

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

August 20, 2018 – 6:31 p.m.
Administrative Offices

Presiding: Comm. Oshin Castillo, President

Present:

Ms. Eileen Shafer, Acting State District Superintendent
Ms. Susana Peron, Acting Deputy Superintendent
Deborah Bracaglia, Esq., General Counsel

Comm. Vincent Arrington
Comm. Emanuel Capers
Comm. Jonathan Hodges
Comm. Manuel Martinez

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

Absent:

Robert Murray, Esq., General Counsel

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
August 20, 2018 at 6:30 p.m.
Administrative Offices
90 Delaware Avenue
Paterson, New Jersey**

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

Comm. Castillo: Good evening everyone. I want to officially welcome you all to this meeting. Thank you for taking time out of your day to be here. We want to start off, Ms. Shafer, with the first presentation and then we will go on into the interviews and give the public a little bit more of the instructions in that area.

STATUS OF FACILITIES REPAIRS DUE TO STORM

Ms. Shafer: Thank you, Madam President. At this time, I'd call Steve Morlino, our Executive Director of Facilities. As you all know, we had some heavy rain last week multiple days and unfortunately 18 of our schools had some type of flooding. Steve is going to go through where we are and what we need to do as we prepare to open up for our children in two weeks.

Mr. Steve Morlino: Good evening. Thank you for having me here. I want to give you a quick overview of the flooding and some other issues going on in the district at this point in time. On August 11, Saturday night into Sunday, we got calls about flooding taking place from a deluge of rain. Parts of Paterson received two inches of rain and other parts received up to four and five inches of rain, depending on the locality you were in at the time. We had numerous locations flooded, some that had never flooded before, as a result of that. We brought in staff Sunday morning. Mr. Matthews was here, myself, a number of people from Pritchard, and a couple of sector supervisors. We mobilized people the best we could on a Sunday and brought in teams of people to start addressing mop up. As you are aware, the indoor air quality law in New Jersey requires you to clean up water within 24 to 48 hours because you'll start to get mold. These are the 17 locations that were damaged. There were other locations that were simply just mopped up really quick and weren't considered to be water damaged. These locations had minimal to extensive damage created by the rain. Mr. Matthews declared a state of emergency and the county approved that emergency. This is the IT department here at 90 Delaware. As you can see, we had to remove sheetrock walls and carpeting. We brought dehumidifiers in to dry it out and the restoration will have to take place to replace that sheetrock, tape it, spackle it, paint it, and put carpeting or tile back in these areas. This is another part of the first floor here. You can see extensive damage to the walls. You can see mold in this picture to my right. Mold already started to form within the wall cavity within that 48-hour period. School No. 4, which some of you may recall years ago, flooded. It was closed for over a year with extensive damage. At that time, FEMA funded some pumps and others waterproofing techniques that were put into that building and that was the result. That's all of the flooding that occurred at that particular location this time around. At School No. 6, the lower cafeteria and lower basement area flooded. The shiny floor is water. That's not wax, as much I would like you to think that. This is another one. At School No. 11 the entire lower level flooded. Just the cost to clean it, dry it, and remove sheetrock is \$21,600. That does not include the cost to put it all back together. At School No. 11 the demolition is under way. You can see at that location there are wood studs. Some of the schools have metal studs which survive much better. They don't get waterlogged in a flood. Here you have 2x4-construction so that the wood can absorb water so they have to go through a different drying technique and that has to be treated. In some cases, you actually have to remove the wooden studs. We won't know that for a little while. At School No. 13 there was some flooding there and staining of the floor. At School No. 15 the lower level was flooded. Again, the cost for that renovation, clean up, and sanitizing is about \$9,100. That does not include putting things back together. While I'm on that school, we declared an emergency at School No. 15 in regard to fencing. We'll hear more about that. The county approved it and we got the approval on the 16th. At School No. 21 the cafeteria and the gym floor flooded at that location. It required extensive clean up. School No. 20 is probably the worst damaged other than 90 Delaware here. There was extensive damage to the building and flooding. You can see mud went into the cafeteria. There's cracking in the floor. That cracking was not there before. The floor actually heaved up approximately 18 inches. This is some of the material that was cut out, again wooden studs. There are metal studs in middle picture and wooden studs in the picture to the right. At School No. 24 the gym floor, if you recall a couple of years ago, flooded. That was a maple

floor there. When I first arrived here we had to tear out the maple floor. That was about a \$110,000 job to remove the floor. At that time, we raised the door on the far end which is adjacent to the parking lot. We raised that door 18 inches off the ground to try and get more coverage. The parking lot at that location floods on a regular pretty consistent basis. We have estimates of about \$100,000 to put a detention tank in the lower part of the parking lot, under the parking lot, which would meter the water out into the sewer system and prevent city water from coming into the building. We did not have funding for that at the time. At School No. 24 there was extensive damage throughout the building. The cost there is \$31, 900 to just do the clean-up and drying out of the facility. This is what was brought in by the vendor. These are dehumidifiers on the right picture. The left picture is blowers. These were placed in the building and run for four to five days to dry the building out. Before you can put this back together you have to make sure to use moisture meters to determine if the moisture levels are at an acceptable range. These blowers and dehumidifiers were placed throughout the building. You can see where we also removed wallboard in those buildings. This is a summary of the four schools that so far have given us cost information for the sanitation and clean up. We're at \$92,000 and that does not include the other vendor, who has yet to give us a cost breakdown for this building which they are still working on. Again, this is strictly for the clean-up and sanitation. This does not include putting all of these buildings back together. While we're at School No. 24 with the flood, the ESIP program is going on. Thank god the boilers didn't get flooded. These are new boilers being installed. The gentleman there through the windows is installing the new stacks that will go up the side of the building. These are high efficiency modular boilers. The old boilers were removed. School No. 27 did have some flooding in the lower level in the cafeteria which came in through the doors. That's one of the buildings where we just did the roof as part of the restoration for solar panels to be received. We had no leakage on the roof. At Rosa Parks we had flooding in the corridors and in the MDF closet so we need to do some work there. At EWK the cafeteria and kitchen area flooded. STARS Academy, which is a leased site, had a number of issues that took place. Several weeks prior to this flood we also had flooding there, which the archdiocese brought in their plumbers to work on and they brought them back to do some more work. They'll cover the cost of that repair. At Colt Street we had some flooding in the basement, which I'm not too concerned with because there's nothing really down there, but the seventh floor had some roof leaks that the owner will be taking care of. Don Bosco, which we lease for a dollar from the Schools Development Authority, had leaking in the lower level. We had a lot of damage to material there. The upper level, which the SDA said the roof was intact and didn't leak, leaked. At School No. 19 we had flooding. Some of that is related to some of the construction going on there. I'll just remind you of the project that's going on there. We're replacing all of the retaining walls, the sidewalks, the asphalt, the neighbor's retaining wall, and part of their driveway. That's all part of that project. While that was all open there was excavation all around and we did get some water into that building. Some of the concrete has been put back and some of the retaining walls have been poured already, but that's an ongoing project. At John F. Kennedy, the auditorium took several days for this to actually develop, but there were water leaks in the auditorium. This is compounded by the fact that these are 9x9 tiles which are asbestos-containing material. This is going to require a remediation. The insurance company is taking a look at how we're going to handle that. This is School No. 9 several days after the flooding. You can see cupping in the middle picture there where the floor tiles have begun to cup. Numerous tiles throughout the corridors have actually released and had to be picked up. The mastic is letting loose as the water sits there for any length of time. It just basically separates the tile from the mastic. The insurance company is looking at what they are going to do there. At School No. 9 the playground work is slated to start this Wednesday on the 22nd. That will be the work on the upper playground area, the lower garage, the front

façade, and the signage. That will be all addressed in that project. At Sage/Silk City we had a steam leak at the end of the heating season. There was concern about mold. We brought in several companies that did two different sets of testing there. There was no mold in that area, but we held off until school ended to begin the remediation. There's a six-inch steam line. About 70 feet of it was replaced. The copper condensate line was replaced and there was a piece of duct work there that we replaced. Actually, in the duct work was a lot of dust and it appeared to be turning into a mold situation. We tore out all of that cheap metal duct work and replaced it with some flexible duct. We've put most of it back together. This is being done with our own crew, by the way. It will be back together before school opens. At MLK there was an issue with the façade. The picture on the left shows the staining and the basic problems with the cementitious panels that make up that building. To the right, you'll see the picture after we pressure washed it, cleaned it up, repainted the sign, put LED lights in the under hang soffit, and we painted the under hang portion of the building, all with internal staff. At School No. 2 we have some issues. If you look up at the top of the building, you'll see bricks have fallen out of the building. There are sections of the building where you can literally stick your hand in. We've safed that off temporarily. There's a fence there in the fall zone. If you look at the building, you'll see in the lower left picture bricks are missing at the foundation level where it meets the sidewalk. If you look at the picture on top of that, you'll see openings. You can actually stick your hand in some of that façade. A number of things need to be done to tuck and point the brick on that building and to rebuild the chimney area of the building. If you recall, during the Board retreat we mentioned some of the three-year proposed repairs that are needed. On just the building envelope, which would take care of that kind of stuff was \$43,000,000; foundation work was \$29,000, but some of that is co-mingled with site work at \$12,000,000. The total for all of the categories we listed in that three-year plan is \$168,000,000 and that's a three-year plan. At New Roberto Clemente the Schools Development Authority is doing work there. The terrazzo floor basically delaminated from the substrate. It came apart. It was heaving. It was cracked. They tore that all out and they put down a new underlayment and they're going to put a Fritz tile, which is a synthetic-type Terrazzo tile in there. In the interim, what you see there is not water. That's the actual underlayment that they fixed it with. It came up. They have to scarify that entire floor again and redo it because the patchwork they did didn't hold. Hopefully, the floor tiles will be here and the patchwork will be done prior to school opening. In addition to this work on the floor, the fire dampers and smoke dampers in the building have to be replaced and relined and redone since the original building installation, as well as the paint coating on the beams. There's a translucent paint that is put on the beams that, if there's a fire, the paint expands and insulates the beam and keeps it from meltdown or bending. That paint failed so they've stripped the paint off the columns and the structure and they're repainting that with a new product which is supposed to be better. At Eastside High School we replaced the fence section that was missing, which was an issue. The Department of Education requires us to begin now to put together what used to be called the QSAC checklist. This is a checklist of over a hundred items that we will be doing in conjunction with the sector supervisors and the principals, going through the building and signing off on these checklists. They're due to the county by October 15. We have some issues with landscaping. As you can see, we lost some trees around School No. 24. That's being addressed by the contractor. We've had some issues with the contractor, which I'll point out to you. We've been on the vendor's case. We understand that there have been some weather issues with trimming and cutting, but when we get growth like that it's unacceptable. We've put them on notice we want every one of our sites done by opening day and we need a continuous schedule. They only have three people doing this citywide.

Comm. Hodges: They only have three people doing all our sites?

Mr. Morlino: Yes. Some of the sites we do ourselves. At the smaller sites the chief does, but the bulk of the sites are done by the Pritchard Company. It's part of their contract. They gave us a schedule recently. They said they would do it every month. We told them it was unacceptable. The contract requires them to do it at a minimum of every other week.

Comm. Hodges: Given the number of sites, does that map out to be possible, to cover all of them and do a decent job?

Mr. Morlino: Under ideal circumstances, you can probably do it, but you're dealing with non-professional landscape-type people. Let me put it that way. They're not supervised extremely well. They're really overtaxed for what they're being asked to do. We've asked them to step it up and come up with a better plan than they have at this point. We're also looking to bring in some landscapers and get some quotes. If we have to, we're going to cut it ourselves with outside resources and back charge them.

Ms. Shafer: Let's put aside for a minute the trees and the shrubs. Can they cut the grass in all schools prior to the opening of school?

Mr. Morlino: Yes, they assure us they will do that. At some of the schools, you'll see a couple of charts I'm going to show you, they are at 100% cleaning level. They're going to take some of those folks and move them to other schools to assist with cleaning at summer school sites and some of them are going to go out on lawn detail. Edging and all of that is part of this. They're supposed to be doing that.

Comm. Castillo: That's one of the things I've seen. I passed by Dr. Hani today. They're cutting the grass, but the edging is not done. We only have 12 days before school starts. You're telling me all of our schools will be up to par by then. Then what do we do to keep them there? Let's say we have this rush motion for the next two weeks, but what happens after school starts? The grass just goes back to looking like this?

Mr. Morlino: That's why we're asking them for a plan. Their contract calls for them to do this. If you go past Eastside High School, we had some grass areas that were 3-feet tall. We made them cut that all down. Again, this is a constant process you have to go through. Unfortunately, it seems that when we complain they tell us it's on the schedule for tomorrow. They do go and do it, but then whatever was on the schedule for tomorrow seems to fall off the table. It's a constant struggle. Some of the sector supervisors are on them constantly trying to get this done.

Comm. Redmon: Ms. Shafer, he's saying that we're expecting them to cut all our grass within two weeks. What is the backup plan if they can't do it?

Mr. Morlino: What I had mentioned is we're getting quotes from local landscapers. If they don't perform, at some point in time I am going to tell Mr. Matthews we need to engage these landscapers and then back charge the Pritchard Company.

Comm. Redmon: You know it's in the middle of the season. A lot of grass has been growing because of the water. We're going to get outrageous quotes based on that. Even if we do inside, what does the price look like now if we had our own people do it?

Mr. Morlino: I don't have that number for you.

Comm. Castillo: Ms. Shafer, part of this for the retreat that we're scheduled to have is one of the parts that we need to plan out. If we're going to look for quotes or have the material to do it in-house, how much would that cost us in an actual plan? It's great if you can get us to school opening, but then what happens? We have a date now and then it falls off for the rest of the year.

Mr. Morlino: We bought all of the equipment. We own it now, whereas in the past the companies owned it and we paid for it every year to the tune of \$150,000 to \$200,000 a year. We bought our own equipment for this contract. We own all of the riding mowers, lawn mowers, weed whackers, and blowers. We bought them all.

Ms. Shafer: We need a letter to them with a date as to when we want their plan. Then when we don't get a plan and we go out and get our own vendors to do the landscaping we have a paper trail for when we go after them for the money.

Mr. Morlino: We have meetings with them every Tuesday and we keep minutes of those meetings in which all of this is discussed. But we will actually give them another call.

Ms. Shafer: We need to give them a letter and a due date of when we want the plan. It's like tomorrow because we only have 12 days.

Comm. Hodges: That plan should say School No. 12 is going to be done on this date.

Mr. Morlino: They do provide that plan. The problem is that they don't stick to it.

Comm. Hodges: Then we need to know what happens when they don't. That's the issue.

Comm. Castillo: It's how we hold them accountable.

Mr. Morlino: We hit them in the pocket. That's what we need to do. We need to hit them in the pocket.

Comm. Castillo: If we do so, then we need a plan on how that's going to work. I don't want to get a quote, hire someone, and then have an issue with the back-pay on that too.

Mr. Morlino: That will keep legal busy. 21 playgrounds are going to be inspected by the new insurance companies. That's part of their charge. They're going to inspect all of these playgrounds prior to school opening. At International High School the chiller was down. That's a major problem at that school. All of the electronic boards you see in the middle photographs there. The doors swung open somehow in the rain and rain hit those panels. That's a 440-volt system. It fried the logic panels. The York Company had to be brought in. Parts were special ordered here. It took them almost 9 days to actually get it back up and running. Being that this is out in the open with no coverage from the weather, you're not going to work on high voltage equipment in the weather. We were delayed several days. The contractor refused to work, which I don't blame him. I was there the other day. We had the rooms down to 70 degrees so the building is working well. There was some deferred maintenance on this chiller over the years. We're looking to correct some of that stuff. This is the cleaning progress report. We get this once a week. The schools in red had summer school so they're a little behind some of the other locations. The column all the way to the right is the percentage of cleaning that's done. It tells you the number of classrooms, what's in progress, and what's been

completed. We have that for every school. Anything at 100%, if the resources are available to be relocated to another location or to assist with landscaping, they'll be doing that. The insurance carrier is starting the boiler inspections prior to the operation of the boilers, which probably occurs sometime late September or October. There's no magic date. It's based on temperature. We'll begin to do all of the boiler room inspections that are done. At School No. 2 this is a representative sample. The floor on the left is the condition of some of the floors in the district. The middle picture shows after we doctor up the floor and put new underlayment in and flash it. To the right is what the floor looks like when we're done. This is all done in-house. We did 39 rooms this summer with in-house personnel. We actually ran out of material. These are the rooms in the building where the floor restorations took place. Next slide is air conditioners that were installed. We installed some 65 air conditioners. Again, it's not just opening a window and sticking in an air conditioner. You have to modify the window at times. You have to modify security grading at times. You have to run electric to these locations. With 50 schools that contain asbestos, even the electric work has to be done with HEPA vacuums on the drills and you have to be careful how all of that is done. It's a challenge to do this. We get a lot of donated air conditioners, which is nice. They donate the unit itself and the district funds the installation through our operational budget. At Union Avenue School there's a meeting tomorrow to go over the four vendors. This is a design/build project. Representatives are going down to Trenton to be part of the interview process, listen to the spiel from all of these vendors on how they're going to do this job, and then a selection will be made. The SDA has told us the notice to proceed with the design and construction will be issued November 1. We're in the process of painting floors and stairs throughout the district where there's the battleship grey floor. The floors are painted. There's no tile or anything. We start that project just before school opens, somewhat delayed by wet floors. It's very hard to paint wet floors. This is a nice project that the New Jersey Community Development Corporation through their Youth Build program had a grant. They called and asked if they could do something for the district. We had a retaining wall at John F. Kennedy that they volunteered to take care of and they had a bunch of young people out there that did a yeoman's job on that. They put it all back together and put two coats of paint on it. They supplied the paint, the material, the resources, and the insurance. With the John F. Kennedy security booth project we hope to get under way again moving forward. It's been somewhat delayed by summer work. We had initially said that entire project would be done on overtime. The overtime was curtailed. It's now back in place so we're going to hopefully remobilize once school opens. We have pending Board actions that I need passed at the next Board meeting. These are issues that somewhat delay us in this process that we have. We don't have these contracts in place. Sometimes we need to go to a co-op in between to get some of this stuff done. We need those contracts put into place.

Comm. Hodges: When are we going to receive those resolutions? It's only nine days.

Mr. Morlino: Some of that was on the workshop. As a matter of fact, all of those were on the workshop.

Comm. Castillo: It's all in the packet that we received.

Comm. Hodges: I know there's a \$500,000 per-school threshold that you have to go to.

Mr. Morlino: Each contract has a particular threshold that we've had. If you recall a couple of years ago, the Board cut some of those thresholds in half. That causes a problem sometimes, but most of the time we don't have the money to even spend at that level anyway.

Comm. Hodges: I'm talking about the SDA here.

Mr. Morlino: The SDA is \$500,000 per project. This is all ineligible. This is considered maintenance. It's ineligible. They will not cover it. The flooding is through the insurance company. Mr. Matthews negotiated a great insurance coverage. We only have a \$10,000 co-pay or deductible. It used to be \$50,000 in the past. They've been pretty responsive in getting out here and working on these projects.

Comm. Capers: What is eligible from the SDA?

Mr. Morlino: Mainly construction. School No. 9 is an SDA 13-A Grant. School No. 19 is a 13-A Grant. They go by the scope of work for the project. As long as it's deemed to not be routine maintenance, which some of the things they tell us is routine maintenance is really farfetched, but they do not cover typically what is covered under maintenance.

Comm. Capers: Even that retaining wall?

Mr. Morlino: That's covered under a 13-A Grant. That's a \$600,000 project. School No. 9 is a \$400,000 project. They're both covered by the SDA 13-A Grant. That's correct.

Comm. Hodges: There are at least three types of leaking – roof leak, coming in underneath the doors, and coming in through the sewage.

Mr. Morlino: That's correct.

Comm. Hodges: The real issue is the ones we can correct are the roofs. The ones from the sewers, what can we do to make sure this doesn't happen again? Can we lump that into the repair costs, putting in French drains?

Mr. Morlino: What we need are backflow preventers. Part of the problem here in the City of Paterson, which is not unique to Paterson, is they have a combination sewer system. Your storm water and your sanitary system are combined. When you get a deluge of rain like we did, it just can't handle it and it backs up into the sanitary system. We get water coming up through the floor drains. We get water coming up through toilets, urinals, and sinks because of the pressure build. Did you see what happened to School No. 20? The actual floor heaved 18 inches from water pressure outside of the building pushing down on earth and popping up the cement floor. There are ways to do that. There are very expensive ways to do that. The insurance companies typically will not cover the cause of the problem. They will make corrective repairs, but not fix the cause of the problem. That's up to the owner.

Comm. Castillo: Something like School No. 20 where it was the ground and it came from the bottom up, is that anything the SDA would get involved in? It's not maintenance.

Mr. Morlino: The insurance company should be covering that. The engineer was out there today. Today the insurance company authorized a contractor to come in and start tearing the floor up and we'll see what they find under the floor.

Comm. Castillo: Does that fix it?

Mr. Morlino: It depends on what's there. We don't know until we actually open up the floor and see what's actually causing it. If it's a pipe or something, then it needs to be repaired. It might be a problem with water actually coming under the foundation, an underground stream. Something is causing that hydraulic pressure to push the floor up. That's never happened before there.

Comm. Hodges: How many times have we had at least the sewage being backed up into the buildings? Can we anticipate that this has happened before in 'x' number of buildings? We need to begin to put some money aside to address that issue.

Mr. Morlino: I'll use School No. 24 as an example. We had a study done. We had engineering done to put a detention base in under the parking lot. It's about \$100,000 worth of work. We couldn't get the funding at the time. We did put some emergency pumps in and we put some alarms in. It just couldn't handle the water that occurred this time. Although part of what we did that time was put in a polyurethane floor, which survived. The wooden floor would've been buckled and looked like a skate rink. That part worked. But again, if we had the resources we would do work in the parking lot and solve the problem forever.

Comm. Hodges: And School No. 20?

Mr. Morlino: We don't know yet what's causing that hydraulic pressure to heave the floor until we open the floor up and take a look. We have had issues at School No. 20 with water backing up in the sewer system, into the kitchen, and through the sink area.

Comm. Hodges: That is one of our pending projects for long-range facilities concerns. I'm just wondering where it is in the queue. We're supposed to rebuild onto the field and then demolish that and make it the playground. How do we manipulate given where we are now? We can't lose School No. 20 obviously.

Mr. Morlino: That's in the five-year plan. We're about to embark on another five-year plan. Needless to say, not much has been done.

Comm. Castillo: Commissioners, why don't we let Mr. Morlino finish the slides and then we will go back to questions. I don't know how much he has left.

Comm. Hodges: I have no reference to go back.

Comm. Castillo: It's okay if you ask questions. Let's just keep the process going and not delay or change subjects.

Mr. Morlino: School No. 27 and School No. 24 are representative samples of the work we did in preparation of the solar panel installation. If you recall, we came to you as a capital project for \$1,000,000. We did 10 schools. That's what we look like. We're now lifting the material. Those are the cranes at School No. 9 lifting the ballast material for the solar panels. There's block work that's put down and then solar panels are installed and anchored to block work. The ballast material is on there so they can't blow off of the roof. You needed to do the roof work, which gave you a 15-year extended warranty. Now we will be putting the solar panels on. The first part of the solar panel project is putting that ballast material up. At School No. 26 we did this in-house. The steps in the front were falling apart. We rebuilt them with our in-house carpenter. At School No. 20 the boiler replacement is under way as part of the ESIP program. We took out three huge boilers. They're being replaced with two high-efficiency modular boilers as part of this ongoing ESIP project.

Comm. Capers: Mr. Morlino, what does ESIP stand for?

Mr. Morlino: Energy Savings Improvement Plan. That's the plan where we don't lay out any money. This is a \$22,000,000 project. We don't lay the money out. It's derived from savings on the utility bill. These are the first 17 schools we're doing. Legal is reviewing the next 22 schools, which will probably run in the \$40,000,000 range. This is School No. 4. You can see the crane lifting the material. There's a scissor lift. All of that material is going up on the roof to support the solar panel installation. That concludes my presentation.

Comm. Redmon: When will we get the residual money? Once the solar panels went up, when will we know when it becomes a cost-saving measure to the district?

Mr. Morlino: There's a measurement and verification project that will be done. The BPU supervises it. It's done by a third-party engineering company. They will verify it. All of the savings are what were projected. We're already looking at the LED lighting. There's quite a bit of LED lighting that's been installed along with occupancy sensors that turn the lights on and off. A lot of that LED lighting is the low-hanging fruit. 35%-40% of your utility bill is for lighting. That will have a quick impact on savings. Once they're at a point where they're going to start the measurement and verification you'll get reports on what the savings are and if we're meeting our targets.

Comm. Redmon: Will most of these projects come under Phase I or Phase II?

Mr. Morlino: This is all Phase I.

Comm. Arrington: Steve, thank you for the work you did. As we're moving to this one-to-one deployment, IT infrastructure is becoming more critical. We talked about the MDF closets and the placement of them. I think we may need to rethink where we're placing them in flood-prone schools. Obviously, if we lose that IT infrastructure it will impact our one-to-one in those schools.

Mr. Morlino: That's been a major concern. Eastside is a perfect example. The entire phone system is housed there. There are a couple of locations that are hubs and if they go down you have a problem citywide.

Comm. Arrington: Some of the things we do in Corporate America, and we talked about this, are water sensors. That might be something you want to think about for these critical areas. Again, thank you. You guys did a great job out there.

Comm. Castillo: Steve, I just want to commend you and your team. You guys came out the night of the rain and put everyone to work. I want to thank you for that.

Mr. Morlino: We have a good staff that responds.

Comm. Castillo: I know we're not in the best of shape, but we could have been worse if we had waited. Your entire staff responded well, as our technology department who was here carrying computers at midnight.

Mr. Morlino: Security was here also.

Comm. Castillo: Everyone was here. Ms. Shafer, I just want to commend you and your team for everyone being hands-on on a Saturday night at midnight taking care of the situation.

Mr. Morlino: Thank you.

Ms. Shafer: Thank you, Steve, for coming out and your staff and also Mr. Matthews. It could have been a lot worse.

Comm. Capers: Are we going to get this presentation via email?

Comm. Castillo: Cheryl, can you send it to all the Commissioners?

Comm. Hodges: I sincerely hope that the fiscal/facilities committee will stay on top of this aggressively to make sure that the timelines are met. That becomes a real problem. If we're short, what's going to happen is when the parents get to school in September they will be calling you. I just think it's something that we have to be very aggressive with. We have not pushed the SDA as much in recent years and I think that we have to start doing it again.

Comm. Castillo: I completely agree. I think it's a timeline of making sure that the schools are okay. Separate and apart I know that's one of our focuses, but also the plan with facilities and the grass. It's a timeline and a plan that I would like for all of us to see and then move forward on that on what would be the best course of action thereafter.

CONDUCT INTERVIEW SESSION OF CANDIDATES FOR THE VACANT SEAT ON THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

Comm. Castillo: As you know, the reason why we're here is to fill the vacancy for the Board of Education once held by Flavio Rivera. We received five applicants. The Board will interview the five candidates at one time in the order that the Office of the Superintendent received the applications. The remaining candidates will be in the parent resource room right outside of the meeting room. Each candidate will be allowed two minutes introduction and to explain why they would like to be on the Board. We have eight prepared questions that will be asked by each one of the Board members. Once you have completed your interview, please proceed to the back to the resource room and when the interviews are completed everyone will return to the meeting room while the Board deliberates in executive session. Just to make it a little bit easier, we're going to go around the room when it comes to the questions. Mr. Teague, please let us know a little bit about yourself and why you're interested in being on the Board.

Mr. Corey Teague: Corey Teague, resident of Paterson and Paterson parent. I've been a community activist in the city for many years, specifically for education advocacy since 2009. I served on the Board from 2012-2016. While I was there, one of my primary focuses was the special education department. Ms. Peron is very familiar with the work I've done there. It was personal for me because my son has special needs and I deal with that every single day. When I talk to and work with parents in that area, I can deal with them on a more personal note because I experience it. My reason for running is to continue the work that I have done on the Board. I bring the experience and the knowledge from the years of work that I have done. I look forward to one day returning to the Board of Education. I do realize that it is a volunteer position, but we have to understand that when we're talking about educating our children there is always a reward there. You have future senators, presidents, doctors, and lawyers. It doesn't

matter to me about the volunteering because we are depositing in our children our very future. In the future we'll hopefully be able to reap from that. That's why I'm here tonight. I'm ready whenever you are.

Comm. Arrington: What specific skills would you bring to the Board?

Mr. Teague: Again, my specific skill is the ability to advocate on behalf of the children and the parents. I know there are many times in politics where there's a fine line drawn in the sand as to how far you can go with your advocacy. In my view, I feel like you have to do whatever needs to be done to make sure that the children have what they need. If you're not here to advocate on behalf of the children every single day, then there's really no need for you to be here. The main focus is to make sure that our children have everything they need. As a Board member, my role is to continue to go to Trenton, as I'm doing now, to demand the money that we're supposed to receive. Let the state tell you what they can and cannot provide. It is our job to go down there and say this is our demand and these are the things that we need for our schools. Make sure that they understand that we're not going to go away until they give us an answer or give us the funding that we need.

Comm. Capers: Thank you, Mr. Teague, for applying for the position. I wish you well. Can you give me three top issues that the district faces today?

Mr. Teague: One of the biggest issues is funding, as I just mentioned. I do know that the district is still facing at this very moment a \$30 to \$33 million deficit. I do understand that the district is in the process of trying to apply for a \$10 million bond to avoid having to lay off staff members throughout the district. I can understand that teachers are probably going to end up rallying soon if there's an issue where teacher salaries and things have to be cut. That's always been an issue with our district, but one thing we need to understand is that's not something that started in Paterson. The state came in and took control of our schools. We had a Governor that came in office, Chris Christie, who decided to flat-fund us. Even though he flat-funded us year after year the cost of the supplies and everything that we have to do continues to go up, which created deficits. Now we're facing the aftermath of the deficits caused by what this Governor and a lot of those folks in Trenton have done. So, our first issue is funding. That trickles down into after school programs and services that our children need to be receiving and are still not being given adequately because of that underfunding. It's almost like a tree and the roots of a tree. The branches may change color and fall off, but the root of the issue here is the funding. That is what causes all the other issues in the district.

Comm. Hodges: Over and above education, one of the district's chief issues we will be facing over the next four months or so is the transition to local control, which has been very slow on our parts. With little recent experience, what do you think that you can deliver to help expedite our process in the next four months?

Mr. Teague: I think having been on the Board and having an understanding of what we're dealing with financially and the decisions that need to be made and just having an understanding of what we need to do as Board members, I think that I can bring that particular experience to the Board. Right now, the Paterson School Board lost control years ago because the state somehow convinced the local Board members that they weren't adequate enough to be able to run their own school district. Now we're getting ready to transition back into local control and we might be facing that same issue again if we do not ensure that we have people on the Board who are experienced, knowledgeable about what's going on, and who are willing to advocate for our children

and for our school district. I was there that day in Trenton when the state decided to return local control to Paterson. Just because they said we're going to return local control to Paterson, it did not take effect immediately. As a matter of fact, it is a couple of years in the making. It's an actual transition plan and for that period of time the state is going to run through everything that this district does with a fine-toothed comb, including on how the Board operates. If they find areas that need improvement, we could be right back to square one. Nothing is in stone. I think it's very important that we make sure we have people here who are experienced and know what's going on with this district. Not to say that everybody is bad. This is not a personal attack on anyone. But we are dealing with a crisis now and we don't want to turn back the hands of time. We want to go forward.

Comm. Castillo: I'm sorry. Before we continue, I didn't mention this and I apologize. We wanted to stay off Facebook Live just to give anyone in the back room a fair shot. We don't know if any of you have any of the other guys that are interviewing. We just wanted to make sure that everyone has the same fair chance. I apologize for not saying that at the beginning.

Comm. Castillo: What is your vision for education in our community?

Mr. Teague: The vision for education in our community is to make sure that we empower the parents. When you empower parents, you empower the children. We have to understand that the first teacher of a child is their parent. In many cases, it's an older brother or sister. For the most part, the parent is the first teacher. When parents are not empowered and they're not given the ability to understand that they can be a part of their child's academic life and they should play an important role in their child's academic life, it has a tendency to cause the child to not progress as fast as other children were. It's a proven fact that children who have the support of their parents excel farther and they grow faster because they have that support system. You may have children who don't have their parents there, but I can guarantee there's somebody around who's a support system for them that's pushing them forward. My goal is to continue to get the parents involved, not just attending meetings, but making sure they're empowered in the home to know what they need to do with their children, know what they need to go over with them, to make sure their children know that there's a support system for them so we can push our kids to where they need to be.

Comm. Redmon: Good evening, Mr. Teague. Do you understand the role of the Superintendent?

Mr. Teague: Yes. The roles have changed. When I was on the Board one of the things that used to bother me is if we had a budget that we did not like because there were so many cuts made to it and we wanted that budget to have some additions for our children, we could pass the budget or we could say that we don't want to pass the budget and the Superintendent could come along and override our decision under state control. Under local control the Board resumes a much stronger position. We need to understand that Board members are not responsible for going directly to department heads and people within the district. Their job is to go through the Superintendent and the Superintendent's responsibility is to talk with her department heads and those who work underneath her. I'm the first one as a Board member as soon as a parent calls me about a situation at a school I go right there. Over the years I had to learn how to go through the Superintendent's office and allow them to deal directly with the administrators and staff. That's my understanding of the Superintendent's role, to deal with the administration and the staff. It is our job to make our demands to the Superintendent, and it is the Superintendent's responsibility to tell us either what can be

done or worked on. That's the role that we both play. The Board makes the demands and says this is what we want and this is what we need, and the Superintendent then goes to her staff and finds a way to make that happen.

Comm. Martinez: Could you or would you support a Board decision that you were not in favor of?

Mr. Teague: If that decision benefits the children, then I'm going to go with it. If you can show me that decision will be to the betterment of the children, I really don't care what it is. If you can show me that it's going to benefit the kids, I'm going to be with it. As I said in my previous statement, if we're not here to advocate for children, then we have the wrong calling. We have to change whatever it is we're doing. As long as that decision is going to benefit the children and you're able to show me how it will, then I'm with it.

Comm. Ramirez: Good evening, Mr. Teague. Can you explain what the NJQSAC is and how it ties to local control?

Mr. Teague: I would like to say that we worked very hard as one of the Board members on there. Being one of the Board members during that particular time I can tell you that particular program in the beginning stages I felt like it was a political thing. When you met the goal, they actually moved the pendulum. I do believe that we reached 80 and 100 in various areas such as program and instruction. There are five altogether and we reached 80, 81 and 100 in various areas and the state would come back and say we need to move the benchmark a little bit further. It went on year after year and when I mentioned that as soon as we get a democratic Governor all of this is going to go away and local control is going to be returned. I was saying that for years. It was a political thing. As long as we had a republican Governor there it was just going to continue to go and the minute we got a democratic Governor there all of that began to wash away. QSAC plays a very important role in what we're doing with local control, but even above and beyond that, how we function as a Board and how we work together as a Board. When I say work together, I don't mean just following anything that happens, but working in a way that will benefit our children in the long run. That is what's going to determine how long we remain locally controlled. If we just make decisions based on calls that come from the outside and we don't have the conversations amongst ourselves, we can be guaranteed that in no time we will be back in the hands of the state. I think there are people in this room, such as myself, who have fought very long and hard to get the state out of our city. Dr. Hodges is one who can attest to the fact that there have been plenty of times that I have gone to the State House, to the Governor's office, and said we want you out of Paterson. I think that it is going to be incumbent upon us, however this thing goes, that we learn to work together not in a way that we just pass decisions that are coming from the outside, but have conversations about the issues that are taking place within our city and making sure that we can function as a Board and a cohesive unit. Again, we have that group think theory – I'm not saying that you do – where everyone just goes along. We can't have that. We have to have independent thinkers who are willing to work together if it's going to benefit the children. I understand about QSAC, but I think that above and beyond that we need to be able to work together and still have our independence of thought as long as we know that it's going to benefit the children.

Comm. Simmons: Good evening. Earlier you touched on the root causes of some of the issues regarding academic achievement and the issues that we have here. I'm going to ask the question a little differently. What are some approaches that you think we can take to get us beyond the limits of improving academically?

Mr. Teague: Again, I'll give you some examples of some of the things I've done in my community. Within my neighborhood I have a program where we take some of our young people throughout the week and we allow the parents to show them various websites with universities where you can actually go online and learn college courses even though they're children. That sounds like a very ambitious goal, but I believe if we give our children the opportunity to explore things that are beyond what they're currently dealing with we can actually see just how much they're able to learn. That's why I was very disheartened a few weeks ago when I heard that they were trying to take away the engineering program and replace it with some garbage. You guys know how I am. I talk the way I talk. We need to make sure that we keep programs like that in place because we need our children to have things that they can go beyond what they're doing now. If you go in a district in Bergen County, just one city over, there are fifth graders who can take our eleventh graders out to lunch and take their lunch from them. We need to be able to explore, even if we need to go to other districts. Comm. Simmons, when we were talking about the flooding issue I kept saying I just want to talk about Paterson. I know there are some times we do have to go outside of the city and see what's going on in these other surrounding cities. I think one of the ways that we can improve the academic outcomes is to see what other districts are doing. Many of the things we might be able to mock after them. Some of the things we might be able to tweak to fit what helps Paterson. I do believe sometimes we do need to take a look outside of where we are and allow our children to explore academics and education beyond what's here in this city. I think that would help them go a little further academically.

Comm. Castillo: Thank you, Mr. Teague. Mr. Keonte, if you could just tell us a little bit about yourself and why you're interested in being on the Board.

Mr. Heru Keonte: I was born and raised here in Paterson. I graduated from School No. 6. From there I went to Rosa Parks High School. Then I graduated from William Paterson. Currently, I'm a student at Kean University studying to receive my doctorate degree in education. Other than just being a passionate teacher, I'm a very passionate person when it comes to helping out the community. I also recently finished my year as President of the Rotary Club of Paterson Great Falls where we did a lot of community service. I don't know if anyone was present when we had a celebration at the Brownstone with Educators Making a Difference where we honored teachers in Paterson who have served 30 or 40 years each. I dedicate my life to education and I'm very proud to be an educator here in Paterson. Even though right now I'm a charter school teacher, I still have an attachment to Paterson Public Schools.

Comm. Arrington: What specific skills can you bring to the Board?

Mr. Keonte: I would classify myself as a very analytical person. I always try to look at things from all sides. Some people become frustrated at me because even when I'm in a debate with somebody I always look at things from their end. Even when people consider me right walking away from a situation I always try to double check and triple check that I've done the right thing, especially when it comes to the children and the welfare of others. I'm a very analytical person and I always try to look at things from all sides.

Comm. Capers: Thank you for applying. Can you give me three of the top issues that are going on that our district faces today?

Mr. Keonte: I can give you examples of things that I thought were issues when I was a school teacher in Paterson, which I was for 10 years. I think that one of the main problems that I noticed when I was a teacher was that it was very top-heavy. A lot of times teachers would have the RAC team, the supervisor for that department, the vice principal, and the principal all roaming around the classroom within the course of a couple of days. To me you're not really learning anything about the culture and climate of a classroom and just getting snapshots. The only thing you're doing is causing a distraction in the classroom. That's one thing that I saw a problem with. One of the main things that I took issue with and I still have issue with is the school lunches. During cafeteria monitoring, I watched hundreds of lunches just dumped into the receptacles and students don't even touch it because they will just tell you these lunches are disgusting. They don't want them. I think that millions of dollars are being wasted. There has to be a better way. Another issue is with the STAR testing. There has to be another way to assess kids because I do question the validity and the reliability of the test. I would have students that would score on the 12th grade level today and then you test them again tomorrow and they're on the fifth-grade level. There has to be something going on with that test.

Comm. Hodges: Good evening, sir. One of the district's chief issues that we're looking at presently and in the near future is our slow transition process to local control. Given your relative inexperience with the Board, what do you think you can contribute in the remaining four months of the school year to help us move forward?

Mr. Keonte: Just hoping that I would have the chance to hold people accountable for the jobs that we've hired them to do. This evening you had a gentleman speaking about maintenance. I know I read an article where there was about \$600,000 that was allocated towards maintenance. To me when you're talking about these types of large sums of money you just have to make sure that people are accountable and doing what they say that they're doing. I'm not sure exactly how it breaks down as far as committees go, but you have to do your research. You have to do your homework and make sure that people aren't ripping you off. I remember when I was a student at School No. 6 year after year you'd hear about the asbestos being an issue. They would have to clean up the school and then the next year it would be the same thing. This went on for the four or five year that I was at that school. To me there's a problem with that.

Comm. Castillo: What is your vision for education in our community?

Mr. Keonte: My vision for education is to hire teachers that truly care about the students that they're teaching. Not just coming to Paterson because it's a way for them to shine their swords up so they can go work for a more affluent district. I think we need to truly hold teachers more accountable and make sure that we're hiring the right people. To me when you have a teacher that cares it shows by the way that the students interact with them. The students are the most honest. When you want to talk to them about what's going on in the classroom, they will tell you the truth because it's not political with students.

Comm. Redmon: Good evening. Do you understand the role of the Superintendent?

Mr. Keonte: I understand that the Superintendent is basically the person that is in charge of overseeing the operations of the school district. Not to drift off the topic, but I think that the Board makes sure that the decisions made by the Superintendent are for the welfare of the schools and the faculty in the district.

Comm. Martinez: Good evening, sir. Could you or would you support a Board decision that you were not in favor of?

Mr. Keonte: I'll put it to you this way – I could support it only because it has passed and I would like to give it the opportunity to succeed. But I'm not the type of person that's going to vote for something simply because everyone else is voting for it. However, if I'm outvoted, I have to support it to make sure that we're all on board to make sure that it has a fair chance to succeed. To answer your question, I would support it even though I don't necessarily agree with it.

Comm. Ramirez: Could you explain what the NJQSAC is and how it ties in to local control?

Mr. Keonte: I'm not familiar with it. Can you repeat the abbreviation?

Comm. Ramirez: New Jersey Quality Single Accountability Continuum.

Mr. Keonte: Like I said, I'm not familiar with it, but judging by its title I'm assuming it has to do with holding your own districts accountable for their success or lack thereof. To be honest with you, I'm not familiar with it.

Comm. Simmons: Good evening. As you know, there are a number of issues which limit academic achievement in the district. What are some approaches you think we can take to help us get beyond those limits?

Mr. Keonte: I think that we really need to analyze how we assess students. Many people learn in different ways. You have multiple intelligences where people are very auditory, visual, or kinesthetic. I think that the way we “test” students is basically a cookie cutter approach. I think that students need different ways in order to demonstrate their knowledge.

Comm. Castillo: Thank you so much. That's it for right now. You can just wait in the resource room.

Mr. Keonte: Thank you for the opportunity.

Comm. Castillo: Good evening. Can you just tell us a little bit about yourself and why you're interested in being on the Board?

Mr. Eqbal Ahmed: My name is Eqbal Ahmed. I'm going to be a senior this coming fall at Montclair State University, majoring in accounting. Right now, I'm taking summer courses 25 hours a week. I work and I have a seasonal job every year with Liberty Tax Service.

Comm. Arrington: Good evening. What specific skills would you bring to the Board?

Mr. Ahmed: I believe it's about new ideas. For example, let's say an issue comes up in the Board. After you listen to everyone, whatever ideas you put together, you work it out together. As far as my skills, I have communication skills. I get along with people. Also, I have been doing a lot of projects throughout my years. I've been in parent involvement. A few years ago, I was in community development where you have to present your ideas about Great Falls. There were a lot of students gathered and you present your opinions on how to renovate or safety for Paterson. I think it's about new ideas.

Comm. Capers: Thank you for applying for the position. Can you name three top issues that the district faces today?

Mr. Ahmed: One of them is with the storms. Also, I saw in the news that they're cutting the budget. We also had to eliminate a lot of classes such as art and music, which are necessary for students in the coming future. Another issue would be adding classes or there are 35 or 40 students in a class. We have to talk about that on the Board.

Comm. Hodges: Good evening. One of the district's chief issues is our slow transition process to local control. Given your relative lack of experience with the Board as an entity, what do you think you can contribute over the next four months to this process?

Mr. Ahmed: Over the next four months I'd bring you my teamwork and knowledge. I have accounting experience. Let's say if we're budgeting, how we're allocating the budget. Are we using the budget properly? Are we using our resources and materials properly? Also identifying the issue of where money needs to be spent, and also focusing on the bigger picture. The bigger picture could be overall, instead of small issues.

Comm. Castillo: What is your vision for education in our community?

Mr. Ahmed: I think education matters a lot. We can build a greater community through education. Education is the only way we can build a better future for everybody's safety. We need to have common knowledge of what's going on and staying informed with what's going on around the city. Education plays a key role in the success of these students regarding their future. Education is the key to success.

Comm. Redmon: Good evening. Do you know the role of the Superintendent?

Mr. Ahmed: Yes. I've heard of her a lot and I also attended the meetings at John F. Kennedy. She was there for the graduation as well.

Comm. Redmon: I'm asking if you know the role of the Superintendent.

Mr. Ahmed: Yes. The Board would make the decisions and the Superintendent would be applying it overall or evaluating if it's working or not. If the decision needs to be changed maybe they can tweak something else. She would be evaluating or managing the decisions of the Board.

Comm. Martinez: Good evening. Could you or would you support a Board decision that you were not in favor of?

Mr. Ahmed: We all have different opinions and ideas. It's about listening and then understanding. Whether we agree or not, we have to come up with the decision. Everyone can think differently. We all think differently. Even if I disagree, if the Board comes up in favor of one decision I would favor it.

Comm. Ramirez: Good evening. Can you explain the NJQSAC and how it ties in to local control?

Mr. Ahmed: To be honest, I'm not familiar with the term. Can you explain a little bit further what it is?

Comm. Ramirez: The question is for you to explain it and how it ties to the process to return to local control.

Mr. Ahmed: I'm not familiar with that.

Comm. Ramirez: It's okay.

Comm. Simmons: Good evening. As alluded to by a couple of my colleagues, there are some issues that the district faces which limit academic achievement. What approaches do you think we can take to help us get beyond the limits so that we can achieve academically?

Mr. Ahmed: I think we have to identify what's causing it. If we can't identify it, we won't have a solution. Then maybe we can evaluate what are the necessary steps. Are we allocating the resources properly to the proper place? Then we can come up with a Board meeting and decide as far as the evaluation what we can do about it.

Comm. Castillo: Thank you so much. You can head on back to the resource room and just wait until the end of the interviews.

Mr. Ahmed: Thank you for your time. I appreciate it.

Comm. Castillo: Good evening. If you can just tell us a little bit about yourself and why you would like to be on the Board.

Mr. Eddy M. Pichardo: My name is Eddy M. Pichardo. Like everyone else, I was born and raised in the City of Paterson. I've been a police officer here for 12 years now. I just entered my 13th year. Just for my everyday life in work, looking at the juveniles that we see every day, this opportunity that I'm having now gives me the chance to amplify my voice, not only as a police officer, but as a citizen of Paterson. It's just another avenue for our children to see that there's more to life than just hanging on the corner, selling drugs, robbing people, or committing crimes – which the majority of our kids are doing now. It saddens me to see, but I figure this is something I can do to amplify my voice as a police officer, as a citizen of Paterson, and as a child of Paterson, so we can better our community. With education comes lower crime. I figure that we can do that and work on that. I can be a part of that and be a great asset.

Comm. Arrington: Good evening. What specific skills would you bring to the Board?

Mr. Pichardo: Teamwork and dedication. That's pretty much what I do. Whatever I put my heart on, I'm going to continue doing it until I accomplish that goal. I'm a team player. That's part of what I bring. There's no task too big that I can't handle, and no job too small that can't be accomplished. That's part of what I bring. Hopefully, if I do get nominated today you'll see what more I have to offer besides that.

Comm. Capers: Thank you for applying for the position. What are the three top issues that you think the district faces today?

Mr. Pichardo: You can't say there are three in particular in general. With the home life of our juveniles, our kids – sorry that word kicks in - I have the privilege of going into people's homes that some may not have on this table or on this Board. I see it from working in grammar schools and the high schools and then going home and seeing what their everyday life is and what they have to deal with. I would say poverty is one. Lack of parent education and interest in their child's education would be the three

factors. If you can educate the parent, you can educate the child. If you educate the child, it makes my job as a police officer and your job as Board Commissioners a much easier job.

Comm. Hodges: Good evening. One of the Board's chief issues, over and above improving education, is our slow transition process to local control. Given your relative lack of experience, which area do you imagine you can contribute over the next four months?

Mr. Pichardo: My 12 years of training and experience with the City of Paterson. It gives me a better understanding that some may not have on how to take difficult tasks and figure out a resolution as soon as possible. As you know, I am a police officer. Sometimes I have a split second to make a decision. You may not like it, but it's something that we have to work around and I believe that handling that task in a quick turnaround with a positive outcome would be helpful.

Comm. Castillo: What is your vision for education in our community?

Mr. Pichardo: I hate to be redundant, but education starts with the home life. When I say home it's because I was fortunate enough to grow up with both of my parents at home. One worked during the day and the other at night. The disciplinary one worked at night, so I was kind of happy about that one. Education comes hand-in-hand. I just recently was talking to one of my colleagues. He was talking to one of his students and he was saying when you're going to buy a house in a certain area look at the education rate to the crime rate. If our education is higher and our kids graduate with a higher GPA ready to go into the workforce to better themselves, there will be lower crime. The better we educate them, the higher they get their education. They graduate high school and can't make it to college. Why don't we make that transition to get them ready for college? The more they learn, the easier it is for you and me because education goes hand-in-hand. When you have low education, you have higher crime and that is what we're struggling with in the City of Paterson. There's crime every day.

Comm. Redmon: Good evening. Do you understand the role of the Superintendent?

Mr. Pichardo: Yes. I would say the role of the Superintendent is almost like a baseball manager. She has the general day-to-day actions. From the little research I did on that, you give her a task and she has to make sure she completes the task. She handles the day-to-day tasks and makes sure she does a great job, which is why we got our local control back. I feel she did a great job in getting us that 80%, which I also read about QSAC.

Comm. Martinez: Good evening. Could you or would you support a Board decision that you were not in favor of?

Mr. Pichardo: That's an easy question. Yes, I can. With my job, there are times when my supervisor tells me we're going to have to go do this, take care of that, and handle that situation. I may not agree with it. I may know who the person is, but it's my job and I have to do it. As a Board member I would say as long as we come to the same conclusion, I have no problem going and deciding that factor, as long as we're all for the same cause.

Comm. Ramirez: Good evening. Could you explain the NJQSAC and how it ties in to local control?

Mr. Pichardo: Like I said, I did some reading and it helped me out. QSAC is how they rate the district. I know it's over five categories and we have to score over 80% and if we get the 80%, it gives us local control back. While we do have local control, it gives us a better opportunity to hire the right people and put things in process that we need to proceed as a school and get our kids educated.

Comm. Simmons: Good evening. As you know, there are a number of issues that limit academic achievement. What are some approaches you think we can take to help us get beyond those limits and achieve academically?

Mr. Pichardo: I go back to the home life. 12 years as a police officer in the City of Paterson, I was also part of the community policing division. We were in charge of doing bullying and speaking with the kids. I ask them who of them know any police officers besides the one standing in front of them today. I would ask them who knows anyone who has been arrested. Nearly the entire class raised their hand. Just bridging the gap between law enforcement and any aspect of it, and our kids to show them not every cop is bad. Unfortunately, we all have bad apples, but we're here to help them out and not to lock them up or arrest them. I've had that privilege in 12 years. I believe just bridging that gap between children and law enforcement and every aspect of everyday life will give us a better understanding so they can understand there's more to life than just hanging around the corner. Just because your friend has the latest pair of Jordans and you don't doesn't mean you're not cool. I just think with the general consensus of that and just seeing from everyday life going into homes and seeing children who don't have a table to sit on and their mattresses are on the floor. I see why my mom said to clean my room every day because you never know who shows up. I know I'm going off subject, but I feel it all ties into each other. It's a circle. As long as we can get it right, it shouldn't be a problem.

Comm. Castillo: Thank you so much. Good evening. If you can just tell us a little bit about yourself and why you would like to be on the Board.

Ms. Jessica Schutte: My name is Jessica Schutte. I'm a Patersonian. I've lived here for about four years. I have four children that are within the Paterson Public School System. My main reason for wanting to be on the Board is because I have children in the district. I feel that I see things from a different perspective or point of view that those who do not have children attending the school and doing the work or participating in the activities may not see things the same way that a parent may see things. As an adult, we are able to put things in action, but the children are the ones who deal with the consequences of what we do. Again, I have a child who is evaluated for special education and in sixth grade her basic reading level is equivalent to a child in fourth grade. That's considered average to her peers and that's a problem because she's not average. She's two full grade levels behind where she should be. I feel like it's not just my child that has these issues. There are many children. I have volunteered in the schools. I have done a reading program that was connected with United Way. I have worked with children who are in the second grade and reading on a kindergarten level. If parents don't recognize issues that are going on at home with their children, they won't know the proper questions or way to communicate with the schools. I feel like there's a disconnect between parents and schools. If we don't express our concerns to you guys, then how do you know there's a concern? That's why I'm here.

Comm. Arrington: Good evening. What specific skills would you bring to the Board?

Ms. Schutte: Certainly not my public speaking because I'm rather nervous. I'm driven. I'm dedicated. I'm not afraid to come out of my comfort zone to help improve or make

change within the community. I'm active in the community, not as active as I've been in the past, but I believe that just my dedication and my desire to help make a difference would be beneficial.

Comm. Capers: Thank you for applying. Can you give me three top issues that the district faces today?

Ms. Schutte: One would be the level of education that our children are receiving. If you have someone that's performing two grades below the standard level, then they shouldn't be considered average. The other one would be some of the older buildings when the children are sitting there in May and June in 90-degree weather and they're on the third floor and dripping in sweat. The teachers are saying we can't have a fan in the classroom, we can't have the doors open, and we want our children to perform given the temperatures that they have to deal with. I know as an adult if I'm uncomfortable due to the weather then I'm not going to perform as well as I should. I feel there's not enough unity and all schools are not equal. To me, that's a concern because I feel like all children in the district should be privy to the same. It doesn't matter if you go to Norman S. Weir, School No. 2, School No. 15, or School No. 24. We should all have the same resources available to us.

Comm. Hodges: Good evening. One of the Board's chief issues, over and above improving education, is our slow transition process to local control. Given your relative lack of experience, which area in that process do you imagine you can contribute the most over the next four months?

Ms. Schutte: With my lack of experience, I feel that's an area that I would definitely need to investigate more to learn how I can better help with the situation. Honestly for me, when we say have local control, I know the district itself has more control over what we can do without having the state saying these are the things you have to implement or this is the way you have to do your curriculum. I don't know if that involves the City of Paterson being more involved and giving us more funding or being accountable to provide what they're supposed to provide, if anything extra. I'm limited to what I know, unfortunately. I just know the parent side. I know that we pay the recreation director a salary. I know that recreation uses the fields that belong to the school. I'm not sure if there are any maintenance issues on that end that the city could chip in and be accountable to help since they use our fields for recreational services. But I definitely would need to get more information on what having local control would entail.

Comm. Castillo: What is your vision for education in our community?

Ms. Schutte: My vision for education in our community would be that the children of the city would be able to perform just as well and have the resources that children in the suburbs have. When I have a kid that came from using a whiteboard and asks what this green thing is... I say it's a chalkboard. I used that when I was a kid. I have to talk it up and say how exciting it is to clean the chalkboard and clap out the erasers. Other schools have the whiteboards and smartboards, which make teaching for the teachers a lot easier to connect with the students. I know our graduation rate is improving, but I'm not quite sure what the college graduation rate is. I've heard many things that we could have a straight-A student graduate from high school but has to take remedial classes going into community college. That's something that I feel our children should better be prepared for. We shouldn't have to take remedial classes just to perform at a college level. We should be preparing them. We should be able to compete with schools from all over the state on an academic level.

Comm. Redmon: Good evening. Do you know the role of the Superintendent?

Ms. Schutte: She oversees all the schools within the district. It's kind of a broad answer. I know she has a team underneath her that helps her do that. There's communication with the state or higher parts of government pertaining to getting funding or implementing certain things within the district. That would be the primary responsibility of the Superintendent, to oversee everything. She usually is hands-on, but that's why there's a staff underneath and then the most important issues should only be addressed to the top of the hierarchy at that point.

Comm. Martinez: Good evening. For someone who says you're nervous about public speaking you're doing a very good job. Could you or would you support a Board decision that you were not in favor of?

Ms. Schutte: I guess that would depend on what the decision would be. If I was in support of it then obviously there wouldn't be an issue. If it's something that was morally against my belief, then I wouldn't be able to agree with it. If it was something that everyone came to a consensus and has more of a background in that area and this could work, if given more information I could possibly go along with it if I understood it more.

Comm. Ramirez: Good evening. Could you explain NJQSAC and how it ties into local control?

Ms. Schutte: Honest answer – no, I cannot. I know I've heard Ms. Shafer speak of it at a few parent university things. The last I heard of it was when I was at Passaic County Community College. I know I've heard it this evening. As far as the details of it, I'm not 100%. I'm guessing it's just a certain level of quality in order to have things run properly or standards.

Comm. Simmons: Good evening. As you know, there are a number of issues which limit the district's ability to achieve academically. What are some approaches you think that we can take to get beyond those limits so we are achieving academically?

Ms. Schutte: I know there are a number of personal development days that teachers are required to do. I know the budget is rather tight, but maybe giving the resources or the tools that the teachers could use to teach the students. When I have a child coming home with homework that's printed from AZ.com that I myself can print, what's the point of him going to school and having that teacher if I can print and give the same quality of work at home? If a child comes home with their notebook because they often can't bring textbooks home and they didn't fully understand what was taught in class, but yet they have to do their math homework, there's nothing to reference. Looking on Google or YouTube for everything doesn't always solve the issue. We can provide better tools for the education of our students then that would be a step in the right direction.

Comm. Castillo: Thank you so much. You can just step back into the parent resource room. Before we go into executive session, I wanted to know if it's okay to do Public Comments first.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

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

Ms. Rosie Grant: Good evening. This is an early announcement that Paterson Education Fund and Parent Education Organizing Council will be releasing publicly our equity audit. I just want you to save the date, which is September 28. Jitu Brown, who is the national leader of the Journey 4 Justice Movement, will be coming to town to be our keynote speaker and participate in a panel. Make your calendars for September 28. Regarding today, I had one comment and it was that I was upset that the public portion was after your discussion. Thank you for moving it.

Ms. Waheedah Muhammad: With god's name, good evening. I'm going to be very brief because I think that you all are highly intelligent people that really do have our children at heart and you know that at this eleventh hour we do not have time to train, educate, and make people aware of where we are in this district. We need people that can hit the ground running and already know what it is that we need in this district. I think all of you have sat there and listened to your candidates and have realized that unless we're going to go with someone that already has the experience, knowledge, and know-how then you're going to be setting our children up for failure. You know what is needed for all of you to come together and needing a complete Board with a complete mind that has already been able to do certain things in this town. I'm praying that all of you have said to yourselves whether I agree with that person or not, I know the best candidate to fill that position right now. We are in a crisis and we don't have time to sit back and make sure that someone is brought along just for somebody to get along. Thank you.

Mr. Corey Teague: Good evening once again. The reason for me coming here tonight was because I wanted to once again put myself up front and my vision out front to make sure you see my face and know that I am serious about serving on the Board. I won't allude to anything that's floating around. I'll just stick to the facts. The fact is that I am running and I am very serious about being back on the Board. I do realize it's not a paid position. That has never been a concern for me. My only concern is to advocate for Paterson's children. Of course, there are no guarantees tonight. I don't know what the story is, but I can promise you that I am going to continue to be here and be a frequent at the Board meetings and throughout the district because this is my calling. It wasn't something that I chose for myself. It was something that just happened. When my son was born with the condition that he had, I had to make a decision to step up and be a man or to do like a lot of men do, run away and neglect their responsibility. In stepping up and choosing to step up and be a man and father to my child, I also had to accept the responsibility to understand the condition that he was in, learn how to work with him, and how to find the resources for him. As a result, I had to learn how to advocate for other parents in the same condition. That's the whole reason why I even ran for the Board in the first place. I'm here. I'm committed. I know what needs to be done in the district. I have been here and I continue to be here. I just want you to know that I'm one voice that you will always be able to rely on and count on in Trenton, D.C., or wherever there's an opportunity to advocate for this city. You can always be assured that Corey Teague is going to be one of the voices that will be there all the time. It's to the point that even if I miss one assembly meeting, Benji or one of the State Senators will make note that I wasn't there because they're so used to seeing me. That's the kind of commitment that you need on this Board. That's the kind of person you need, someone who you know you can rely on and someone who you know is going to be there to fight for the children of this city. At the end of the day, if we all don't have that same goal, then we're in the wrong field. Have a good night.

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

MOTION TO GO INTO CLOSED SESSION TO DISCUSS FILLING THE VACANT SEAT ON THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

It was moved by Comm. Redmon, seconded by Comm. Simmons that the Board goes into closed session to discuss filling the vacant seat on the Board of Education. On roll call all members voted in the affirmative. The motion carried.

The Board went into executive session at 8:22 p.m.

It was moved by Comm. Capers, seconded by Comm. Ramirez that the Board reconvenes the meeting. On roll call all members voted in the affirmative. The motion carried.

The Board reconvened the meeting at 8:47 p.m.

ACCEPT NOMINATIONS FOR CANDIDATE TO FILL VACANCY ON THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

Comm. Castillo: At this time, I would like to accept a motion for a candidate to fill the vacancy on the Board.

Comm. Martinez: I'd like to nominate Ms. Jessica Schutte.

Comm. Redmon: I'll second it.

Comm. Capers: I'd like to nominate Mr. Corey Teague.

Comm. Redmon: I'll second.

Comm. Hodges: Motion to close nominations.

Comm. Ramirez: Second.

RESOLUTION

It was moved by Comm. Martinez, seconded by Comm. Redmon that Ms. Jessica Schutte be appointed to fill the vacant seat on the Board of Education. On roll call all members voted as follows on the nomination of Ms. Jessica Schutte:

Comm. Arrington: Yes.

Comm. Capers: No.

Comm. Hodges: No.

Comm. Martinez: Yes.

Comm. Ramirez: Yes.

Comm. Redmon: Yes.

Comm. Simmons: Abstain.

Comm. Castillo: Yes.

The motion carried.

Comm. Castillo: Congratulations, Ms. Schutte. Would you be okay with the 29th so you can have your family and everyone present for the swearing in?

Ms. Williams: But she will be taking her seat that night so I will get the information.

Comm. Capers: How can she get all the information? She needs to be sworn in to get all the information.

Comm. Hodges: She can abstain on the agenda because she will have a week to do it or so.

Comm. Capers: Is it her decision or the Board's decision?

Comm. Castillo: It's her decision.

Comm. Capers: You have to ask her.

Comm. Redmon: She just asked her.

Comm. Castillo: Thank you so much and congratulations. You can work with Ms. Cheryl Williams. She's going to be your new best friend. She'll give you all the information you need.

Ms. Schutte: Thank you.

ADJOURNMENT

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

The meeting was adjourned at 8:53 p.m.