here in the same city. It has to stop. We're paying charter schools \$68 million. Our children don't come in little cases of 24. If they did, and they went to a charter school, we could eliminate a teacher, a building, gas, electric, and heat. That's not how it works. A couple of children from each school or different grades go to charter schools so there's no savings for us. We had a \$30 million shortfall after the \$13 million. The Board, the district, the business office has been working around the clock to make the cuts as least harmful to children and staff. I apologize because I'm sorry to say we're not able to do it. I've been here a long time and I know the things that last year we were able to do for children and for staff. I have to disappoint those children and say to them the music and art you didn't have for 27 years you had for a year. It's a tease. Now we have to take it back. The instruments go back in the closet like they did back in 1991. That's just one little piece of what we have to do. I'm no better than the people in Trenton because I'm playing with kids too. That's not who I am. Those who know me know I don't play with kids. We worked extremely hard to make cuts that touched

everybody. It could not be just teachers. It could not be just one group anywhere. When I met yesterday with principals to bring this news to them, it was devastating. They're already at the bone. When you give up 526 people, there's nothing left to give up. The media specialists we finally started to put back because they were eliminated. We're taking them out again. They got those nice libraries full of books and computers. Now lock the doors because the media specialists are now going to be gone. After we went through everything that we could cut, I just want to report to you that we cut a non-salary item. That is not positions, but just non-salary. That was textbooks, materials, resources - \$7.3 million from central office. We wanted to leave the school budgets alone. We have to leave something in place. We cut from central office in a variety of different positions 11 positions, 29 supervisors, 5 directors, 44 vacancies, and 120 teachers, for a total of 232 positions. There are districts out there that don't even have 232 positions. That means that our class sizes are going to go up. All of our large schools will have one vice principal. Supervisors will be non-existent. There will be no professional development or professional learning communities. We won't be in compliance with Achieve NJ for multiple observers. We won't be providing feedback to teachers so that they can improve and that children can do better and be successful. We won't be monitoring curriculum. We won't be writing curriculum. Three years ago, we did not pass QSAC because we were short over 400 curriculum guides. Supervisors and teachers worked on curriculum, over 400 guides, so that we could be successful with QSAC. What happens now? We won't have a five-year curriculum plan. We won't be updating curriculum because we won't have supervisors to do that. Nor will we have the money to pay stipends to do that. What this has done to us is set us so far back. It has to stop. Our children deserve what every other school district children get on a daily basis. No other community would sit back and watch. That's why I'm so happy that people are here and listening. What it says to me is you care about our children. We have to stick together on this one. If we don't stop it, it's going to continue. We will be paying over \$70 million to charter schools. It's got to stop. I'm not against charter schools. Find another way to fund them. You can't give us \$13 million and take \$9.5 million back. You can't. It's simple math and people know that we're going to have to cut programs and people in order to make that up. We can't continue to do that year after year. Our children aren't reading on grade level. We have a new reading program, part one. We don't have the money for part two. Our kids are going to continue to not be able to read. Everybody in this room knows if you can't read, you cannot do anything. For far too long our children have suffered not reading on grade level. We can't continue to be part of this problem. We just cannot and let our kids down. We have to stick together. On Thursday at 9:00 two buses are leaving from here to go to NJIT. You're all more than welcome. I think Parent and Community Engagement is here. Bridget is somewhere around. There she is in the back. You can register to come and speak to the Assembly and to the folks who make the decisions around the funding. We can't continue to be underfunded like this. On March 27 we will be meeting with the Assembly down in Trenton for the same thing. Buses will be leaving here. If you want to come, you're more than welcome to come. We have to stick together. We can't sit back and accept this anymore. We just cannot. Our children deserve better. Our community deserves better. Our staff deserves better. Thank you.

Comm. Castillo: Thank you, Madam Superintendent. We received the approval or the vote to go into a transition to go into local control a little less than a year from today. The conversation was how Paterson was going to move in a better direction and for an entire year we were. We saw the growth. We saw art and music. We saw laptops. We saw the idea of science labs, not being built to be fancy, but just so that our kids can operate and experiment, just like in any other school district. This year a lot of that growth is going away because of the funding, one more time. Were seven or eight

years, \$280 million, and over 500 teachers not enough? Now you're giving us a district without giving us the tools or the resources to make sure that we continue to govern and educate all of our students. That's where we need your support. We can't do this by ourselves. We're going to Trenton. I'll be there, but I'm going to need each and every one of you and the parents to come along. Right off the bat, we have \$100 million out of our budget. We have \$65 million going to charter schools. We have \$21 million going to Tech. We have another \$20 million that is used for our special education out-of-district. Other districts have used that line item to get more funding. Another district just got \$15 million because they said that their out-of-district costs were too high. Yet Paterson has about 28,000 and 315 of them are special education out-of-district, without counting the \$65 million that go to charter schools and the \$21 million that goes to Passaic County Tech. What tools and resources do we have to continue to give the students the very best that they can? Our students are excited to be in the performing arts and dancing. We're actually having a show tomorrow. How do you tell those students that will be performing tomorrow for African American History Month that this will be the last time they will have a lot of those instruments, those resources, or even that instructor that gives them the extra way of learning? Arts have saved many of our students. How do we tell our students that their counterparts in other districts are using computers and tablets to do their work? They get to Skype with students all over the world and have that interaction and our students aren't able to do that. I've been here all my life and my younger brother still attends school here. I see those resources and I see all those abilities. We fought to make sure that special education does not get cut and isn't touched. But what happens to all of our other programs? All of our students deserve the very best education that we can give them. Board members have a few things to say. Then we're going to go into public portion. We want to hear what the public's opinions and needs are. We'll also hopefully be hearing that commitment that you'll be coming down to Trenton with us on the 27th. Then we do have to go into an executive session before the whole presentation. It is a little delayed. We did have technical issues with the presentation so we'll be doing an executive session right before we start. Thank you.

Comm. Redmon: I'll just repeat what I said last night. It's back to dollars and cents. You're making us gut our classrooms over dollars and cents. We cannot provide our students an efficient education here. This is just not right. We sit here and sacrifice night after night to stay here to make sure that our students have the best quality education that they can get and we're biting at the bits just to try to get the basic needs. I was part of that transition when the State took over in 1991. I was an eighth grader here. It still saddens me to come back to this district and go through the same problems that we went through in 1991, just for the basic education. It's disheartening to sit here with my colleagues when we fight day and night to figure out that our students are getting the short end of the stick. Not even just that. Our staff members here are afraid to come to Paterson and start their careers because they don't even know if they're going to have a career here. Each year we're asked to either cut them or make something else out of them. I wouldn't want to be a new teacher coming into the City of Paterson to teach because I might not have a career here. We're sending our best talent to suburban areas. We pay for the professional development for them, but we can't keep them with that professional development that we service our kids with. We watch money go out the window because we cannot provide a proficient and quality education for our students and also our staff members here. Some of these facilities at the Paterson Public School District are 100 years old. Some of our students are sitting in inadequate classrooms. We can't even get proper air conditioning for our students to come in here because our facilities are so old. Even when you look at the mandates of technology, we can't even get the basic technology to come in here sometimes because of our facilities. We don't know whether to gut out. We restructure for everything. We

can't gut anymore because there's nothing else to gut. I will stand with my colleagues to fight in Trenton to let them know that what you're giving us is a disservice to this community. You're letting down 30,000 students that attend this public school system. You're letting them down each and every day.

Comm. Simmons: When we talk about the takeover, the State took over four years after I graduated high school. We're talking about taking away music. Music is what got me into college. Music is what got me my scholarship. Of course, I don't want to see those things taken away because I know how important they are. What we're talking about is what Comm. Redmon touched on, a thorough and efficient education. We're charged to provide that for our students. Yet we were set up for failure with giving us local control and putting us in a position where we can't meet the mandates. This is my ninth year on this Board and I remember when we had to cut all of those teachers. It was a difficult time then, but we made a lot of progress and we finally got control. We finally met all of the challenges that were put before us, just so that they could give us control but no money, or take the money away. Madam President, you touched on another district, Lakewood, who got \$15 million first, and then an additional \$15 million because of destabilization that they voted for and created. They chose to give money to private schools. We're facing destabilization here because of the mandate to pay charter schools and Passaic County Tech. Those children end up coming back when they don't meet requirements or standards and the money doesn't follow. That's what we're faced with. I often say to the community we're only nine people here. The State doesn't pay attention unless we show up in force. It has worked in the past. It will work again. But we have to be committed to make that we go down and fight for all of our children. These are our children. These children belong to the City of Paterson. When we don't provide a thorough and efficient education there are consequences. Children don't become productive. They don't become good citizens. Then we have to deal with it one way or the other. I'm going to repeat what you said, Madam President. It is important that we get commitment from community, teachers, principals, and whomever else to go down and fight for what we deserve. We're not asking for what's not owed to us. We were underfunded \$280 million. Lakewood got \$15 million additional dollars that wasn't even owed to them. We just have to go down and fight and make the commitment.

Comm. Castillo: \$30 million for 6,000 students.

Comm. Redmon: Compared to 30,000.

Comm. Hodges: I'm not from Paterson. I came here to do my residency at St. Joe's Hospital. I had no intentions of staying in Paterson. I was just transitioning through. The only reason I'm still here is because I encountered your children, our children, in the emergency room. I watched them die. I stood in their blood in a trauma room. I watched hearts stop. I pulled a shotgun casing out of a 21-year-old Latino male who was shot on Elm Street. I watched his heart fibrillate trying to catch up with the blood that it needed while the rest of it poured out of a hole in the heart's wall. I had to stand there and watch the lights go out of the eyes of 16 and 17-year-old children. I was shocked because I had never seen that before. When speaking to Paterson's children, their grammar was atrocious. They couldn't hold decent sentences. I wondered what's causing this here because it wasn't what I was used to. I began to spend some time in the educational system and it became very clear. The State deliberately took money away from your district as part of the Abbott problem. We lost money. People say that was a tragedy and was wrong. Kids died because they did not have the educational options to do anything else. They died. They sacrificed their lives on street corners running drugs and shooting each other because they had nowhere else to go. When I

became a part of this process, I was shocked. Not only did you lose art and music, but you lost science too. You had language arts and math. No extra-curricular activities, just language arts, math, and no science. How can you certify a child to graduate without science? I don't know. Your State did that because that was the concern that they had for Paterson's children. We fortunately won the Abbott decision. 31 districts were experiencing similar issues. They stole money and diverted it away from us. That was back in 1997 or 1998 when the 22 cases ended. Then we had the Christie administration after we had established the formula, which came and took \$280 million. It was supposed to be an attempt by the Supreme Court for us to catch up. Those moneys were supposed to be for us to have an opportunity to get back into the swing of things, to be able to restructure our system so we could teach our children who are so far behind. \$280 million! It hollowed out our system for over eight years, just as we were catching up, beginning to put things in place to plug some of the holes. You can't teach if you don't have teachers. You can't teach if you're spending millions of dollars on professional development and then they have to walk out and leave. They go someplace else because we can't afford to keep them here. This is a process that's happening to us. This isn't just one isolated incident. This has been happening. Now we're faced with \$13 million when every single year there's a 6% to 7% increase in the cost of a school district's function. It doesn't change. The State knows that. They told me. How do you come up with \$13 million? \$9 million of it you take away to give to charter schools. It's even worse than that. If the charter school had 600 kids in it and they lost 20 to the school district that we had to assume and educate, we would have to turn around and pay the charter schools for the loss of those 20 kids that we're now educating because they're to be held harmless. That's what we're facing. We're supposed to sit here and I'm supposed to stare in the eyes of these kids and not see them dying in front of me. When we hand out diplomas after looking at PARCC scores where our students can't read, I'm supposed to believe that those diplomas mean something in terms of their future. I'm supposed to look at those kids and say we've given you an education. Science labs are deficient. No chemistry. No physics in some schools. These are State requirements. You're in substandard facilities. I think we have close to 13 schools over 100 years old. School No. 14 one day had a 108-degree temperature that our kids had to sit through, despite the fans. I know the number because we had to go over there and investigate it. When I came here, my chemistry book, the one from my high school, was in use here in Paterson. That's the truth. I was shocked. I'm no spring chicken. I know I look that way, but no. My science book from high school was here in use from 1973. How does that happen? Whole new elements have been discovered in that time. This is what we're asked to live with. People say what happened with the Abbott decision was a tragedy. No. It wasn't a tragedy. What happened to the kids was a tragedy. They died. Their parents did not get the education that they need so they could encourage education for their children. That's what we're seeing today. Now you want me to accept the notion that charter schools who have very engaged parents, and I commend them for that, but they're taken out of our system. We are left with a different population. They don't have a large Hispanic population. We're at 62%. They don't have that in the charter schools. They don't have special education in the charter schools. We can't take a child and say, "Your behavior is so bad you have to go home." We can't do it. They can do it. We're facing this kind of situation where we're just trying to catch up. I'm a physician. We were sharing nurses. This is an asthma corridor. You only need six to eight minutes to die. That's it. In fact, if you go into a spasm, four or five minutes will be enough because you can't stop it. We had to share nurses and there was a fight over that, as you remember, because I, in particular, was upset with that notion. We had to go through all of that. We cannot accept this. We can't go back anymore. We simply can't go back. I cannot vote for a budget that does not provide a thorough and efficient education for our children. I intend to put as much pressure on the State of New Jersey to make sure that

we're given the funds that we need to move forward, not backward. Time is not stopping for us and it's not going backwards for us. Neither are the communities outside here. Their kids get the best. We need the best here in Paterson, even if we have to stand and fight for it. Thank you, Madam President.

Comm. Martinez: As Dr. Hodges was describing some of what he saw working the emergency room, a very troubling and stark reality became painfully obvious to me. I, too, played a part in that misfortune. I was the funeral director who far too often had to meet with those families and make funeral arrangements to bury these young people. As you're describing that, it hit me in the face. Too many of our young people have literally lost their lives because of lack of proper education. They haven't been given the proper skills to make the right decisions to lead a good productive life. This has affected our city in ways that are unfathomable and we have been given the task of providing a thorough and efficient education without adequate resources or funds – the old adage of do more with significantly less. The potential ramifications of this are generational. We are potentially looking at losing another generation of young people because of this. We can't afford to lose another single young person, never mind another generation of young people. This is what we're facing right now. This is what's on the line. This is a stark reality. I'm not trying to overplay this and make this heavy, but this is the reality. This is what we're facing. Lives of young people are hanging in the balance right now with these decisions. This is a Catch-22 for us. Does this budget reflect what we need to provide a thorough and efficient education? No. But if we don't pass this budget, we're going to get hit with sanctions. We're going to get hit hard. They're going to say, "This is your first bite at the apple, Paterson, at local control and you guys couldn't do it, so we're going to take your fiscal operations from you. Then we're going to take your governance from you. Then we're going to say we were right this whole time. You guys couldn't do it." Meanwhile, they're not giving us what we need to do it and they're going to take the local control away from us and we're going to be right back to where we were 27 years ago. This is what's at stake right now. This is what we're facing right now. When we say we need everyone to have skin in this game, we need everyone to have skin in this game.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

It was moved by Comm. Hodges, 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.

Comm. Castillo: For all of you visiting this evening, we're glad that you're here. We do allow three minutes just to be respectful of everyone else's time, if we can just stay to that.

Mr. John McEntee: Good evening everyone. If you take a look at your calendars from last year, I venture to say that we probably were here doing the same thing for the last 15 years. Budget time has never been a great time in Paterson. I was here last night. I was here last week. I feel like I'm giving the same spiel that I know many of you probably feel you're giving as well. We're in a war. Call it what you want. We're in a war and our students are the ones that are losing. Last night I talked about being tired of hearing words. I'm tired of hearing people say let's do this, this or that. I'm ready to do something about it. I'm ready to shut this city down. I'm telling you where my head is at. I see a lot of heads nodding yes, but I want to see you partner with us and say we're shutting this city down until the State of New Jersey comes through and says we are going to fund our schools. I've a nurse at School No. 9 who sees over 900 kids. You tell me how that nurse at School No. 9 can give the same services to one child

when she's got a line pulling up behind them? Our child study team members have caseloads that I couldn't even explain to you. Could you imagine a lockdown with 45 kids in your class? I want to thank Ms. Redmon for bringing up Teacher for a Day last year. Many of you were there and you saw what it's like to be a teacher in a classroom with 30 to 40 kids. Imagine a shooter, god forbid, coming through a school building and you've got 45 to 50 kindergarteners in that room. Imagine what that's going to be like. You're asking for our teachers and our ESPs to do a job that you know they can't succeed at. You're asking them to grade hundreds of papers which will only increase next year. We've got to do something big, something so gigantic that the rest of the state, like Toms River who sent 25 buses with an \$83 million gap two weeks ago. You want faces from this audience to be there? Let's shut down the schools and let's do it. Enough of the talk!

Ms. Darlene Morris: Thank you once again for an opportunity to address the Board. I was thinking about how well the challenges we face today were articulated last night and today. The challenge I have is I'd like to hear some solutions. The way I think about it is like this. I always bring it down to a realistic level. I know that when I had my children and my husband and I didn't make enough money to what we felt would adequately support them, we went out and got more money. We went out and got other jobs. I always worked two jobs when they were young because he was a better nurturer than me. We made it happen. I have three very successful children. I don't believe that we can continue to eviscerate the schools like we have. Dr. Hodges was talking about how he watched the kids die in the operating room. We watch them die every day. When their little eyes are looking at us begging for information, security, and education for the jobs for which they're already not going to be prepared – gravity snatchers, locationalists - things they've never heard of and have not even been introduced to. We cannot eviscerate the schools. We can't do that. We have to find other solutions. The thing I don't understand is if we're not getting all the money we're supposed to get, why would we be giving the charter schools all the money they're supposed to get? In my head, if we're only getting 75% of the money that we're supposed to get, and we're giving them 100% of the money that they're supposed to get, that means we're only getting 50% of the money that we need. We lose all the way around. At some point we have to say if I have to give you money, if I get 75%, you get 74%. We're not going to be Even Steven. Nobody is fair, but then we have to be fair. The State is not fair to us, but we take the little bit and try to work with that. Charter schools are not fair to us, but we give them all the money. You look at our kids every now and then, but we look at them every day. They need a good education. It's unfair. What are we going to be living like when they grow up? We're all going to die, not just them. Thank you.

Ms. Carrie Gonzalez: Good evening Madam Superintendent and Board members. As many of you know, my name is Carrie Gonzalez. I'm not only a parent, but I'm also a taxpayer. I have two kids in the Paterson Public Schools, one at BBT and one at School No. 19. I come before you tonight to express my indignation on learning that the district is going to be cutting approximately 150 teachers from the district. It is disheartening knowing that this is always the go-to solution during budget crises. How about instead of laying off our teachers we start eliminating nonsensical positions, such as multiple secretaries, assistants to the assistants to the assistants to the assistants? When I call, I have to speak to the assistant of the assistant superintendent, to the assistant vice principal, to the principal. I'm of the firm belief that it takes one person to do a job. I work in a law firm with a heavy caseload of family law. I'm one person and I do the job of three people. If you hire someone who can't do that job, it's not the position. It's the person you hired. In my home I keep the books. I know what comes in and what goes out. We all here can say we have maybe \$500 cell phones. Guess

what? Before I buy that \$500 cell phone, I have to pay my mortgage, put food on the table, and clothe my kids. If I don't do that and I take away from that to buy a cell phone, who am I hurting? My kids! We knew already that we were at a deficit. Why send administrators to Puerto Rico to recruit teachers when we can't even pay the teachers that we have here? Does that make sense? That doesn't make sense to me. I'm sorry. As a homeowner, I'm getting the brunt of the tax increases. A tax hike of almost 15% on top of a sewer tax, which I know most of you have heard of, is going to drown me. I'm giving and they're taking, but I'm getting nothing in return. My streets aren't paved. My son, who is in seventh grade, doesn't know how to write cursive because it's not taught in schools. Thank god my nine-year-old is at a fifth-grade reading level. I thank god for that. We're hurting our kids. My kid deserves a chance. I'm a product of the Paterson Public School District. I went to college. I have a degree. Can I tell my kids the same thing? Sometimes I think twice about it because I don't know if they're going to make it. I have a kid who is in college and I'm trying to understand why this child cannot write cursive or have a full sentence, as one of the Board members had brought up before. This is an injustice to our children. At this rate, close the schools. Close all the schools. Why have a building and have kids go to school when there are no teachers to teach them? The substitutes don't even teach them. What's the point? Leave my kid at home where I know he's safe. Or give me the money and I'll take that money and bring him to private school. At this point, it's like Mr. McEntee said. We need solutions. Enough talk. Thank you.

Ms. Rosie Grant: Good evening. Tomorrow before the Board meeting Arts at New Jersey is coming into Paterson to celebrate the gains that Paterson Public Schools has made in arts and music. Dr. Hodges talked about it. We went for 27 years without our kids having arts and music. When we fought to get them back and we got them back, the first thing that was cut again was the art and music teachers. This is who we will lose first in this round because they're the newest. We just brought them back last year. It's sad that we made all this gain, enough so that the entire attention of the State of New Jersey will be focused on Paterson tomorrow, while at the same time we're going but no more. The same situation exists with lots of other subject areas. We'll lose our newest and brightest. We've invested a lot of money in professional development. We've become over the years the training ground for people who want to work in other urban cities. Come to Paterson and work a couple of years. They're going to RIF you anyway. I'm not saying you're at fault for this because I fully understand that we've been starved for the resources that our kids need for 27 years. It's a sad situation to be in. There is something we can do about it. I'm encouraging everyone to sign up and go down to Trenton and raise hell. Go down to Trenton and let them know that our kids' lives are as valuable as the lives of the kids in the surrounding suburban communities. Go down to Trenton and tell them \$13 million is just not enough to educate our kids. We have a court case in our favor. Let's go back to court. John, I'm with you. Shut it down. It's not enough money to educate our kids. We can't have classrooms with 40 or more kids. How are they going to learn? When you even think about safety, security, and just basic health considerations, it's impossible. Let's do something radical. It's time for us to do something radical so that we get the attention of the people in Trenton. Start with the testimony. Go down and do that, but then let's make sure that we're doing more to get their attention. Thank you.

Mr. Charles Ferrer: Good evening, Charles Ferrer. It's hard to even think where we should start with this. It's what we've been dealing with for some time. I'm a supporter that says we have to take care of home first. I was looking at the August Board minutes and the amount of money that was going out to take care of our special needs students. I called Ms. Coy and we had a little discussion. They give 'x' amount of dollars for special needs students, but we're paying 10 times what they give us. I said before we

have to give any money to any school, we have to make sure that we're taking care of our special needs students. Then whatever is left we have to divide by the amount of students that we have left in our district, which might come down to \$5,000. That's all that we give to Tech and a charter school. We should not be forced to give them top dollar. If they're a student in Paterson, they should receive the same amount of money that the children that remain in Paterson receive. That's disparaging treatment. We're treating them better than the students that we're taking care of here. That's one fight that we need to address because it's unfair. We have to take care of special education because our children didn't ask to be in out-of-district placements and that costs more than the \$18,000 that they give. Just look at the Board minutes of August. It will blow your mind what we're paying for those students. Then we have to do the rest a little bit? When we go to Trenton and Newark, we have to look at these legislators and say the Constitution says to fully fund education. Maybe they should have put in that clause in the Constitution "by any means necessary." If you don't fund the children, we have what Dr. Hodges and others have described and it's a shame. I think back 40 years ago and I remember my classmates saying when they went to college they weren't prepared. Thirty years later I attended a workshop and students says they weren't prepared. Wow! Who does that really fall on? It falls on the State because that's their obligation. We have to make them understand. We're really not asking. We just want you to do one thing – follow the law. Give us the money. Don't give us excuses. Take it from the lottery. Take it from the millionaires. Take it from the other taxpayers because you know the educators are not taxpayers, so says Sweeney, but we are taxpayers and we care about the children here. Most importantly, we know that if we don't stand together they're going to continue to walk. They set us up. They said first we're going to give it back to them, but then we're not going to give them the money that we used to give them. That's wrong because regardless of whether we're State controlled or local controlled, they have an obligation to fund the education of these students. Look in the Board minutes and you'll see. It's a disgrace. I'm going to go to the next month and I'm going to analyze it. We're educators. They're treating it like it's corporate and it's not. We don't have all children that are the same. They come and we take them as they are and we have to educate them, but we need the money to educate them. Music and the arts are key to making students strong in other areas. I remember when we didn't have art. My kids came with different shirts designed every day. I asked where they were buying the shirts. They said they don't buy them, they make them. That was without an art teacher. So our students have the talent. They get an art teacher and some of them are doing great things, but then you're going to pull that. You're going to pull music. I heard a young lady from School 20 sign. I said I know you're going to Rosa Parks. But if we continue to pull all that, what do we have? If we have to camp on the Governor's step, let's go. I guess John and I think alike. Shut it down! Bring everybody. Load up all the buses. Bring all the students and let's just crowd the State House and the Department of Education. Let's just crowd them and sit in until they get an understanding that we, in Paterson, mean business. The students mean business. The parents mean business. The educators mean business. Thank you.

Ms. Lynn Schweighardt: Good evening, my name is Lynn Schweighardt and I'm the nurse at School No. 21. I just want to say that I really feel horrible for the students. I've got 761 kids alone in by building. They love art and music. They're decorating the building like crazy. For them to lose that, it's something that gives them a break in the day. You bring it back for one year? I know it's not your fault, but something has to be done. Having 30-40 students in a classroom is just unacceptable, besides being overcrowded. We had a real lockdown this year and it was scary. I can't imagine being a second grade teacher and having 30 or 40 kids. We have two teachers in our building who are second grade teachers with 32 7 and 8-year-olds that they had to keep under

control during something that was so scary. People are still talking about it. Maybe we do need to do what John said and shut it down. Let's shut this school district down on a day when we're going to Trenton so that the teachers can go. Hopefully nobody will shoot me for this. It's a sick day that you have to take unless you show up. If you show up, it doesn't count. Then we will get the numbers. Maybe that's something that we need to do. Shut it down for a day and let us all go to Trenton. I would love to go, but I can't because I have to work. As a nurse, there are no substitutes. There's no way I'm taking off unless I have no choice. Thank you.

Ms. Paula Alford: Good evening everyone. I'm very disturbed. I have two sons in the Paterson Public School District. I've lived in Paterson all my life. I'm 40 years old. I went to School No. 13 k-8. Then in eighth grade when they cut the arts, I was afforded the opportunity to go to Rosa Parks. Having the arts in my life is what has allowed me to talk to you at this moment so confidently. I walk into rooms every day and speak very confidently. I'm going to attribute that to the arts. I was a part of the Equity Ensemble at Rosa Parks. We got to go out and perform for Corporate America. We stood on stages and spoke about social issues. One thing that I have not heard mentioned here is the school-to-prison pipeline. This is exactly what this is. That's very scary. We need to say that from our mouths. I have two boys. I have two young Black boys in this city. What I'm really being faced with, as I was speaking to someone last week... I have another opportunity that I'm blessed with. I work from home. I've already been speaking about home schooling my two boys. In Paterson when I look at my friends that live outside of Paterson and the education that their children have, it's by the grace of god from their mother that they measure up. It's not really the school system. My son went half of the year without a science teacher. It's unacceptable. If I can appeal to the parents to understand, we hear school-to-prison pipeline. We hear it all the time. It's happening. It's happening right here in your city. When they take everything else, it's setting them up to do nothing but go to jail. They need it. Every kid is a dollar. By the time your child is in the third and fourth grade, if they're not at a proficient reading level, they know that kid is a dollar they can count on for jail. I don't know what we have to do to urge other parents to be a part of this, but we have to do something. This cannot be taken lightly. You need to understand that if we don't get this money our kids are going to jail. If we don't get this money, our kids are not going to make it. They're going to die. The world is changing. Many parents are working from home now. I can do home schooling and you all will be out of a job. So we all need to really figure it out.

Ms. Liz Moulthrop: Hi, my name is Liz. I run an after-school music program here in Paterson. I'm a musician and I've been here for a couple of years. I want to talk about the arts and music being cut during the school day. We may be an after-school music program, but when students during the school day lose the opportunity to have arts and music, we all lose. We're part of a larger ecosystem and it all works together. I'm a violinist and I learned to play music in fourth grade at a public school. I'm here today as a certified music teacher and a non-profit administrator because I learned music and I had a teacher who believed in me. However, students here are not going to have the opportunity that I had. In 2011, there were 21,000 students in the State of New Jersey who did not have access to their State mandated right of arts and music. There were 21,000 in the state and 14,000 were in Paterson. Two-thirds of all the kids in the state who did not have music and arts were in Paterson. That's actually half the district. Since then, there's been a lot of progress, but for us to go back to that is devastating for our kids and for the entire district. We know that music does things like increase attendance, increase parent engagement, increase college readiness, test scores, school culture, and will decrease the chance of students going to prison after graduating or not graduating. We're able to save money if we're able to invest in kids and education early before they go into not having a job or going to prison. We've had great

success in the past year hiring 90 music teachers, bringing in VH-1 to save the music, and attracting outside people like to them to invest and give us instruments. If we cut these teachers, outside interests like VH-1, NJPAC, NJSO, and programs like the Paterson Music Project are disincentivized to come here and invest in Paterson as well. I'm here today to say that I support the in-school music programs. I will advocate for them and I hope that you will too. Thank you.

Ms. Sailys Cabral: Good evening, Board members. My name is Sailys Cabral. With all due respect that's awarded to each and every one of you, what's in it for us? You're asking the parents to be there, to go to Trenton, and volunteer. We need you so much. We can only obtain this with you. I did. I gave way more than 110%. We raised thousands of dollars. We bought air conditioners. We bought programming tablets and supplies for teachers. We fought for nurses, proper security, ADA compliance, and parental involvement and succeeded. There are still thousands of dollars in the bank account for that school's PTO to provide more. How did we accomplish that? It was through hard work and determination. When you got all of these new programs and my child's safety was compromised, with proof what did you do? I was forced to put my son's life first and made a crucial sacrifice to put him into private school. We pay for it ourselves. We don't have the luxury of having charter school money and vocational school money like PCTI. We would be happy with 50%. This district is unfortunately plagued with inadequacies. I, as a responsible taxpayer, cannot afford any more increases. We are looking at another increase from the city, a \$3 million sewer tax, and now you're proposing a 14% increase. We pay so much and have nothing to show for it. I had to get another job to afford it. I still can't afford it and my husband and myself are looking to get another one. It's time to pull the emergency brake and restructure everything. You need to do more. You need to show up. You need to prove that you are in it for us. When we show up and show out and walk the walk, you also need to stand by our side when things aren't going well for us and our children. We are taxpayers. Whether people pay rent or own homes, they contribute to the taxes that are being paid into this city. I'm sorry, but we're drained. Enough is enough. Asking for more and more and we get nothing. Our kids don't have anything. Please take everything into consideration. Everything needs to be restructured. Please press the emergency brakes. There are enough officials here that can handle restructuring every single program. Every single program needs restructuring. Thank you.

Ms. Erica Santiago: My name is Erica Santiago. I'm the mother of a special education student at HARP Academy. Quite frankly, after hearing everything that everybody said, I understand why the Superintendent can't go on record and say shut it down. She might not be able to do that. Guess what? I can. My daughter will not be in school on the 21st and she will not be in school on the 27th because I am going to shut it down. I do not have Facebook or Instagram, but I will be passing the message along to everyone's page in my family. I will make sure that everyone in Paterson keeps their kids home on the 21st and the 27th so we get our money. We need to stop arguing like amicable people that have signed a pre-nup and we need to start arguing like a bitter first wife who got left for a side chick. I'm sorry, but it is time to go in. We are going to show up and show out. I'm legally blind and I have no shame in my game. Put me in front of the cameras. Put me in front of the Senate. Put me in front of Trump. I voted for him, so I don't care. I will tell him we need our money. Thank you. Ms. Shafer, I'm behind you 100%.

Ms. Raquel Soto: Raquel Soto, parent advocate. I have a child with special needs at Rosa Parks High School. I can't top Erica. Ms. Shafer, I just want to tell you that I'm behind you 100%. I usually come to this microphone to fight for special needs. I'm fighting for every child, not only special needs. Comm. Capers, you made a comment

yesterday about the Newcomers. I was a newcomer. I came from Puerto Rico when I was 11. I was thrown in School No. 13 and did not know the language. It's sad to say that we're fighting for these kids that are coming from Puerto Rico because of a hurricane that occurred a year ago and we're not going to service them. You're giving me the look. There are a lot of newcomers that came from Puerto Rico that did not decide to come. The circumstances brought them here. There are a lot of children with IEPs. Do you know what PEI is? That's an IEP from Puerto Rico. I've looked at them. Those children have to be serviced. If we don't service those children within 30 days, we're in violation of their IEP. It doesn't matter if it's from Puerto Rico. I took that offensively because I was one of them, just like Ms. Castro. I'm going to leave it there. Thank you.

Ms. Hannah Tannin: Hi guys. My name is Hannah. I'm a mother of two children in Paterson. One goes to a charter school and one is in public school. I do not see any difference in education from the charter school to the public school. Knowing now where the money comes from, I'm a little disgusted at how much we're giving to charter schools and we're not using it for our children who need it. My child is special needs. He's the one in public school. If we made the classes 30 to 40 kids each, how are they supposed to learn? How are they supposed to get their one-on-one? We're setting them up to cut classes, to go out, and get into trouble. I'm not willing to have my children go to jail, get in trouble, fight, and do anything like that just because we're not getting money. We cannot have bigger classes. We shouldn't have to let go of 150 teachers who could really benefit our children. I will be one of the parents going to Trenton with you guys and I'll stand with you through this whole process.

Ms. Martha Osencio: Hi, my name is Martha. My daughter is in special needs classes. She's doing much better this year. I don't want her to suffer for the money to take away all the services that she is having right now. She's making a lot of progress, especially in reading. Her level is second grade and she's in fifth grade. Like Ms. Shafer said, I'm going to be with you at Trenton and Newark. If I have to take my kids with signs, I will bring signs. I don't want them to suffer. If the school is not going to be good for them because of the money, what should we do? Should I leave her in the house and show her those programs on TV? Do you want me to do that for her? That's not what we need. I want her to go to school and do better instead of staying in the house. If she stays in the house for too many days because she says school is not worth it because they do nothing, I don't want the police to start calling my house and say why isn't my kid going to school. Because school is not good and you say you don't have the money, how is she going to go to school if she is not going to do better? I don't want the police to say my kid has to go to jail because they don't go to school. That's not fair. Kids need the money so they can do better. What's her future going to be? I'm not going to be here forever. They can stay here. What is her future going to be? Nobody knows, especially with all the help that she needs. That's not fair. I'm with you 100% and my other kids too this Thursday and next week on Trenton. I'm going to be with you.

Ms. Shaye Brown: Good evening. My name is Shaye Brown. I'm a single mother of two children. One attends Dale Avenue. I'm a resident, homeowner, and voting taxpayer of Paterson. I'm also an employee of Paterson Public Schools. Please know I'm here to represent, not only myself and my children, but all the other parents of children in Paterson and the employees of Paterson Public Schools who could not make it tonight. I was lucky to come. I do have my kids with me. They would be home in bed right now. Their bedtime is 7:30 but I knew that this was important. Please know we have other 1,000 employees who live and work in Paterson. I have one essential question that I ask of everyone on the Board, including your Superintendent Shafer.

Please write down and provide an answer to the people in Paterson and all the district employees. When will this district become truly child centered? Cutting jobs will disturb teacher/student relationships that have a huge impact on children's academic success, as well as their socioemotional. We're now threatening to create long-lasting traumatic effects by cutting positions that our schools need in order to run effectively. The district is becoming about quantity and not quality. As a parent of a child with autism, the parent/teacher relationship is incredibly important to me as well as my son as his ability to build and maintain relationships is a true struggle and part of his disability. What about our children in our schools who don't have disabilities but function only because of the special bonds they have formed with staff who motivate them to do better and attend school? Increasing class sizes again? When will this district become child centered? How can effective and progressive learning take place in an overcrowded classroom where 20-40 children will uncomfortably have to fit into, especially in our buildings that are so old they don't have effective air conditioning or heating to provide a healthy, safe, and secure environment? As a staff, every year it seems I'm asked by either my district, the State, or the current sitting president to do more with less and less. I love teaching and I'm passionate about that. I sincerely mean that. I love my job. I do. I want you all to know that. But I'm beginning to be discouraged about my career choice because of the instability and lack of respect teachers are getting. Superintendent Shafer, you made a comment to make a commitment to make sure every school had an art and music teacher. I'm from New York, Harlem. Born and raised. The arts were a huge piece of my identity and educational experience. I was beyond excited when you announced that. I was screaming. Not you're taking it away. It is one of the greatest forms of expression for our youth. Can you imagine that child or those children who have found an outlet through their arts and music because they have enough to deal with in their neighborhood and at home? Can you imagine that being taken away from them right now? This budget crisis has threatened the jobs of approximately 150 employees. That is no small number. My colleagues and I are nervous as we're uncertain of our job status which will immediately lead to a chain reaction of how we will care for our families and pay our bills, especially if we are the sole and primary caregivers. I'm asking respectfully that you, Superintendent Shafer and the Board, please reconsider cutting these teaching positions and find another route to address this budget crisis Paterson Public Schools is in. We are educators. We are not financiers. Maybe it is time to actually find an expert financial advisor to come in and look at our options without hurting our staff which hurts our students. Do we really need another assistant superintendent over teachers? Thank you for your time and consideration of my request. I look forward to hearing your replies. Thank you.

Ms. Elizabeth Elias: Good evening everybody. I'm Elizabeth, aka Liz. How are you guys? I haven't attended any of the budget meetings because it's too much for me. I feel like we've been doing this over and over and over again. A lot of you guys have been knowing this. I was one of those parents that fought for my Turnaround School No. 21 teacher. I'm doing it again. Four years before that there was another cut and another before that. We're going to go on and on about how we're going to point fingers that we've been doing it, but do you guys really know what you're doing? It's consistently again and again. I'm exhausted. You guys talk about it, but won't you be about it? Everybody keeps talking about how essentially we can't miss one day of school. This is an emergency. We need to close down the schools these days that we're going to Trenton. For one inch we close down the schools when it's not even needed. Then you lose our money on that and parents still have to figure it out. I hope to see you guys walking around the businesses and talking parent language, letting them know how really aware and dangerous this is. This is dangerous. Our kids are our future. Tell your friends not to come in here again like you did four years ago. They

wanted to be in the Council meetings. One thing does have to do with another. We're all one city. Everybody talks about the village. Where are you guys? This is not something we're going to do behind computers. This is something that you have to do on foot. I have 75 parents to come down when Dr. Evans was here from two days. Do you know how I did it? If you don't come to this meeting, it's your fault. If you don't come to this meeting, it's your fault. I suggest that everybody that day – I don't care what positions you have – be there just like I'm going to be there with my children. For those who are talking about Puerto Rico, I'm Dominican and I'm one of the only parents that fight here in America. Don't stop the shine on those kids that come. It has nothing to do with what you are. It's where you're going to come from and what we're going to do in the future. That's the problem. Everybody likes to find and point nationalities. The prison problem that Paula is talking about is that. You guys get distracted. What's the issue? Do you know what the issue is? Somebody is not doing their job. I do believe that a lot of people need a cut. I'm with it. Not the teachers, but a lot of these administrator positions, starting with the budget, need to be from the head to the tail. You guys need to stop the pointing. It's serious. You don't understand. Our children are the future. It doesn't stop when people die. It starts when they start being born. All you guys have been here for so many years. I don't understand why it's happening again and again. You guys need to do better. I hope to see you guys on the 4th. Just like when you want to be voting, you pass around these papers and be proactive. That's what I want to see. I want to see you in the hood.

Dr. Katherine Benevento: Good evening Board members, Superintendent Shafer, and Cabinet members. I'm going to start with a little story. In 2010, I was sitting home writing my dissertation about the arts and how they increase student success in schools in the academics, arts integrations, and arts as itself holistically in an art room. I really spoke about some of the outcomes of what the successes are with the arts in the district. So did another parent. I'm going to tell you right now, the research has shown that the arts, if it's completely absorbed in a school district, there is an increase in student success academically. I have it. You can look my name up. You can read my dissertation. I am here now because you're doing it again. I came and stood next to our Mayor in 2010. I almost got up to speak and I stopped myself. But I could not stop myself today. You must not only provide arts as itself as a discipline for what it does holistically for all people all around, but for the fact that it actually helps students become more successful. I can state the research to you and anyone else that wants to know at any time. I'm so happy that all the other programs are here and have come over in the past 10 years and have assisted helping us because we were cut. When I got transferred to HARP Academy I wrote curriculum so that students can learn medical illustration. I spoke to Jersey City State to create a program so that we were able to get students to graduate with a BA here and go down to Baltimore for their MA. What are we doing here? There has to be somewhere else that you can figure out where to cut and not hurt my colleagues. As far as special education, that's where I'm teaching right now. I've always done special education in my art and I've always done the art in my special education classes. I'm going to ask you to please look somewhere else. As far as I'm concerned, I have one more personal day now that I'm back from my worker's comp case and I will take that personal day and come down with you all. I implore and plead to all the teachers that have a personal day to take a day off and let the district pay for a substitute if Superintendent Shafer cannot shut us down. Thank you. Or shut us down.

Mayor Andre Sayegh: Good evening, Andre Sayegh, 215 Dundee Avenue, Paterson, New Jersey. I'm here to let you know that I've been on the phone with Trenton lobbying to see if there's any way we can get additional aid for the school district. I certainly want to avoid layoffs at all costs. In Paterson we were confronted with a budget crisis

ourselves, and we took necessary steps so we didn't have to go down that path. We found cuts and made sure that fire, police, and public works remained intact. I've been in direct contact with the Governor's Chief of Staff, George Helmy, and I will continue that dialogue as well. It's that important. I'm not only the Mayor of the city, but I'm a parent of a public school student. It's important to note that I don't envy any of you because, like I've stated before, I can relate to what you're going through. We had structural challenges that we faced and we had to make difficult decisions. Switching to a State health benefit plan was not very popular, but it will save us tens of millions of dollars every year. Now we've created a sewer utility asking taxpayers to pay a supplemental bill. It's not the easiest decision to make, but a decision that had to be made. We're not afraid to make difficult decisions. I'm here to let you know I'm here in solidarity with you. You're not alone in this process. You have someone who's advocating for you right down to Trenton in the Governor's office. I also want to ask that you reconsider the Newcomers program. I've gotten calls from constituents, Bengali, Arab, and Spanish-speakers. It will set them back. Quite frankly, at this time we want all students to achieve because they all deserve a chance. Thank you for this time this evening.

Mr. Robert Scott: Good evening everyone. It's a little bit difficult to follow behind our Mayor, but I'm going to cut to the chase. My name is Robert Scott, PTO leadership President. We cannot afford layoffs. As a member of the law enforcement community, we are losing our kids to the streets. We elected individuals up here and some of the most intelligent and connected influential individuals that are up there. I hold every single person up there in some way or form responsible to find out what's going on in order to save the layoffs from any of our people being affected. Solve this problem, please. Protect us, please. Protect your constituents, please. That's 150 people that may not have the ability to feed their families. That's thousands of kids who have developed relationships with our teachers and administrators as the first line of defense against what's out there. Drug dealers outside are not laying off. There are bad guys out there that are not laying off. I know enough to humble myself because I talk to every single person up there. With the influence and everything that you have, please handle this. Right now, we have 150 people that potentially, when everything is said and done, are not going to have the ability to feed their kids or save one child from what's happening just outside our doors. I say it again and I beg of all the individuals that we voted in place that we supported all the time – handle this. Protect our kids. Protect our teachers that care about our kids. Our teachers, parents, and every administrator are the first line of defense against what I'm dealing with every single day. Thank you.

Ms. Susan Lucas: Good afternoon everybody. Ms. Shafer, I'm with you 100%. The schools do need to be shut down because you're saying we parents need to be there and need to support. How are we going to support if we're taking our kids to school? We have to go to our jobs. The schools need to be shut down and a lot of parents can go down. If you don't shut down, I'm going to shut down myself. I'm not sending myself to school. I'm not sending my son to school. I'm going to go to Trenton to fight and help every parent to fight for our rights. I have a disabled child. I don't want him to end up in the streets becoming a criminal or going to jail. How many kids do you want to be dying? How many suicides because they're talking about they don't have enough education and that they're not caring in school? Think about how many kids out there in school right now are committing suicide, cutting, and quitting school because they feel they're not getting any education. We have to take to serious. Look at my child. How many of these do you want to drop out? How many of these innocent kids do you want to die? If you have less teachers, you're going to have a whole bunch of students and

there's a lot of insane people out there shooting our kids in one classroom. Like I said, I will be in Trenton. That's all I have to say.

Comm. Hodges: Madam Chair, I think there's a misunderstanding.

Mr. Michael Taylor: My name is Michael Taylor, Parent of the Year at International High School. I do know I have a solution to stop the illegal underfunding of the Paterson School District. I'm proud to say I grew up in Florida. I went to school in Florida and I graduated from Passaic High School. My daughter is a junior at International High School. I'm going to be there for my daughter every step of the way until she graduates. I've been an active parent and coming to Board of Education meetings. The solution to this problem is that in Florida the county controls the district money. The State of Florida distributes the money out to the counties equally. One county doesn't get any more money than the other. If the money was distributed to the counties, Paterson students will get the same education as the students in Wayne, Clifton, Kinnelon, and Wanaque. I'm going to be brief. I'm not able to go to Trenton because I work. I really would like to go down there and enjoy the experience in fighting for the kids of Paterson. I come up to these meetings, not just for my daughter. I come to speak for all the children of Paterson. I'm going to hold the Board, Ms. Shafer, and the Mayor respectfully accountable that when you go down there to Trenton please consider the suggestion I just made to you. All the money gets distributed to the counties equally. Thank you. Michael Taylor, Parent of the Year at International High School.

Comm. Hodges: Madam President, we've had situations in the past where a very enthusiastic crowd has shown up in front of the Senate and/or Assembly and unfortunately have misinformation, which confuses the issue. This Board is not choosing to make cuts. The Superintendent is making cuts to a reading program that's going to affect close to 28,000 students. She's making cuts because there's no money. We are being illegally underfunded. The State owes us more money than they've given us. That's first and foremost.

Concerned Parent: So instead of cutting from the reading program, why not cut inefficient staff?

Comm. Hodges: She's cutting supervisors, vice principals, teachers, and directors. I'm not going to have a debate. I just want to give you information now. We're not doing this because we want to do this. We're not having a debate.

Concerned Parent: I'm not asking you to have a debate. I'm asking you to go to Roberto Clemente upstairs to the third floor and sit down in what I only assume used to be a library. It's split in partitions with my child sitting in it. She has her second grade classroom, the third graders behind her, the fourth graders next to her, and the fifth graders on the other side. How is my child supposed to learn?

Comm. Hodges: We had the exact same situation at School No. 16. We had to go out and fight to close that school and rebuild it and we did that. All I'm trying to say is we have to go down united with an understanding of what's happening here. This is not the choice of the Board. We're not saying let's cut because we have nothing else to do here. We have to fund programs. We have to fund buildings. We have to keep kids at least moving through the process. The cuts that we have are the least harmful. We don't agree with what's going on here now, but we're being illegally underfunded. This is not the Board's choice. I've heard some parents get up and ask us please not to make these cuts. We don't have any choice in the matter. This is not something that we want to do every year. The problem is we're being illegally underfunded constantly.

Our goal is to put a stop to that and go down and challenge the State and make them understand that you cannot do this to Paterson. That's the process. When we go to Trenton, we go to help people understand that our children deserve to be funded appropriately and in accordance with the State Supreme Court mandate of a thorough and efficient education, which is not happening now. That's all I want to say.

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

Ms. Shafer: Let me just reiterate that when your cost drivers are up and the State only gives you \$13 million, you end up with a \$30-million shortfall. We looked long and hard about every single thing that we could cut. I've been here since the State took over. The last thing I want to do is bring a program back for kids, which is art and music, for a year and then turn around and say to them it was a little tease. We're taking it back. We're not having art and music. Last thing I ever wanted to do. Last thing I ever wanted to do was cut any positions. For teaching and learning the most important person is the teacher in front of that class and the principal who runs the building. I have seen our kids on the roller coaster over the last 27 years. This was not an easy task, to look at what we could cut and have it the least harmful to our children. We have been cutting for the past nine years. There's nothing left to cut. That's what the State needs to understand. There is nothing left to cut. Every single person in this room feels the pain of what we've been going through over the past couple of weeks since we received our funding from the State. You may read it's \$13 million. It's nothing. It's \$2 million. \$2 million does not go far with 28,000 children. This was not an easy task. I made commitments when I took this job of what I was going to do and we did it for one year. Teachers worked extremely hard and I tell the teachers when I go around that we have the best teachers you can find right here in Paterson. Make no mistake about it. That's why it's difficult for me to do this. I came through the ranks. I just didn't come here and this is not just a job. This is a passion. When it's a passion, it becomes very difficult to cut anything. I know what needs to be done and I know we can do it. I have seen it. Over the past 18 months I have seen it. Attendance is up. PARCC scores are up. They're not up a lot, but they're up. You see growth. This is not easy for me to do, but we have to submit a balanced budget and continue to fight and that's what we will do.

Comm. Castillo: I think we need to have a list and show the public there are some positions that are mandated. There are some positions that we have to have, those same positions that sometimes we're cutting directors, supervisors, and vice principals and what positions were put back in the same predicament that we have to have because it's this revolving circle. We need to have a list of all the positions that are mandated. We're in a revolving circle. We're asked to educate students, but we're not given the resources. We're told that maybe cuts are the best possible idea, but there are cuts that we can't make and then others that we really can't make. There are two different ways. We don't want to cut teachers. We need teachers, yet we're also mandated to keep some other positions. I think it would be good to share with the public so that they know which positions we're mandated to have per pupil.

It was moved by Comm. Redmon, seconded by Comm. Ramirez that the Board goes into executive session to discuss:

- 1. Personnel**
- 2. Attorney/Client Privilege**
- 3. Litigation**

4. Discussion on Shut It Down
5. Thorough and Efficient Education

On roll call all members voted in the affirmative. The motion carried.

Comm. Castillo: We just ask you guys to be a little bit patient. We have to go into executive session before and then we will have the full presentation of the budget.

The Board went into executive session at 8:15 p.m.

The Board reconvened the meeting at 9:23 p.m.

PRESENTATION OF THE 2019-2020 SCHOOL DISTRICT BUDGET

Comm. Castillo: I want to thank everyone for your patience. Ladies and gentlemen, I know it's getting a little bit late. We definitely want to thank you for your patience. Madam Superintendent, I'm going to hand it over right to you so we can go through the budget fairly quickly. Then we can move forward.

Ms. Shafer: Thank you, Madam President. At this time, I'd like to call our Business Administrator Richard Matthews and his staff. I want to thank them for the past couple of weeks working around the clock to put this budget together. We'll have the presentation and then the Board will have an opportunity to ask questions.

Mr. Richard Matthews: Thank you Madam Superintendent and Board Commissioners. I, too, want to thank the entire district that has worked on this budget, but especially the budget team of June Grey. We're probably working on 23 straight days. June is just phenomenal. I've told her a million times how good she really is. The entire team is great. Katori Walton is another very, very talented accountant. Linda Herald is just really awesome with the budget and gap accounting. Kenia Fulgensio is another one. Three of these girls will all soon have their MBAs. June will have hers in May. Katori already has hers. Kenia has hers as well. We have a really talented team in business services. I just wanted you guys to know that and I want to personally thank them again for all the work they've put in over the last number of days. I'm going to go through this thing pretty quick and answer any questions you guys might have. We're here. On March 20 we have to go through the budget presentation similar to what you've been seeing for the last couple of weeks. We have to get this to the County Superintendent tomorrow. That's what we're obligated to do. That's what we've done since February to the deadline to adopt our budget, which is May 14. We're going to probably do our public hearing on May 7. I've heard a lot of things that happened over the last couple of hours over the budget and some of the cuts. Even after we submit this tomorrow, we will have some time to also look at ways to make this thing better for the district. Before we get into the nuts and bolts of what the numbers are, I want to talk a little bit about how we have to move forward beyond today. We'll talk about some of the stuff that's in our budget and the structural deficit. The district's revenue, as it says here, is limited. You saw this year we got \$13 million. We have to start the next budget season right now to start to get ahead of some things. We can't wait until next year to the October, November, and December timeframe. We have to really start chipping away now. The budget is really revenue-driven. We don't really control those revenues, but we're going to go down to Trenton and fight for what we feel is right for our kids. Salaries and benefits this year in our budget went up \$10 million. The district expenses will continue to exceed revenues. That's part of the structural deficit. Year in and year out, we're going to have what happened this year. That's why we have to start thinking out more than just one year. We have to think three years out. We have to be more disciplined

in the district. We have a budget. We have to be disciplined and stick to the budget so that we can build up our reserves so that we can start chipping away and putting money into capital reserves to do some of the projects that we're not going to get through State aid. The State aid will not give us enough money to do the things that we have to do in capital. We have to start doing those things by being more disciplined in terms of putting money away into our reserves. In terms of the charter school and PCTI situation, you've seen it before. I'm not going to spend a lot of time on it. It's a \$10 million increase to the budget. Ms. Shafer mentioned earlier the \$13 million versus the \$10 million. This is the picture that we're looking at. This chart you're going to see every year unless we start getting ahead of this stuff by having our budget process start a lot sooner. We'll talk a little bit about structural deficit. Basically, what it says is that our annual expenditures are going to increase more than our annual revenues. We're starting out in the hole, so we have to start making decisions that are permanent and that will definitely attack our structural deficit. This is the bank cap, the breakdown by millions of dollars. We have levels up to \$5.1 million on bank cap. The impact to the taxpayer for 2019-2020 is \$190.19. This is the closing of the gap. We're going to submit a budget of \$526 million and you're probably asking what we did to close that gap. If you look below the \$439 million, that's the \$13 million. We've added money to our contribution from early childhood. We put in \$2 million for that. Miscellaneous revenue we picked up about three-quarters of a million dollars from our indirect costs. We've added \$3 million of fund balance because we had to close the gap so we could come down here and submit to you guys a balanced budget. Our operating budget for 2019-2020 is \$526 million. We have appropriations of \$526 million. That's our budget right there. It's balanced and we'd like to submit that to the County for their review and approval. That's a pie chart of the different categories of revenues. Basically, 85% of our money comes from the State. 11% comes from the tax levy. This is a breakdown of appropriations. That's pretty much it. Are there any questions?

Concerned Parent: Can you put that one slide up so I can photograph it. Thank you. Can you go to the next one so I can photograph that?

Comm. Capers: Thanks, Mr. Matthews, for your hard work and dedication to this budget. Thank you to you and your staff for working on this budget day in and day out for the last couple of weeks and months trying to close this gap. One thing I do want to bring up as a recommendation. I talked to a couple other Commissioners and the Superintendent about this. It's our athletic program. Can you do a presentation or let the Board know what would be the cost savings of combining the athletic program? How much would it save the district this year and going forward?

Mr. Matthews: I would love to. So noted.

Comm. Hodges: I guess the question at this point is how does the Board want to approach the handling of this budget? I'll give a recommendation if there's nothing else on the floor.

Comm. Redmon: Sitting here and going back and forth over the last couple of days with this budget I have to put a charge. I think we need to hold our Superintendent accountable to make sure that she gets more resources for our budget. We can't keep surviving with gutting. We're bickering amongst each other about what programs to cut or keep. It's just disheartening to sit here. We know that this is not a thorough and efficient education. We just know it. In my heart of hearts, I know that we're charged with the thing to make sure that we pass this budget because we have to have a balanced budget. But at this particular time, I would like for us as a Board to make sure

that we have our Superintendent go out and lobby some more people for more money for this budget for our district.

Comm. Hodges: Yesterday I made a very demonstrative statement that I would refuse to vote for this budget because I did not think it would provide a thorough and efficient education for our children. If this were the last thing that we were going to do, I would stand by that. We have done this in the past. The State does not care once you vote your budget in. You can put statements. You can put red flags. You can put signs. You can have music. They don't care. They will say to the press, "They voted for it." That's the bottom line. But I can't see this as just the only thing that we're going to do. You started to talk about that. I see this as a process between now and May 7.

Mr. Matthews: May 14.

Comm. Hodges: I cannot accept that we're going to allow the State to do this to our children. With a view toward insisting on more funds, the first thing I would do is vote for this budget. Trust me, it pains me to say that because I've voted against budgets in the past. But we have a new responsibility now as we're no longer under State control. Even though the funding may not be what we want, our options about not voting for it and not delivering a balance budget in essence suggests that we're shirking our responsibility as a Board. That's the way the State will play it. Only because I think that would be the outcome and that we would face unreasonable sanctions, particularly because we're going after the charter schools, I would personally vote for the budget even though that's not what I want to do. I've said it's not what should be done. But I think that we have to pursue more funding and not just charge the Superintendent with pursuing more funding. We need to pursue more funding by any means necessary, up to and including a court battle if we need to. That's just one of things that need to be done. There needs to be a clear discussion. What do you mean it's not a thorough and efficient education? These numbers are estimates. It's something in the order of \$125 million short of what the formula says is a thorough and efficient education.

Mr. Matthews: Adequacy.

Comm. Hodges: Adequacy, which is a thorough and efficient education. It's \$125 million short, of which \$72 million is from the State. They owe us \$72 million. If we had \$72 million, we would not be in this position. They sent us \$13 million when we had \$72 million that they owe us. Out of the \$13 million, \$9 million was sent off to charter schools for their advancement and \$2 million to Tech, without even having any say from Paterson people, Paterson children, Paterson administration, and the Paterson School District. No say. Given that, those numbers need to be looked at. They needed be talked about in public. The press has to be made to understand that we were shortchanged this amount of money and that we intend to come for that money. I think that's what I suggest as an approach to what we're doing going forward in this budget. I also would hope that we can reach out to the Commissioner to make sure that he understands how we feel about what's going on here tonight.

Comm. Martinez: The options that were laid out right now with charging the Superintendent with everything that Dr. Hodges just laid out is well. In order for us to get what we need, we're going to have to operate on more than one track. There's not one simple answer. We can't just say the Superintendent has to do this. We can't say this lawsuit is going to do it. We're going to have to be operating on several different tracks simultaneously pushing at the same time, in the same direction, and with the same message. That's an important component that I can't understate. All the advocates in this room have to make sure that we're singing from the same song page.

We can't go down there and say one thing and then you guys are saying something else. That speaks to the notion of having to be in constant communication and making sure that our message that we're delivering is precise and unified. That's an important component to this. This is not going to be one person. This is going to take all of us pushing to get this done. One of those parallels that we have to run on we really do have to call on our legislators and assembly people. We've had conversations with them and they've been responsive to our plight. We need their help too. That's one of those parallel tracks that we have to run on. We also have to involve them more in this process. I think if we're firing on all those cylinders, we're going to make a lot of noise and we can chip away at this. I know it's disheartening and I know it's hard, but this is the time we really need to bear down and keep pushing on this. I'll take personal responsibility. When we get to these situations where we're voting on the budget and we're going through these difficult choices, all these things come to light. We vote on it and then the next day we all go back to business as usual because we have jobs to do and lives to live and we forget the magnitude and severity of what we're dealing with. We let this fall to the wayside. Then, as Mr. Matthews said, come September and October it's budget time again. All these same problems come back up and we're a day late and a dollar short in trying to get these things done. We have to keep the pressure on. Tomorrow morning after this is voted on today, we have to keep the pressure and keep moving. We have to keep chipping away at this now. We can't allow some time to lag and get away from us.

Comm. Hodges: Does the legislature have phone numbers?

Comm. Martinez: They absolutely do. They have office phone numbers right here in Paterson.

Comm. Hodges: They're very easy to find.

Comm. Martinez: Absolutely. All of that being said, this is the stark reality that we're faced with right now. Is this budget representative of a thorough and efficient education? No. But if we don't vote on it, we're rolling the dice. We can say we're not going to vote on this, we're not going to pay this, we're not going to pay that, but we don't know what's going to happen to us if we do that. The ramifications, we don't know. Or we vote on this and we keep fighting.

Comm. Simmons: I can't stress enough what Comm. Martinez said. We don't want to vote on this budget. We absolutely have to. We've been under State control 27 years. I sit here standing on the shoulders of Al Moody, Willa Mae Taylor, Waheedah Muhammad, Errol Kerr, Andre Sayegh and all those Board Commissioners that came before me that worked so hard to make sure that we did the things that we needed to do to get control. I was fortunate enough to be here when we started to get the areas back. But so that the public understands, if we don't vote on this budget, tomorrow we could have a State-appointed Superintendent. It can be that drastic. Even though this Board hired Ms. Shafer as a Superintendent, the State can take her out of here tomorrow if we don't pass this budget. Then we will be starting that 27-year journey all over again.

APPROVE RESOLUTIONS

Comm. Hodges: Madam Chair, I'm going to put that in terms of a resolution for the Board to vote on, if I can. I think we talked about a press conference to discuss these numbers and the implications for the numbers. I would hope that gets done, if the

Board supports it. Number two, certainly emphasize that we are \$125 million below adequacy.

Mr. Matthews: It's \$152 million.

Comm. Hodges: The State owes us somewhere in the area of \$72 million, only gave us \$13 million, and took away \$9.5 million to give to charter schools for expansion. In view of that, it has put us in a situation that makes our ability to educate our children untenable. This Board seeks to charge the Superintendent with the responsibility of initiating whatever action she has to initiate, up to and including legal action, to recover the additional funds that we need to bring a thorough and efficient education to our children. That's the resolution. That's a motion on the floor. I certainly need a second.

Comm. Capers: I second it.

It was moved by Comm. Hodges, seconded by Comm. Capers that the Superintendent be charged with the responsibility of initiating whatever action she has to initiate, up to and including legal action, to recover the additional funds that we need to bring a thorough and efficient education to our children. On roll call all members voted in the affirmative. The motion carried.

Comm. Hodges: Does the Board recognize that that wasn't in fact a vote to pass the budget? I'll make that very clear. I may not have said it well enough. That was a resolution to...

Comm. Castillo: To allow the Superintendent to go through all means necessary in order to find more funding.

Comm. Hodges: But to accept the budget.

Comm. Castillo: I have three separate ones. One has the grant total \$14 million, one that has just verbiage on it, and this third one that is stapled. That's three. I just want to make sure everyone is on the same page.

Resolution No. 2

WHEREAS, in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-10.3(b)1, a district can request use of banked cap only after it has fully exhausted all eligible statutory spending authority in the budget year; and

WHEREAS, banked cap from earliest pre-budget year must be used before the amount from a more recent year which totals \$5,160,682; and

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Paterson Board of Education has fully exhausted all eligible statutory spending authority for the 2019-2020 budget year as follows:

- Increase of Charter Schools: \$9,422,866
- Loss of one-time revenue for Sale/Leaseback: \$12,000,000

This must be completed by the end of the 2019-2020 budget year and cannot be deferred or incrementally completed over a longer period of time; and

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

It was moved by Comm. Redmon, seconded by Comm. Olivares that Resolution No. 2 be adopted.

Mr. Matthews: It just says that we lost the revenue. We didn't get it in 2019-2020. We got it one year, in 2018-2019. That's all it says.

Comm. Redmon: According to this resolution, the loss of the \$12 million doesn't tell you what year it's lost. It just says the \$12 million.

Mr. Matthews: It asks you to put something in here that's impacting you to ask for the bank cap. Two things that impacted us are the \$9 million and the one-time revenue of \$12 million in 2018-2019. It's all for prior years. It has nothing to do with us moving forward. It's just noting that you have expenditures that are impacting your current budget and why you want to use bank cap in the current 2019-2020 budget. We could have not even put it there, but it's there.

Comm. Hodges: The sale/leaseback of \$12 million refers to...

Mr. Matthews: Prior year revenues that we had. We don't get that anymore. It was prior year revenue that we used in the 2018-2019 budget so it's one of the things that are impacting our gap. We used the \$43 million and part of that was charter schools, one-time revenues, transportation, and special education. You have to note to them what some of these incidents are that are causing you to want to use bank cap. We just picked charter schools and...

Comm. Hodges: I understand why you did it. I'm not quite sure I can explain the sale/leaseback.

Mr. Matthews: It was one-time revenue that we got last year.

Comm. Redmon: When we discussed this, we understood the \$9 million that's affecting us, but the rest of the Board did not agree. We could have put some other items in there, something else that we could have harped on. Right now, that's something we can't fight on.

Comm. Hodges: This is the books?

Comm. Castillo: Yes.

Comm. Redmon: We can't fight on that.

Mr. Matthews: We're going to change it.

Comm. Redmon: We can't fight that.

Comm. Castillo: The more frustrating part is that we've talked about these same numbers for the last six days and this is the first time, hence why we're all confused.

Mr. Matthews: No, it's not the first time.

Comm. Castillo: We knew about the lease/purchase, but we didn't know this was going to be part of the bank cap used in the resolution. That we did not know.

Mr. Matthews: It's not part of the bank cap. It's just giving you a reason why we're asking for the use of bank cap.

Comm. Castillo: But you can't use that reason. Granted, I know it was money that was a one-time increase, but we can't add this as a reason why.

Mr. Matthews: You can use that. I talked to the County BA about it today. You can use that.

Comm. Castillo: Businesswise as the BA, you might be able to do that. We can't sit here and say the bank cap is one of the reasons because of a book loan.

Mr. Matthews: You don't have to use it. We're going to take it off. You don't have to use anything. It says have you exhausted all remedies to use bank cap. We're saying we have. Give me an example of what's impacting your budget and we can just put charter schools and call it a day. We don't have to use the \$12 million. We're just trying to be more inclusive and telling them what are the issues impacting our budget.

Ms. Shafer: Could we just cross it out and put some of the other cost drivers?

Mr. Matthews: We can put nothing there. We can put just the charter schools and be done with it.

Comm. Hodges: I'll take that. Let's just say charter schools and keep it moving. Madam Chair, I support the notion of just striking loss of one-time revenues and just leave increase to charter schools, which by the way, enhances our argument anyway.

Comm. Castillo: The charter schools I don't have a problem with. It was the sale/leaseback.

Comm. Hodges: Let's strike that and go with that.

Mr. Matthews: That's fine.

Mr. Murray: You may need to amend the current motion.

Comm. Redmon: I made the motion, so I recommend that we amend the motion. Withdraw the motion that's on the floor.

Comm. Olivares: I withdraw my second.

Resolution No. 2

WHEREAS, in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-10.3(b)1, a district can request use of banked cap only after it has fully exhausted all eligible statutory spending authority in the budget year; and

WHEREAS, banked cap from earliest pre-budget year must be used before the amount from a more recent year which totals \$5,160,682; and

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Paterson Board of Education has fully exhausted all eligible statutory spending authority for the 2019-2020 budget year as follows:

- Increase of Charter Schools: \$9,422,866

This must be completed by the end of the 2019-2020 budget year and cannot be deferred or incrementally completed over a longer period of time; and

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

Comm. Hodges: I motion that we go forward with the amended copy and include only the increase of charter schools, \$9,422,866.

Comm. Simmons: I second it.

Comm. Castillo: Would you like me to read it into the record? You'll be able to just change that?

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

Resolution No. 3

WHEREAS, the Superintendent of Schools forwarded Paterson Public Schools' preliminary 2019-20 budget to the Commissioner of Education and the Passaic County Executive County Superintendent of Schools for review and approval on March 20, 2019; and

WHEREAS, the 2019-20 budget for the state-operated Paterson Public School District was prepared consistent with the New Jersey Quality Single Accountability Continuum (NJQSAC) focusing on quality performance indicators in all five areas of school district effectiveness: Operations Management, Instruction and Program, Fiscal Management, Personnel and Governance; and

WHEREAS, the 2019-2020 budget was prepared consistent with the district's revised Fiscal Policy 6220 addressing budget preparation, with primary consideration given to educational priorities identified by the Board and Ms. Eileen Shafer, Superintendent of Schools, and;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education adopt the 2019-2020, budget submitted by Ms. Eileen Shafer, Superintendent of Schools, which budget reflects 2% increase in the local tax levy and use of banked capital available for 2019-2020 to support the general fund as reflect herein;

| | <u>Budgeted</u> | <u>Local Tax Levy included</u> |
|--|-----------------------|--------------------------------|
| General Fund Revenue | | |
| Local Sources | \$ 59,513,735 | \$ 47,445,757 |
| State Aid | \$ 448,251,959 | \$ 0 |
| Federal Sources | \$ 1,319,815 | \$ 0 |
| Budgeted Fund Balance | \$ 3,027,271 | |
| Excess Surplus | \$ 8,462,454 | \$ 0 |
| Total General Fund | <u>\$ 516,575,234</u> | <u>\$ 47,445,757</u> |
| Special Revenue Fund (net of operating budget transfers) | | <u>Local Tax Levy included</u> |
| State Aid | \$ 58,193,306 | \$ 0 |
| Federal Aid | \$ 32,318,044 | \$ 0 |

| | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|
| Transfer from Operation Fund | | |
| Pre-K Special Education | \$ 1,547,385 | \$ 0 |
| Total Special Revenue Fund | <u>\$ 92,058,735</u> | <u>\$ 0</u> |
| Debt Service | | |
| Local Sources | \$ 506,479 | \$ 506,479 |
| State Aid | \$ 799,121 | \$ 0 |
| Budgeted Fund Balance | <u>\$ 20</u> | <u>\$ 0</u> |
| Total Debt Service | <u>\$ 1,305,620</u> | <u>\$ 506,479</u> |
| Grand Total Revenues | <u>\$ 609,939,589</u> | <u>\$ 47,952,236</u> |

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Superintendent of Schools hereby fixes and determines that the amount of money necessary to be appropriated for the use of the public schools for the 2019-2020, School Year is \$609,939,589 of which \$47,952,236 is the General Fund local tax levy; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Superintendent of Schools will authorize the reallocations and modifications needed to present a balanced 2019-2020 budget with an adequate amount of funds to provide for a thorough and efficient education; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Superintendent of Schools shall hereby forward to the Commissioner of Education of the State of New Jersey the budget statement, budget statement certification, form A4F (Certification and Report of School Taxes, 2019-2020 School Year) and supporting documentation as required by statute and code; and

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

It was moved by Comm. Simmons, seconded by Comm. Redmon that Resolution No. 3 be adopted. On roll call all members voted as follows:

Comm. Capers: Yes.

Comm. Hodges: I stated with great reluctance yes, with the idea that this is a process and that I intend to be part of the process that fights for more funding for our students, funding that is actually thorough and efficient.

Comm. Olivares: Yes.

Comm. Ramirez: I'm going to pull one from Dr. Hodges' book. This is not a thorough and efficient education. I can't legitimize this budget with these cuts to our teachers, reading programs, and Newcomers program, which further puts our kids who are at risk into a worse situation. We need to do better than this. We need to fight Trenton and whoever we need to in order to make sure that we get adequately funded. My vote is no.

Comm. Redmon: My vote is yes because it's my responsibility as a Board member to make sure that we pass this budget. Personally, I would have voted no on this.

Comm. Rondon: I don't want to do this. I feel like I'm obligated. We have a responsibility and we have to do what we have to do. I know we're not giving our kids the education they deserve, but we have to get this budget in. I have to say yes.

Comm. Simmons: As Dr. Hodges said, we know this does not represent a thorough and efficient education, but I am mandated by law to pass and submit a balanced budget. My vote is yes.

Comm. Martinez: Has the budget passed with the number of votes, six affirmatives? If the budget is already passed, my vote is no.

Comm. Castillo: I know how complicated this process has been for all of us and the position that we were put in. At the end of the day, I have to agree with Comm. Ramirez. My responsibility falls to this community because my kids are getting the short end of the stick. I vote no.

The motion carried.

Resolution No. 4

WHEREAS, the tentative budget submitted by the Superintendent of Schools be affirmed and approved by the Board of Education for the 2019-20 School Year using the 2019-20 state aid allocations and the School Business Administrator be authorized to submit the tentative budget reflecting the following revenues to the Executive County Superintendent of Schools for approval in accordance with the statutory deadline:

| General Fund | 2018-19 | 2019-20 | # Increase/ (Decrease) |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Local Tax Levy | \$ 41,455,956 | \$ 47,445,757 | \$ 5,989,801 |
| Tuition | \$ 500,000 | \$ 500,000 | \$ - |
| Miscellaneous Income | \$ 3,092,000 | \$ 3,670,510 | \$ 578,510 |
| Worker's Comp/Rx Rebates | \$ 6,000,000 | \$ 6,000,000 | |
| Sales and Leaseback Textbooks | \$ 12,000,000 | \$ - | |
| Extraordinary Aid | \$ 3,000,000 | \$ 3,000,000 | |
| Adult Education Testing Center Fees | \$ 18,220 | \$ 18,205 | \$ (15) |
| State Aid | \$ 426,013,595 | \$ 439,251,959 | \$ 13,238,364 |
| Federal Aid-Medicare Reimbursement | \$ 1,211,817 | \$ 1,319,815 | \$ 107,998 |
| Withdrawal from Capital Reserves | \$ - | \$ 1,879,263 | \$ 1,879,263 |
| Pre-School Carryover | \$ - | \$ 2,000,000 | \$ 2,000,000 |
| Excess Surplus | | \$ 8,462,454 | |
| Appropriated Fund Balance | \$ 8,646,913 | \$ 3,027,271 | \$ (5,619,642) |
| Total General Fund | \$ 501,938,501 | \$ 516,575,234 | \$ 14,636,733 |

WHEREAS, the District will advertise said tentative budget in the Herald News in accordance with the form suggested by the State Department of Education and according to law; and

WHEREAS, a travel expenditures maximum resolution was approved on January 3, 2019 with an annual maximum amount per employee of \$1,500 for regular business travel pursuant to the provisions of N.J.A.C 6A:23A-7.3(b) with a maximum travel expenditure amount of \$310,058 for the 2019-2020 school year; and

BE IT RESOLVED, that a public hearing be held at the Board of Education Administration Building, 90 Delaware Avenue, Paterson, New Jersey on May 7, 2019 at (6:30 pm) for the purpose of conducting a public hearing on the budget for the 2019-20 school year; and

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

It was moved by Comm. Martinez, seconded by Comm. Rondon that Resolution No. 4 be adopted. On roll call all members voted as follows:

Comm. Capers: Yes.

Comm. Hodges: Present.

Comm. Martinez: Yes.

Comm. Olivares: Yes.

Comm. Ramirez: No.

Comm. Redmon: No.

Comm. Rondon: No.

Comm. Simmons: Yes.

Comm. Castillo: Yes.

The motion carried.

Mr. Matthews: This is the resolution to accept the budget for 2019 of \$560 million with revenues broken out as outlined in the 2019-2020 budget. \$47 million for local tax levy, \$500,000 for tuition, \$3.6 million for miscellaneous income, \$6 million for worker's comp rebates, \$3 million for extraordinary aid, \$18,000 for adult fees...

Mr. Murray: The last full line in the first "whereas" leads to suggest that this first "whereas" is simply a ministerial act to send the budget to the County Superintendent.

Mr. Matthews: By the statutory deadline of...

Mr. Murray: If we look at the next "whereas," it would appear that it was simply a directive to advertise in the newspaper. If we look to the next "whereas," it was simply a requirement to identify the expenditures because there's a special rule on this travel. The final "whereas" is a call to have a public hearing. Is that correct?

Mr. Matthews: Yes, sir.

Mr. Murray: It would be fair to say that this resolution is ministerial in action. It is not approving the budget itself. That's already been voted on. Is that correct?

Mr. Matthews: Yes.

Mr. Murray: In case there is any confusion, because there are a lot of resolutions passed, before we complete if any member who has already voted wishes with this clarification to revise either a yes to a no or a no to a yes, we'd ask the secretary to go back to the roll already taken.

Comm. Rondon: I'd like to rescind my vote and make it a yes.

Mr. Murray: Just call the name of those who have already voted. There have been a lot of other actions.

On roll call all members voted as follows:

Comm. Capers: Yes.

Comm. Hodges: Present.

Comm. Martinez: Yes.

Comm. Olivares: Yes.

Comm. Ramirez: Yes.

Comm. Redmon: No.

Comm. Rondon: Yes.

Comm. Simmons: Yes.

Comm. Castillo: Yes.

The motion carried.

OTHER BUSINESS

Comm. Hodges: Point of personal privilege. When I commit myself to a process, I commit myself. I am deeply resentful of having that in public misdirected. I think it does not serve well. It does not enhance trust. It causes problems long-term. I would be very careful with following that kind of approach, particularly when it's being asked in order for the Board to move forward collectively. I didn't appreciate that at all. I will be very circumspect in the future at how I commit myself because that's problematic.

Comm. Castillo: Duly noted.

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

The meeting was adjourned at 10:06 p.m.