

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

January 17, 2018 – 6:10 p.m.  
Administrative Offices

Presiding: Comm. Oshin Castillo, President

Present:

Ms. Eileen Shafer, Acting State District Superintendent  
Ms. Susana Peron, Acting Deputy Superintendent  
Robert Murray, Esq., General Counsel

Comm. Emanuel Capers  
Comm. Jonathan Hodges  
Comm. Christopher Irving  
Comm. Manuel Martinez

Comm. Nakima Redmon, Vice President  
Comm. Flavio Rivera  
Comm. Kenneth Simmons

Absent:

Comm. Joel Ramirez

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  
January 17, 2018 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. Irving: Just a point of personal privilege. Thank you so much for the ability to address the Board for the record. As many of you know, this will be my last evening with you all. I have a prepared statement that I want to read just for the record. Then my plan is to finish out this meeting. I'm going to read it and hopefully not get emotional as I get through it. If I do, Kenny, just smack me. In 2010, after a long conversation with a close friend of mine about what the City of Paterson meant to both of us and had given us, I decided to run for the Paterson Board of Education at the age of 27. What

has transpired since then simply has been the best eight years of my life. I've had the distinct opportunity to serve alongside some of the most committed and dedicated elected officials in our city. We have sparred and disagreed with each other at times, but that has only helped to make me a stronger and better public servant. The time that I treasure most has been the last four and a half years that I proudly served as President of this amazing body. I want my colleagues past and present to know that every time my name was called to lead, I took that call seriously and I was humbled by the opportunity that you gave me. With new and exciting educational opportunities on the horizon, I've made the decision that effective tonight at midnight I will officially resign as a member of the Paterson Board of Education. To our teachers, administrators, central office, and staff that I have come to know and work with, I want to thank you for your time and commitment to the children of our city. Your love for these young people is shown every day when you walk into your buildings or offices with our children foremost in your mind. I ask you to please continue to fight the good fight of providing a quality education for our children because we are winning and our collective success means success for our children. I'm a proud graduate of this school system and just one small example of how our education system has the ability to impact and produce future leaders in our city. To the residents of our City of Paterson, thank you for the honor to serve in our city and thank you for taking the chance on a 27-year-old man who just wanted to help others. Thank you for helping to mold me into the man I am today. Thank you for the kind words of support and the motivation you gave me even when you may not have approved of some of the decisions or actions that I may have taken. Finally, to my family, wife, mother, and siblings, thank you for understanding and the patience regarding the amount of time it takes to do this important work with intention and love. It has not been easy for us, but together we are a solid family and have grown through this experience. I'm leaving this meeting tonight feeling quite accomplished and at peace in my heart about the impact that I believe I've had on our district and our community. I look forward to working for the Murphy administration at the Department of Education in whatever role that new Commissioner sees fit for me. But please know that no matter what the role may be, I will always be invested in the success of my community and will always love this great city and the people within it. However, with Governor Murphy at the helm, I now look forward to ensuring that all children in our state are given an equal opportunity to receive a quality education. Many of you know I have a quote that I use. It says, "Be the change you wish to see in the world." I believe we all share this responsibility in that change. For me, the next chapter of this change begins tomorrow. Not as a Board member in Paterson, but as a passionate educator, dedicated to the success of New Jersey's children. God bless you all. God bless the State of New Jersey and our great City of Paterson. I want to just say anecdotally to all of you I have very distinct relationships with all of you. It has been an absolute pleasure to serve alongside of you. I've said many times in front of different Commissioners and Governors that there is no greater Board than this group of people who sits here. I mean that sincerely. For the staff and the folks that I've worked with over the course of the last few years, I want to thank you guys so much for the friendship, love, and the experiences to do this job, even in times when it wasn't easy. As many of us know, to serve is probably the most humbling thing when people put your name and pull that lever on the ballot. It really is. It is one that I take seriously. I'm extremely excited about my new job and I'm extremely excited about the opportunity to come back here and work with you all in a very different capacity. While some of you may think you may have gotten rid of me, maybe politically, but not professionally. I look forward to the new role that I will have working with urban districts and helping all of us continue to transform the districts that we work in to being the top-quality districts. Thank you for the opportunity, Madam President. Thank you all for the opportunity to serve. I love you too, Dr. Hodges.

Comm. Castillo: If any of the other Commissioners want to say something, now is a great time. We do appreciate the work that you have done in this district and all the love and passion that you put into this. For you this is not a job. You literally live and breathe education in this community and in the City of Paterson. I've heard you with many people in different places always speaking about how great this community and our kids are. That's something extremely important and valuable and makes you such a great person. We are definitely honored to have you on this team and to call you a friend. I will continue to bother you, but it was a pleasure working with you. I know this is not the end. It's only the beginning for you. We're proud of all the strides that you're making and I know that you will do an amazing job for our kids, not just in Paterson, but in the entire state. Thank you and don't get lost. We expect you to be here a lot.

Comm. Martinez: It will be impossible for him to get lost. It gives me a tremendous peace of mind and a stillness of heart knowing that we're going to have a champion for our city and our students down in Trenton. I know you're going to continue to advocate and fight for our students and all students in the State of New Jersey as you just mentioned. It's especially comforting to me to know that someone who I consider a brother and family member is going to be down there. When we need to pick up that phone and get in touch with folks you're going to be there. While you may not be sitting at this dais with us, your influence and intellect that you bring to the table will remain and we're still going to lean on you. You'll just be a little bit further down on the Parkway, but you're not going anywhere. This is not a goodbye. We have a lot of work to continue to do. I'm super proud to call you a friend and a brother and the best is yet to come. There's a lot more to do. Thank you.

Comm. Hodges: As some of you know, I'm very active down in Trenton. I'm more known down there than I am in the City of Paterson. I'm known for my advocacy. Without a doubt, we will meet again around the issue of education. We may differ on a number of issues, but the overriding concern and principle is that the children of Paterson deserve the best education possible. I will go to whoever and whenever I can to get that done on their behalf. If you're there working in that capacity where you can help the children of Paterson, I will not hesitate to reach out to you. We need plenty of help in this district to deliver to our children what needs to be done. Good luck.

Comm. Capers: To Comm. Irving, I'm so proud that you're going down to your new journey. As I expressed in text messages to you, I'm extremely proud that somebody from Paterson is represented on the Murphy team and somebody that's from our community. We were at the NJCDC the other day and one of the papers asked me a question saying that Chris talks about how he's from Paterson. He always says that on the first line of his bio. I said that's a great thing. Go down there and represent. You are somebody from Paterson. It's great to show our youth we have people from Paterson that are serving in these seats and in different administrations. Don't forget where you come from. Keep wearing that 'P' on our chest. We'll be in touch. Go down and represent and I'm glad that you're there. It was an honor to serve with you. Eight years of your service to this Board and district is very commendable. We work for free. I know we're at the finish line where the district is going to local control and everything that we're about to experience. You've played a big role in that. Technically, you're not going to be a part of it, but you're a part of it. You played a great deal in getting us there. It's up to us to get us across and get us the distance. I know you're going to be fighting for us down there. Congratulations again to you and your family. Blessings to you, my brother.

Comm. Redmon: It's been a pleasure to serve with you. Even when I first met you I said, "Who is this guy? What does he want?" I was skeptical. The first meeting that I

ever met Dr. Irving I said, "Who is this guy and what does he want?" I took your meeting and I took what you said to me to heart. It's about Paterson and the next generation behind us. It's not about us. I wish you well in your future endeavors. I know that you've worked extremely hard here at the Paterson School District. I know that you left your input. These are shoes hard to fill because every time we talk to somebody the first thing they mention is Dr. Irving. I wish you well. I hope that you continue to come back giving us information and guidance. I hope that you're only a phone call away. I wish you and your family well on your next journey. I see other things happening for you. I truly wish you the best of luck.

Comm. Rivera: Chris, you know we've known each other for a while and I've witnessed the progression of your career. I just want to let you know that I'm very proud of you. You have served this district. I don't see you serving this district in any better way than what you have. Because of our friendship it took me a while to be able to call you doctor, but you deserve it. You worked hard for it. One of the things that I learned from you, at least from the political end, is that you being President I admire the way you handled all these personalities, including myself. You and I have our fights, but we never do anything publicly. We have our disagreements. Everybody thinks everybody is a rubber stamp. No. We have our disagreements. We just know how to work together and we do it behind closed doors. If we come to an agreement, there's no need to relive those discussions again because they're not relevant at that point. I just want to let you know that I wish you the best. We'll continue to see each other just like we knew each other before politics. We'll continue to keep the friendship and I wish you the best.

Comm. Simmons: Where do I start? You and I started this journey together in 2010 and became at the time unlikely running mates. It's been a great journey. At some point people affectionately called us Batman and Robin. I'm Batman.

Comm. Irving: He's older, so he has to be.

Comm. Simmons: It was a pleasure for me to call you the Boy Wonder. I still feel that way. I've always said that you're going to go far because of who you are, because of your personality. If you don't know you, it's something to get used to. Even with the perception that we didn't get along or we were fighting, I'm proud to call you a friend and brother. I look forward to seeing the great things that you're going to do for the State of New Jersey, especially the urban districts.

Comm. Castillo: On that note, our job now is to not skip a beat and make sure that this district keeps moving forward, that this transition goes as smoothly as possible, and that we're working together for our children to make sure they get the best education and this community gets what they need during these few months. I want to leave it to Ms. Shafer to discuss the goals and priorities.

Ms. Shafer: Let me also just comment about Dr. Christopher Irving. Thank you for everything you have done for our school district, but more importantly for our children. You have been a role model and you continue to be a role model as you move on to your next endeavor and journey. There are so many opportunities for our young men to look at you and see what is in front of them as they continue to go through school and college if they choose to do so. Thank you for being that positive role model for the young boys that we so desperately need here in the City of Paterson. I also want to thank you for your endless tireless efforts to get us to achieve on QSAC and working closely with us every step of the way so that we can look forward to local control and

giving the school district back to the community where it certainly belongs. Thank you for all that you have done for all of us.

Comm. Irving: Thank you.

## **DISCUSSION ON GOALS AND PRIORITIES FOR THE 2018-2019 SCHOOL DISTRICT BUDGET**

Ms. Shafer: At this time, I want to call our Business Administrator, Mr. Richard Matthews, to come forward. As everyone knows, we have discussed for some time now having our budget be all-inclusive of the community, all the stakeholders that are involved to have input and to be with us and partners every step of the way so you know where we are. We have had a couple of meetings already and asked for your input. We now want to tell you where we are and ask for priorities as we continue to build the budget. Mr. Matthews will outline our next steps going forward. This is certainly not the last meeting of putting our budget together. We had made a promise with the Board of Education and the district that we would have an all-inclusive process and that's what we have been doing all along and will continue to do until we balance the budget and send it off to the Department of Education. I will turn it over to Mr. Matthews, our Business Administrator.

Mr. Matthews: Thank you, Ms. Shafer and Commissioners. I just want to say a personal thank you to Chris Irving. I haven't known Chris for a long time, but in that short amount of time I've seen the kind of impact that he has had on the people and the kids in this community. Personally, he's really inspired me. I've been in his presence around other kids and how he spoke to the kids. Just being around him and talking to him he's been a real inspiration to me. I'm just glad to call you a friend and a brother. I want to continue to work with you and get to know you more. I know you're going to do great things for the City of Paterson and the kids of Paterson. I'm looking forward to it and good luck. Again, this presentation has been done a couple of times so it's more of the same. This particular session is more for reaching out to the Board and trying to get your Board priorities. We're going to do something a little bit differently tonight. We've done this presentation before. We sent it to you in a video over the weekend. Hopefully you've had the chance to review it. It's a 10-minute video. It's on YouTube. We're just going to press the 'play' button for 10 minutes. We're going to go through the presentation. It's all narrated and at the end of the presentation we're here to take any questions.

### **Video Presentation**

Mr. Matthews: That's a little different than what we normally do as far as presentations. We thought that we'd give it to you in advance so that it would give you a chance to come here to give us some options and some priorities that we can take back and cost out and bring to our cabinet and budget team. With that, do you guys have any questions or comments?

Comm. Martinez: I don't have any direct questions pertaining to the presentation. If there's an opportunity to share some of our individual budget priorities, wants, or needs, I'm not sure if this would be the time to jump into that.

Comm. Castillo: Absolutely.

Comm. Martinez: One of the things that I have been giving some thought to might be a heavy lift, but I think it's rather doable. It's a way to consolidate, tighten up, and

consider the budget constraints that we're facing. It would be to take an in-depth look at a lot of the academies that we currently have in our district and identify some ways of consolidations or even seeking additional funding through something like Perkins. Basically, offering some themes or certifications that our students can work towards and come out of high school with certifications with some skills in certain vocation areas. I think the notion has always been that students go to high school and they go to college. While college is definitely an important aspect of education, I think it's safe to say that it's not a necessary target for every student in the district. I don't think there's anything wrong with perhaps identifying certain students who can benefit more from learning certain skills and vocations. If we're able to offer some of those things it might be a way to attract and entice some of our students to remain in our district. A couple of meetings ago we talked about what was taking place in Florida and Texas through those natural disasters and the lack of skilled individuals to do those kinds of jobs. If we can perhaps explore reorganizing some of the academies to offer some more of those skills and vocations, I think that might be something that can be really beneficial and a potential cost-savings to the district - not only a cost-savings, but also an opportunity to bring in new funds through federal programs such as Perkins. I'll start with that and if there are any thoughts or notions behind that maybe we can kick that around and discuss it before we jump on to the next one.

Comm. Castillo: I definitely agree. I think it's conversations that we've had to make sure that the academies are serving their purpose in making sure that all our students are leaving with some type of certification. If they choose to go to college, that's great. But they can have a job right out of high school and pay for college and continue their education. We also need mechanics, plumbers, and welders. It's something there's a lack of and some of our students would benefit from that as well.

Comm. Simmons: Along the same lines as what Comm. Martinez is speaking about, making sure that our academies are doing what they are supposed to be doing in terms of the themes. When we talk about the school of technology at Eastside we want to make sure that they're actually working on technology, whether that's programming, computer repair, or networking. I think part of the issue that I've noticed is in many of the themed academies, like technology, we don't have people with real world experience teaching in those academies. Similar to what PCTI does, those are actual professionals who have a certification just to teach that subject matter. How do we go about finding and hiring that population to make sure that we're teaching in those themes? I think we're on the same page when we talk about that.

Comm. Martinez: Yes, and it's a great way to entice and keep these students in our district. If we can offer the same opportunities they can seek at PCTI here in town, that helps our bottom line, retains some of our better students, and it keeps our enrollment population numbers high. That's what we need. I think that's something that should be top priority.

Comm. Simmons: Beyond that, I really need to understand where the district is going and what the Superintendent's plan is for the district and how the district is going to move forward before I can actually really come up with priorities. I would need to know the direction we're headed in. Beyond the themed academies, and that's one of the priorities, I just need to know the direction.

Comm. Capers: I third what Comm. Martinez and Comm. Simmons said. I had talked with you before. I'm a big fan of the cosmetology academy and also strengthening the academies that we have. Here in the City of Paterson, I think there are as many barber shops and beauty salons as much as churches. When I go to a barbershop, I see about

four young people from Tech cutting hair and they're paying their rent just as my barber is that owns that shop. He's charging them the same amount. We have to really look into the college and career readiness, strengthen that, and really offer some things. I heard that we kicked this around a few years ago. I wasn't on the Board, but it was the number one academy voted on for our kids. They want to participate in this. I think that's a good one that we need to bring into our district. Just like Comm. Simmons said, I think all nine of us have our own wish list of what we want to see and what we want to implement. But we want to see a really thorough plan on where the district is going. What does the budget look like? Then we can see how we can all fit in what we want to fit in. Without that, I can ramble off my priorities, but I think we have to strengthen our high schools and academies. We have to make sure what it says on the building those kids are getting those resources. If it's technology, we have to make sure that academy has rigor and we have some specialties that those kids come out with.

Comm. Redmon: I think the district as a whole can do better with special education. Even though we tried this year to correct some of the flaws with the special education program, I think it should be another priority on our list when it comes to our budget and some of the side assistance with special education. I know a lot of it is not because the district has not tried, but we're not getting the services that we can get to provide for students that are in special needs. Professional services are not coming because when they get here they don't know the tone of the district so they don't approve the jobs. We can't get that out. We need to do a better job with that. I was thinking that we were going to get a list of items. That's what I told the President last night when she asked all of us to make sure we submit something. I didn't submit anything because I don't want to just go off the cusp. Last year we did bounce ideas back and forth and narrowed some things down. When we get something a little bit more formal then we can start more with the ideas being kicked around. But I think special education should be one of our main priorities in this district.

Comm. Irving: I think that's a great idea. In the past we ebbed and flowed on the Board just pontificating on what we think we wanted, but I think that always has to be done within a context. In all fairness to the administration, it probably makes sense for you to give us a framework of what the context is and then have the Board add to, comment, or give suggestions to that context. It's probably a more prudent conversation as opposed to people just espousing. I remember one year some people on Board gave 20,000 things and that wasn't even realistic. I think that within the context of that conversation this group can come up with two or three concrete goals everyone wants to work on they can support it and narrow it down. To me that makes sense. Maybe the next time the Superintendent, in the midst of rolling out the budget, begins to share what that rationale is. Provided the Board gets it ahead of time, then the Board can comment and add on to it as well.

Comm. Castillo: I expected to see a document where if we emailed you the priorities knowing what it would look like in the budget. It was what I assumed we'd be getting tonight. But I think definitely we have something in writing or something we can go on, including all the priorities that the Commissioners submitted. Seeing what it looks like and what we can add, as Dr. Irving said, is better than just throwing ideas in the air. Even though I know Ms. Peron is writing it all down, I think it's more efficient if we do it that way.

Comm. Hodges: I think this has already been said. I can't tell you what my priorities are because I don't know where the district is headed. It's not what Eileen wants to do anymore. It's what the Board wants to determine the direction of this district should be. We can't wait for her to do it. It's on our shoulders now. What has to happen, from my

point of view, is taking a look at what we had as a system. What does the school district represent? What has the state left us with? Once you have an idea of facilities, educational needs, content, and personnel, then very rapidly you have to move into strategic planning. Where do you want to be next year, three years from now, or five years from now? Based on that information, then you can say the priorities should be this or that. You need to determine what kind of schools you want to have. What's going to be your emphasis? You have competition out there taking your higher-level students away from you. That model of that high-level student behavior is leaving. You have to compete to stop that loss. What are you going to do to make certain schools more competitive so that loss is not sustained? We have to determine what that's going to look like. Until that happens, your priorities are meaningless to me. All I'm saying is we're going to have to have a look at what's in place now, a thorough comprehensive discussion. Then very rapidly talk about are we going to have new academies, stronger comprehensive schools? The Board has to determine what that's going to look like. Once that roadmap begins to take shape, you then have to plan what happens over that course of time and what you're going to need to spend money on to get that accomplished.

Comm. Irving: I think we're all saying the same thing. I think what precipitates that conversation is the Chief School Administrator giving a framework for where we are within that context. I think we're touching on the same thing. But I think that's all precipitated by the Superintendent of Schools being able to articulate that.

Comm. Capers: I don't know whose job this is, but can we get a projection of where the job market is going? We're getting our students ready to hit those different venues so we can get them prepared. If we're going into the wave of technology or coding, we need to have curriculum and get ready to move in that direction. If all of us come in saying let's do this and that and there are no jobs, why are we offering that to our children? Our competition is offering different innovative stuff that's competitive with the job market. So, when these kids graduate from high school they fall right in. We're just not there yet. I would like a list to see for three to five years where the job market is going. Are we doing research on that? Who's looking into that? How can we create new academies and strengthen our academies?

Comm. Rivera: Ms. Shafer, you being the Superintendent, I expect that it should be the initial responsibility for you to put together a plan to address a lot of the needs that we haven't been meeting. For years I've been sitting here and one area where we're not efficient is regarding special education. I agree with Ms. Redmon. As a Board member, I'm going to support you and give you some ideas, but initially you have to put forth a plan. You're the Superintendent. You cannot have nine individuals telling you what should and shouldn't be done. Yes, we will collaborate with you. We will tell you what needs we feel should be met. But for now, we have already seen what areas we are deficient in. I want to see us meeting the responsibilities that we have in meeting those services that we're not. One of them is special education. If we need to put additional resources we need to identify first why a lot of those services are not being provided. That's part of the budget process. We need to analyze those things that we're falling short on. I have a long wish list, but I think those deficiencies have to be met first before I start sending you a wish list. That's just my opinion.

Comm. Martinez: I was just going to follow up on what Comm. Capers was saying. If I heard what you're saying correctly, where do we want to envision this district eight years down the line? That's what we should be preparing for. We shouldn't be looking at it from the short-sided point of view saying what jobs are currently in demand and what's going to be in immediate demand. What are the jobs that are going to be in demand



nine years down the line? When these students are coming through the pike they're prepared for what's going to be required out there. Whether that's coding or green energy, it's going to take some lifting there. I think that's what I heard Comm. Capers saying and I agree. The one thing that I'm hearing from everyone is that a framework needs to be in place, but it's also on our shoulders to help shape that. We just can't put that squarely on the shoulders of the Superintendent or any one person. We have to all take our chisels and hammers out and start banging this thing into place. We can't put this on any one person's shoulders. This is the responsibility that comes with gaining local control. Here it is. I think that's the thing that everyone has touched on in a different way. This is not on one person. This is on all of us collectively to give our input and mold this district into what we envision it being eight years down the line.

Comm. Simmons: I know we're kind of beating a dead horse. Just to add to what Comm. Martinez said, we really need to figure out what the overall goal is. Once we establish what the goal is, every decision has to be made around that goal and how we reach that goal. All of those things have to be able to work together. Any decision that is not going to help us reach that goal is obviously a bad decision. We have to figure out what the goal is. I'm not sure when we do that. I don't think we have much time, but we have to establish the goal first.

Comm. Hodges: That's really our job, not hers or any Superintendent's. We have to decide what this district is going to look like, along with our community. We're going to be going here. This is what our plan is. We've been under state control forever. Now it's yours. It's not hers. It's ours. We have to do it with the community's help. We're running out of time because all of January should have been that planning session trying to find out what's necessary so that we move into March with the budget pretty much shaped and you have February to jostle around. That's the timeline. When does the preliminary budget get submitted?

Mr. Matthews: The budget is almost done. The software just opened up today for the state software. The budget is still being put together as we speak. We want to present the preliminary budget to the Board at the February 5 fiscal meeting. At the February 7 workshop we'll have the preliminary budget all done with any budget gaps that are going to be realized at that time.

Comm. Capers: We went through this last year with the preliminary budget. When is the preliminary budget due to the county?

Mr. Matthews: The budget is not due to the county until March 8. We have a budget calendar that we already gave you. We will share the budget calendar. The budget is not due to the county until the middle of March.

Comm. Hodges: There's no point in having a discussion if it has already been done.

Mr. Matthews: It's not done.

Comm. Castillo: Let's get clarification from the Superintendent.

Mr. Matthews: We're putting together where we stand as far as the stuff that we've taken in so far. We're doing salaries. We will be done with salaries this week. That's the biggest piece of the whole budget, salaries and benefits. We're still getting those numbers together. Those are the last two missing pieces. Once that's done, by the end of the month we will have a budget that we can present to the cabinet, which is next week.

Comm. Hodges: All I want to say is we need to come together rapidly to do planning and decide as a group what we want to see in the district and what we want the direction of the district to be. You now know what the intent lines are, so that's the time that you have to do the planning and also get an inventory of what the state has left us and make it very clear to the community. Then we can talk about priorities and blame him.

Comm. Redmon: What I'm going to say is that I agree with Dr. Hodges 110%. I think as a Board while we're sitting here we need to come up with a date where we can just work out some issues that we want addressed. We do have a tentative date that we're looking at for the retreat. We wanted to put this in when we're talking about transition. This is going to be part of that budget of the transitioning.

Comm. Hodges: It should be facilitated.

Comm. Redmon: Right. I think we were talking earlier about some ideas for the retreat. One of the ideas was talking about transition and budgeting, and things that we want to see. We also talked about a facilitator that will come in from New Jersey School Boards and give their ideas. We're kind of in that gray area of going back to local control. We're trying to figure out how that looks like. We want to get their guidance also. We know it's up to us individually, but I know New Jersey School Boards is a good point of view that we can go to and have that kind of support going back to local control. We just really discussed this maybe an hour ago. I'm glad that you brought that up. I'm glad that Mr. Matthews also brought up the plan of budgeting so we know the real numbers. We can focus on the real numbers and on programs around the numbers. Last year we didn't have numbers that we projected and things that we put out first we had to go back and revamp some of that stuff that we put out. I would not like that to happen again this year. We should be concrete with the numbers and then we can be realistic with what programs we can put and establish for the future.

Comm. Irving: Last year we went through the exercise in February, but we had a hearing every Wednesday just to be prudent and to be on top of it. It just allowed the Board to have four weeks in a row where we had working sessions where you're just plugging away, as opposed to having one meeting here. At least we all know for the entire month of February every Wednesday we're having hearings. That still lets the community have the opportunity to be heard and for Mr. Matthews each week to be updating as the weeks go on here is where we are with personnel. We can have a conversation around programs. You got a program into the budget. Here's where we are with that. It just makes sense to go every single Wednesday with budget hearings.

Comm. Castillo: Just to summarize it, I think we're all in agreement. If it's okay with you all, I'm going to have Cheryl send out a date for a Board retreat as soon as possible so we can start working on it. That way we can get the calendar for the budget and when it needs to be submitted and all the important dates so we all have that as well. Make sure that we have the rough numbers that our BA is working with. That will also help shape our priorities and where we want to go to and make suggestions in that area. I also want us to come up with ideas prior to that date on what our priorities are and be a little bit more diligent on what we think. Maybe we can collaborate and have those ideas coming together as well. Now we have the calendar, we have numbers from our BA, and the Board retreat where we can continue to move forward. Then I can also have Cheryl poll you guys or send out a memo with working sessions through the month of February so we make sure that we have all the information prior to our submission of the preliminary budget.

Comm. Capers: When you say numbers, that means we're going to see the preliminary budget and what that looks like? What types of numbers are you talking about?

Mr. Matthews: Yes. You're going to have the preliminary budget where we're capturing all the costs right now. We're going to do revenues based on flat-funding, 5% increase, and 8% increase. You'll have three budgets with three revenue targets.

Comm. Capers: When is the state projected to tell us what our budget is?

Comm. Irving: That's a good question. When I get down there I will let you know. The Governor said yesterday his plan is to present the budget to the legislature in the next two weeks. We should find out what the total appropriation for education is. That total appropriation will give you a very clear indicator. If the number is 30% higher than we know for sure there's going to be some additional revenue, not knowing what it will look like. I believe, knowing this Governor and knowing the Commissioner, that that will happen. If it's totally flat like it was before, then you also know what you're working with as well. The three projections are a smart way to go because it allows you to plug-and-play the scenarios. As soon as you have an idea of what the appropriations are going to look like, you will choose which option. The Governor made it very clear in his address the other day that he plans to have a budget to the legislature in the next few weeks.

Comm. Capers: Are we going to plan our Board retreat after the fact, or before the fact?

Comm. Castillo: We're going to plan a Board retreat as soon as possible. I'm going to speak to Cheryl and she will be reaching out to you guys tomorrow.

Comm. Hodges: I would just suggest to you that your strategic planning session won't be accomplished in just one day.

Comm. Castillo: That's just the first one and then from there we can plan for the entire month of February. I think it was a great idea from Dr. Irving. We can continue to be updated.

Comm. Irving: I'm going to recommend you guys meet four days a week and then leave.

Comm. Castillo: We can also get the community involved and see what their thoughts are on the budget process and what their priorities are.

## **RESOLUTIONS FOR A VOTE:**

### **Resolution No. 1**

Whereas, the Paterson Public School District approves payment for the list of bills and claims dated January 17, 2018, beginning with check number 208797 and ending with check number 209106, in the amount of \$4,580,123.44; and

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

**It was moved by Comm. Irving, seconded by Comm. Martinez that Resolution No. 1 be adopted. On roll call all members voted in the affirmative, except Comm. Hodges who voted no. The motion carried.**

**Paterson Board of Education  
Standing Abstentions**

Comm. Capers

- 4<sup>th</sup> and Inches
- Westside Park Group

Comm. Castillo

- Passaic County
- Scholastic (Transportation)

Comm. Hodges

- Pertaining to himself
- Jumpstart
- City of Paterson

Comm. Irving

- Workforce Investment Board of Passaic County (WIB)
- Private Industry Council of Passaic County (PIC)
- Greater Bergen Community Action
- Irving & Mendenhall
- Hibster Intervention Services

Comm. Martinez

- New Jersey Community Development Corporation (NJCDC)

Comm. Redmon

- Historic Preservation of the City of Paterson

Comm. Rivera

- Passaic County
- Private Industry Council (PIC)
- Workforce Investment Board (WIB)
- Community Charter School of Paterson

**Resolution No. 2**

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

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

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

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

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

#### CONFERENCE/WORKSHOP REQUESTS

STAFF MEMBER	CONFERENCE	DATE	AMOUNT
Jenna Goodreau	Students at the Center Challenge Conference	January 31 – February 2, 2018	\$1,291.50 (transportation, meals)
Interim Director/FSCS	Houston, TX		
Maudellyn Kimbrough	Infinite Campus Interchange NYC 2018	March 27-28, 2018	\$565.28 (registration, transportation)
Supervisor/Student Information Services	New York, NY		
Lenny Moore	Infinite Campus Interchange NYC 2018	March 27-28, 2018	\$565.28 (registration, transportation)
Supervisor/Student Information Services	New York, NY		
Frank Pajuelo	Infinite Campus Interchange NYC 2018	March 27-28, 2018	\$565.28 (registration, transportation)
Data Management Specialist/ Student Information Services	New York, NY		
Pamela M. Powell	Infinite Campus Interchange NYC 2018	March 27-28, 2018	\$565.28 (registration, transportation)
Chief of Staff	New York, NY		
*Emanuel Capers	2018 NSBA Annual Conference	April 7-9, 2018	\$3,254.00 (registration, transportation, lodging, meals)
Board Member	San Antonio, TX		
*Oshin Castillo	2018 NSBA Annual Conference	April 7-9, 2018	\$2,680.00 (registration, transportation, lodging, meals)
Board President	San Antonio, TX		
*Jonathan Hodges	2018 NSBA Annual Conference	April 7-9, 2018	\$3,289.00 (registration, transportation, lodging, meals)
Board Member	San Antonio, TX		
*Nakima Redmon	2018 NSBA Annual Conference	April 7-9, 2018	\$2,680.00 (registration, transportation, lodging, meals)
Board Vice President	San Antonio, TX		

**TOTAL CONFERENCES: 9**  
**TOTAL AMOUNT: \$15,455.62**

\*Previously approved (December 20, 2017); being resubmitted to include meal functions.

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

**Commissioners Capers, Redmon, Simmons and Castillo who abstained on their name. The motion carried.**

**Paterson Board of Education  
Standing Abstentions**

Comm. Capers

- 4<sup>th</sup> and Inches
- Westside Park Group

Comm. Castillo

- Passaic County
- Scholastic (Transportation)

Comm. Hodges

- Pertaining to himself
- Jumpstart
- City of Paterson

Comm. Irving

- Workforce Investment Board of Passaic County (WIB)
- Private Industry Council of Passaic County (PIC)
- Greater Bergen Community Action
- Irving & Mendenhall
- Hibster Intervention Services

Comm. Martinez

- New Jersey Community Development Corporation (NJCDC)

Comm. Redmon

- Historic Preservation of the City of Paterson

Comm. Rivera

- Passaic County
- Private Industry Council (PIC)
- Workforce Investment Board (WIB)
- Community Charter School of Paterson

**Resolution No. 3**

WHEREAS, Paterson Public Schools (the “District”) is working to upgrade facilities and to ensure that schools are clean, safe, and aligned with 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning Standards in accordance with Priority II, Goal 7 of the 2014-2019 Strategic Plan; and

WHEREAS, by lease agreement (“Lease”) dated the 1<sup>st</sup> day of August 2018, between Michael John’s, LLC (“Landlord”) and the Paterson Board of Education, Landlord did lease to the District certain real property, consisting of a building located at 535 Broadway, Paterson, New Jersey; and

WHEREAS, the initial five-year term of the Lease will commence on the 1<sup>st</sup> day of August 2018 and terminate on June 31, 2023, per year thereafter, and Year 1- \$19,026.67 per month [\$228,320.04], Year 2- \$35,500.00 per month [\$426,000 annually], Year 3- \$39,379.66 per month [\$460,917 base rent + \$11,639 catch up=\$472,556 yr.] ,Year 4- \$39,379.66 per month [\$460,917 base rent + \$11,639 catch

up = \$427,556 yr.], Year 5 - \$39,379.66 per month[\$460,917 base rent = \$11,639 catch up = \$472,556 yr.]; and

WHEREAS, the lease is attached to this action it sets forth the landlord's obligation to pay real estate taxes and such other payments required by the lease and the landlord is required to provide the build out of the interior of the building as required by the lease; and

WHEREAS, the District has determined that its use of the Premises is required for the provision of public education and related administrative services and that Landlord will retain some use of the Premises during mutually agreeable times and dates; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT, the District approves this Lease with Michael John's, LLC for a period of five (5) years at a monthly rate set forth in the lease until the expiration of terms as hereby ratified and confirmed.

**It was moved by Comm. Martinez, seconded by Comm. Irving that Resolution No. 3 be adopted.**

Comm. Simmons: I just got this, so I really haven't had the opportunity to actually delve through it and actually understand it. I would like the opportunity to do that. Can counsel give me just an overview of the lease?

Mr. Murray: This is a five-year lease. It is for the property as indicated on Broadway. There is a build out that is included, which will be done by the owners of the property. The first year lease number corresponds to current costs. It is a back-loaded lease. You'll see that in terms of what's referred to as a catchup number. That's a spread-out number to help as far as softening from budget year to budget year. The start of the construction would be as soon as approved. The completion is targeted and the developers, who are here tonight and could address it if you wish, have assured the district that it will be completed by August 1. If there is an issue, at their expense they would be responsible for moving the various properties that we have and it would be stored at the building until they finish. They have assured the district that it will be completed and it is subject to the approval by municipal authorities to have a certificate of occupancy from the state. In the terms of the lease, the owner of the building is responsible to pay the real estate taxes and all other of those standard costs. It is not a triple net lease. The real estate attorney who is working with us on it is available by phone should it come to that.

Comm. Redmon: Can we table this for this time? All Board members haven't had a chance to vet this through. Is it time-sensitive? Or can we table it for the next Board meeting?

Ms. Shafer: As soon as it gets approved the landlord will start the work. The longer we delay this, how long would it take?

Comm. Irving: Can I give a suggestion? Next week you all are supposed to pick my replacement anyhow. Is it possible to put it on the agenda for you all to discuss next week? That gives you seven days to vet it and then you can have your discussions once that's done.

Mr. Murray: Yes, that can be done.

Comm. Martinez: I think that's a good recommendation. With that overview given perhaps someone can tell us what the intended use of this building is moving forward. Who's going to occupy it? Can you give us those broad brushes?

Ms. Shafer: Right now, Young Men's Academy is in Prospect Park. We're going to bring them back to Paterson and they are going to occupy it starting August of 2018. We were also going to put STARS Academy and then we would eliminate two leases that we currently have. Year one was Young Men's Academy and year two was STARS Academy.

Comm. Martinez: So, it's the consolidation of two different academies and leases that we're currently using. The costs being allocated towards this will then be coming from those. Is there any cost savings? Is it a wash? How does that play out?

Ms. Shafer: Right now, it would be a wash. It would all depend if we had to renegotiate with those two buildings that we're currently using whether their prices will go up or not.

Comm. Irving: You also get two new facilities. I think everyone recognizes this is a really good opportunity. To Comm. Redmon's point, we just need time. Having gotten it today makes it very difficult. If you just hold it off for a week and do it at the next plausible meeting whenever the Board convenes at least you will have the opportunity to do that. It might make sense to have the landlords give any feedback or comments now since they're here. That might help inform the conversation.

Comm. Castillo: I think we can definitely hear from the landlord and at the same time it is our responsibility to get all the information and make sure that we're all knowledgeable of what we're agreeing to. Even though it's great, we just want to make sure. It's the responsible thing to do, since we just got it today, to make sure that every Commissioner gets to review it and that we get all the adequate information.

Comm. Capers: Before they come up and speak, I just have a quick question. On this it says 'Option 1' and 'Option 2'. Are we voting on both options? Which option are we going with? On page 13 it says 'Option 2.' I'm assuming anything from page 1 through 12 is 'Option 1.'

Mr. Murray: The lease was negotiated over a period of time and what you see in this option is what was finally negotiated and that simply was the carryover from before. In other words, we could have struck out 'Option 2' because there were a number of things that were negotiated. One option was for the landlord to do the buildout and then it was negotiations over the cost of that and who was paying. I believe that's correct on that.

Comm. Capers: I'm totally confused.

Comm. Castillo: Why don't we hear from the landlord first? Maybe some of the questions will be answered in his comments. Then we'll continue to review.

Ms. Shafer: Before we go there, let me just say we've been going back and forth for quite some time between our attorney and the landlord's attorney. The reason you got this late was because we got it this morning and as soon as we received it we sent it right out to the Board. I just want to be clear. It wasn't something we were holding on to and gave to you late. We finally worked out all of the things that are needed to be in this building for our students. That's why it came to you when it did.



Mr. Murray: I might also want to point out you will see in this 'Option 2' several things with lines through that were struck. The final lease doesn't have this. The reason you have it in this format is Mark Blenda received it. There was a back and forth over the weekend between your attorney and the landlord's attorney. There was more back and forth today. It got to you the fastest way possible tonight. That's why it shows some things that in the final draft you're not going to see. It's going to be deleted. In order to get it to you quickly without having to send it back to the other lawyer to look at and back to us to look at, it would have taken more time. That's why you have it this way.

Dr. John Sico: Hello. I'm Dr. John Sico. Some may remember me. I used to be assistant superintendent here. I spent 37 years of my career in Paterson. We had another offer on the table and we still do. I want the Board to understand that. I love Paterson. We cater to this deal. This is a good deal. We cannot wait seven more days. It will be almost impossible to have the building ready by August 1. There are a lot of variables when you're doing construction. You have the opportunity of a lifetime for this deal. It's built to your specifications. The architectural drawings that you have were done by input from your staff. When I'm involved in a building, it is state-of-the-art. A lot of you a lot younger than me may not know that I did PANTHER Academy. That was my dream. I designed it with the architect. I designed it with input from staff. It is a state-of-the-art building. This building will be second to none, but if you lose this opportunity we can't wait seven days. These negotiations have been going on since September. We were under the impression this would have been approved many months ago. The details are worked out to the satisfaction of your capable assistant superintendent and the attorney. You have a deal of a lifetime. Reconsider. You cannot table this. If you table it, you may not have the deal. If we can't meet the deadlines, we can't commit to it. My son has been involved in this from day one. Let him talk to you now.

Mr. Michael Sico: Good evening, Michael Sico. I've been working on it about three or four months, as my father expressed. What we do is build buildings around the country and also in Europe. It's a 31,000 square foot building. We're going to be building it to suit. You're going to technically be getting a brand new building. If you look at your leases that we OPRA requested and compared side-by-side, you're currently busing kids out of the district to Prospect Park at additional costs. They're both old buildings. We're out of our pocket paying to renovate the entire building. The way we calculate it in working with your SBA and team, you guys have cost savings. It's not a triple net lease. All the leases that you're currently involved in are triple net leases. We were surprised it wouldn't be voted on tonight because if you look at the leases side-by-side, you're not in a triple net lease. You can consolidate two schools into one. If you have one nurse in the building, you're going to have cost savings there. You're going to be reinvesting funds that are going out of district in your city. Everything that we were discussing at the beginning of the meeting sounds great, but you have the opportunity to actually do it by saving money and reinvesting money in your city. As my father said, there are a couple of offers on the table. If we can't meet the deadline, unfortunately we're not going to be able to go forward with the deal. Hopefully you guys can take a look at it. You can vote on it. I think you have a quorum here. You need how many people to vote?

Comm. Redmon: I'm going to intervene here. You're in the business of selling buildings. We're in the business of governing. We have to do our due diligence to this district to make sure that we have read and vetted this. I appreciate what your dad said and what you said. I understand you met with our people and our professionals. But the Board hasn't had a fair chance to vet something out. The only thing we're asking is a chance to read it. Would you like to sit behind a table and have something presented

to you and be asked to vote on it? Some of our members already have questions on the lease. I'm sure you did the best that you could do to build the building to our specifications with our staff. I'm not saying what you're saying in this document that I have is wrong or right, but I did not have a fair chance to read it. So how can I honestly vote on something that I did not have a fair chance to read? I understand there were time constraints, but you're in the business of selling buildings. I'm in the business to govern for this district. I'm responsible for governing this district.

Mr. Sico: I'm under the impression that your counsel would have advised you on this maybe before this, but that didn't happen. I'm not sure why not. That's fine. I understand your situation, but we're just expressing ours. The offer was valid for tonight. We're making no promises for next week. Do what you need to do. If you did take a look at it, the highlights of this lease compared to other leases that we've worked with your administration, we do feel it's a great deal. Hopefully if you had the opportunity to see it, I think you would see it. If you compared lease by lease, you'd be consolidating two schools into one. It would be a cost savings for staff. You wouldn't be busing students out of district. It would be a brand-new building with HVAC systems. It's not a triple net lease as your current leases are. That's basically the highlights of the lease. I think that's what made it a sweet deal for you guys. You have to do what you have to do. Are there any questions for us as far as the buildout?

Comm. Rivera: This is not the way we do business here, just so you know if you want to do business with us in the future. I know it's not your responsibility to make sure what happens on this end. General Counsel contacting us individually is not how we operate. This should have been vetted through finance and facilities and it was not. That's why in order to give this a chance and have a possibility of this being approved it had to be vetted. It would be irresponsible on my part to vote on a five-year lease where we're allocating a few million dollars without discussing it with my colleagues and asking the questions that we need to ask. I just wanted to add that.

Mr. Sico: I've been spending for the last three or four months at my expense and you guys did not do that on your end. That's news to me. I wish I would have known that prior to spending the architectural fees for doing the buildout for the school. Do you have any questions for us as far as the buildout? Thank you for letting me know that. Unfortunately, that's news to me. Are there any questions on the buildout of the lease?

Mr. Murray: I'd like to make a comment because it is not an accurate suggestion that the lease that is before the Board tonight is a lease that your attorney submitted over the weeks that have gone by. In this period of time you've had two attorneys. We've cooperated. Mark Blenda has worked extensively with your lawyers. We have made significant changes in this lease over issues that were in dispute between yourselves and with the district. Those changes came most recently into this past weekend. Mr. Blenda had been after your attorney for the last week to get this resolved. Ms. Shafer has been in touch because she wanted the lease here so it could be submitted to the Board as promptly as possible. That was made repeatedly clear and we finally received the answer to the last three points this afternoon. That's when it went to the Board. Thank you.

Comm. Irving: Can I make a recommendation? Pull the motion from the floor. Let's allow the opportunity for the Board to actually read the lease, understand it, and have it vetted over the course of the next week in finance and facilities. The landlord can actually come and have a discussion with the actual committee. Then the committee can come back, like we typically do, and make the formal recommendation saying it was thoroughly vetted.

Comm. Castillo: Thank you, gentlemen.

Comm. Martinez: I think everyone is very well intentioned here. We're being respectful of your position and you're also being respectful of ours. If that consideration can be granted, I know an additional seven days may throw things off, but we've come this far and we're right on the precipice of this. I'm asking if that consideration could be given, I'm sure we can get this sorted out. It's just a matter of having a little bit of time needed to discuss this a little bit further amongst ourselves and we can revisit this within seven days and have this resolved.

Mr. Sico: Everything Mr. Murray said was correct. We did switch attorneys and you guys have been doing a great job as far as administration attorneys. We do appreciate that. You have to do your due diligence. Unfortunately, we thought that was happening tonight. Are there any other questions?

Comm. Martinez: We certainly appreciate what you guys are bringing to the table and offering. If we can ask for that little bit of time to sort that, I'm sure we can resolve this.

Comm. Castillo: We definitely thank you for your time for coming down. I know if we have further questions we will definitely be reaching out to you. It's our time to do our due diligence and make sure that we're being responsible in voting on something that's going to benefit this community. Thank you.

Mr. Sico: Likewise. Thank you. Have a good night.

Comm. Martinez: I rescind my motion.

#### **Resolution No. 4**

WHEREAS, the District is a State-Operated School District and has a need for an Engineer of Record; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to the Public School Contracts Law, N.J.S.A. 18A:18A-1 et seq., Engineering services constitute "professional services" and N.J.S.A. 18A:18A-5(a)(1) permits the awarding of a contract for professional services without the requirements of public bidding; and

WHEREAS, the Acting State District Superintendent has the authority to award contracts for professional services and to enter into contractual relationships on behalf of the District; and

WHEREAS, awarding this contract is in line with the "Bright Futures Strategic Plan 2014-2019," Priority 4 – "Efficient and Responsive Operations," Goal 3 – "Increase responsibility for performance;" now

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that a contract be awarded to the following vendor for the 2018-2019 school year:

REMINGTON & VERNICK  
One Harmon Plaza, Suite 210  
Secaucus, NJ 07094  
Approvals Required

**It was moved by Comm. Martinez, seconded by Comm. Redmon that Resolution No. 4 be adopted.**

Comm. Capers: Which engineering firm is this? Is this the same one we approved before? Is this an additional one?

Comm. Irving: It's the same one we had before. It just didn't make the agenda last week for some reason.

Comm. Capers: The guy that we approved in the springtime?

Comm. Irving: Yes. It's the same firm.

Comm. Capers: What are we appointing them to do?

Comm. Irving: Every year we do the appointment. For some reason, it just didn't make the agenda. That's why it's on now.

Comm. Capers: Got it.

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

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

Comm. Capers

- 4<sup>th</sup> and Inches
- Westside Park Group

Comm. Castillo

- Passaic County
- Scholastic (Transportation)

Comm. Hodges

- Pertaining to himself
- Jumpstart
- City of Paterson

Comm. Irving

- Workforce Investment Board of Passaic County (WIB)
- Private Industry Council of Passaic County (PIC)
- Greater Bergen Community Action
- Irving & Mendenhall
- Hibster Intervention Services

Comm. Martinez

- New Jersey Community Development Corporation (NJCDC)

Comm. Redmon

- Historic Preservation of the City of Paterson

Comm. Rivera

- Passaic County
- Private Industry Council (PIC)

- Workforce Investment Board (WIB)
- Community Charter School of Paterson

### **Resolution No. 5**

WHEREAS, the State District Superintendent recommends the appointment, salary adjustments, transfers, leave of absence approvals, dismissals, contract renewals of tenured and non-tenured employees which supports the Bright Futures Strategies Plan for 2014-2019 which amongst its strategies goals is Priority I – Effective Academic Programs – Goal I – Increase Student Achievement; and

WHEREAS, the advisory Board of the Paterson Public School District has reviewed the recommendation of the State District Superintendent; and

WHEREAS, the advisory Board of the Paterson Board of Education has made comments as appropriate; and

WHEREAS, the advisory Board of the Paterson Board of Education communicated its expectations that such recommendations are made on a timely basis and include the proposed appointment, transfer, removal or renewal of tenured and non-tenured, certificated and non-certificated personnel in compliance with contractual and/or statutory requirements;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the advisory Board of the Paterson Board of Education acknowledges reviewing and making comments based on the personnel recommendations of the State District Superintendent adopted in the January 17, 2017 Board Meeting.

**It was moved by Comm. Martinez, seconded by Comm. Irving that Resolution No. 5 be adopted. On roll call all members voted in the affirmative. The motion carried.**

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

Comm. Capers

- 4<sup>th</sup> and Inches
- Westside Park Group

Comm. Castillo

- Passaic County
- Scholastic (Transportation)

Comm. Hodges

- Pertaining to himself
- Jumpstart
- City of Paterson

Comm. Irving

- Workforce Investment Board of Passaic County (WIB)
- Private Industry Council of Passaic County (PIC)
- Greater Bergen Community Action
- Irving & Mendenhall
- Hibster Intervention Services

Comm. Martinez

- New Jersey Community Development Corporation (NJCDC)

Comm. Redmon

- Historic Preservation of the City of Paterson

Comm. Rivera

- Passaic County
- Private Industry Council (PIC)
- Workforce Investment Board (WIB)
- Community Charter School of Paterson

## **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

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

Comm. Castillo: May I have the first three speakers? Just for anyone who's visiting us for the first time tonight, everyone is allowed three minutes to speak just in consideration for the time of everyone else coming behind you. May I have the first three speakers?

Ms. Rosie Grant: Good evening, Madam President, Board members, Madam Superintendent, staff, and community. I'm glad that you're looking at the budget process and setting priorities. Thank you for doing that. It was mentioned that you ought to be holding community forums. I do want to say the Superintendent has held community forums, several of them. She has those notes. There were parents who came out and gave their impressions. Just not to waste time duplicating efforts but take the work that was done and incorporate it into your decision-making. Leave the process open so that people can talk with you and offer more advice and suggestions. The school progress reports are out. They came out last night. I know that you may have seen embargoed copies. We haven't had time to go through them yet, obviously, but I did take a preliminary look. I do want to caution you last year we brought the state in. They came in and they talked about growth and we celebrate the growth. Growth is wonderful, but we ought to stop and think about it when we're celebrating moving from zero to three or from two to seven. It means we're still not doing good enough by our kids. Please take a hard look at the school progress report and I ask you to make sure that what you see in those reports feed into your decision-making about what the priorities of this district are. Our priorities need to be to get all kids educated to high standards. Regarding the lease that was just mentioned, I want to thank you, Commissioners, for raising the issue. The public was looking at this and there is no indication of what this lease agreement was for. It's listed on the agenda, but it doesn't say why. My recollection is that at our facilities long-range meetings we decided we were getting out of leases. Thankfully it was explained, but I do want to ask for a little bit more information on the agenda because when you don't give people the information and the facts they make them up. Please more information. Finally, to you, Comm. Irving, I posted it on Facebook and I did have the opportunity to congratulate you. I'll see you in Trenton and hopefully we'll continue to work together for the benefit of Paterson kids.

Comm. Irving: Let me know if you want to ride down together. That's a long drive.

Ms. Marcella Simadiris: Praise the lord, everybody. I just want to start by thanking Captain Smith. I forgot to thank him last time. Before we went off on winter break I forgot some Jets tickets. I enrolled our school in a program and we award an upstanding student three Jets tickets every week. I was holding them for one of my parents and I left that day and forgot them. Captain Smith was kind enough to help me get back in the building so I could get those tickets for the parents. Thank you, Captain Smith. I have a couple of clarifying questions that I'm hoping I can get responses to either tonight or maybe at the next Board meeting. I would like to know what happens to documents brought forward at Board of Education meetings for the Commissioners. Where are we in exploring what resources we have within the county? I spoke to you about Project Talk that was a program that was available through county agencies that we totally missed and they did not acquire those services for us. I'm trying to figure out are we exploring how we're communicating with those county agencies. How does the district email work? I saw an email about Infinite Campus like we're going back to Infinite Campus now. I'm wondering what's going on with that. This next one is a little bit extensive, so you can take your time with it. It's about abusive administrators. I'm wondering what course of action a teacher has for administrators who are viewed difficult and abusive by both labor and management. There are multiple instances where teachers have sought relief from both their union leadership and district leadership but have found none. For the same of culture and climate within our schools, where do these teachers go to for support after going to all leadership? I'm trying to explore that. I just would like to make a connection. You all have a curriculum and instruction committee and it meets once a month. I'm trying to find out is there any way you can help create a space where the community can bring questions and suggestions forward. Right now, on your curriculum and instruction committee, which I served on for two years, I did not find a lot of success in bringing some of the things that I feel my students need through spending time with their families and having those authentic relationships. I was not successful in bringing forth the change that I thought needed to be done through authentic relationships. I can't do that and then when you do try to do that you get kicked out. Can we create a space for the community to come in for those curriculum and instruction meetings? You have Amistad. You have administrators who don't even know what Amistad is. I'm just looking for us to really take these things seriously. Thank you, Captain Smith. If you could provide responses to some of those simpler clarifying questions, I'd appreciate it. I also have suggestions about the snow days because it really interrupts our calendars when you force us to do the whole six-day cycle. It's too confusing to get into tonight and I don't have the time. Have a good night. Thank you.

Mr. Charles Ferrer: Good evening, Charles Ferrer. I really wasn't going to speak until the Board members started saying some things that I just want to bring some clarification to. There are many teachers and support staff in this district that come from all different backgrounds before they came into teaching that we've never tapped into. A teacher just retired and before she came into teaching she performed on and off Broadway. She was a speech person. She didn't even get into what she was really good at. She wanted to be a speech person. We have to understand that. When we talk about programs where we teach our children trade, there's a school right on Market Street and E. 27<sup>th</sup>, the Hohokus School, that has been trying for some time through Pastor McDuffy to build a relationship with this district. They teach how to become an electrician, plumbing, HVAC, and auto mechanics. They have programs that are available for people who have dropped out so you can get your GED while you're also getting a trade. They have been trying to build a program for the high school students who might be interested in that field. I almost thought about switching fields because they said within five years you could be making \$150,000. They're right there and they have people coming in from all over this County and Bergen County to that school

getting trained. They said they have very few, if any, students from Paterson. We need to understand that. Some of the other things we need to look at that will help us is at one time back in the day we had one of the baddest bands in the country. We allowed other superintendents to dismantle the music program in the grammar school. Our last Superintendent felt that when you got to high school you could learn to play an instrument and be a part of the band. That's impossible. It starts about fourth grade. We had from violinists to other instruments and on top of that vocal, but we've dismantled all that. I remember the last good performance that we saw at Kennedy High School was... I forget the play but this young lady was one of the performers in it and her voice was so well trained I said to her mother, "Where does she study? Who is she under?" The mother said she sings in the church choir. That was all natural talent. These are the things we have to bring back. We always talk about data. Data shows that music and art are disciplines. We also started shop in the elementary schools. If we bring back some of the basics, you'll see the changes because that's the foundation for success. Understand, you have to reach out, tap in, and see what experience is outside of what teachers and support staff are teaching. We have custodians who have said they teach karate to some of the students. That's what we need to do. Everything we need to make our students successful is already here. We keep looking outside of here and what have we gotten for that so far? Think about it.

Mr. Robert Scott: Good evening Board. First and foremost, Dr. Irving, sorry to see you go. I wish you blessings as far as everything and congratulations. Not secondary but also as important, congratulations Madam President and Madam Vice President. One of the things that was brought up is that there is a transparency that's coming especially with the budget process and everything that's going on. One of the things that occurred is I noticed that the transparency and the cooperation are prevalent and holding. I'm proud and I'm happy that I see that. Not enough people give the Board credit for what you have to go through and the different battles that you're fighting on a day-to-day basis. With those different battles, I'd like to take the time to say thank you and I like what I'm seeing and how it's going. I like how the Board came together and supported the concerns of one of the members so that everything can be accomplished for the whole. It's been there, but now it's a little bit more transparent since the things that were done by Ms. Shafer. Thank you again. It's not any type of critique, but the parents are taking the time, watching, listening, and seeing what's going on. The little things that occur are noticed and it's movement forward. Thank you for your time.

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

Comm. Castillo: Before we move forward, I just want to take the time because Gilman and all the great staff has told me that we're live on Facebook and we've had over 1,200 views tonight. Just to thank the staff and everyone watching. This is definitely a new step that the Board is moving forward to and I'm glad to be able to know that there are so many parents, students, and community members outside that are interested and looking at what we're doing. We invite you to come down. This is a great outlet as well. Hopefully, we will soon be able to communicate with you guys as well. It's definitely very exciting to continue to move forward. Also remind me to do my hair next time.

**MOTION TO GO INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION TO CONSIDER A PERSONNEL MATTER AS IT RELATES TO TENURE CHARGES, LITIGATION AND NEGOTIATIONS**



**It was moved by Comm. Redmon, seconded by Comm. Irving that the Board goes into executive session to consider a personnel matter as it relates to tenure charges, litigation and negotiations. On roll call all members voted in the affirmative, except Comm. Hodges who abstained. The motion carried.**

Comm. Hodges: Are there any legal issues we'll be discussing in executive session? That's not mentioned here, so I would amend it to include legal issues.

Comm. Redmon: He's asking for an amendment.

Comm. Castillo: It says litigation and negotiations.

Comm. Hodges: That's not necessarily legal. I want to make it very clear we're discussing legal issues in addition to litigation.

**It was moved by Comm. Irving, seconded by Comm. Redmon that the above resolution be amended to include the discussion of legal issues. On roll call all members voted in the affirmative. The motion carried.**

The Board went into executive session at 7:51 p.m.

The Board reconvened the meeting at 9:50 p.m.

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

The meeting was adjourned at 9:52 p.m.