

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

June 7, 2017 – 6:32 p.m.
Administrative Offices

Presiding: Comm. Christopher Irving, President

Present:

Dr. Donnie Evans, State District Superintendent
Ms. Eileen Shafer, Deputy Superintendent
Robert Murray, Esq., General Counsel

Comm. Emanuel Capers
Comm. Oshin Castillo
Comm. Chrystal Cleaves, Vice President
Comm. Jonathan Hodges

Comm. Manuel Martinez
Comm. Nakima Redmon
*Comm. Flavio Rivera

Absent:

Comm. Lilisa Mimms

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

Comm. Martinez read the Open Public Meetings Act:

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

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

**Workshop Meeting
June 7, 2017 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. Irving: If we can remain standing and just take a moment of silence in light of the tragedy that took place over in the United Kingdom just to pay our honor and respect to those who lost their lives. I want to welcome everyone this evening. Before I begin, I'd be remiss if I didn't at least acknowledge some news that this Board and the district received last week. For those who may not know, our Superintendent of Schools Dr. Evans indicated that as of June 30 he will be leaving us for greener pastures and other aspects of his life. We'll certainly do so for the record at the Board

meeting, but I wanted to publicly say that it has been a pleasure in the six and a half years that I've known you to work alongside you. Whether we've agreed or disagreed, you've challenged this Board and I think you've improved this district significantly. I think folks don't remember the amount of turnover we had in chief school administrators prior to Dr. Evans' coming here. Aside from what you've contributed, that level of stability is what this city and district needed and you provided that. During our evaluation of you today in executive session I'm sure the Board will have other complementary things to share. I want to tell you sincerely given my conversation with many of the Board members I want to thank you sincerely for your service. I want to thank you for your commitment to the children of the City of Paterson. I want to thank you for being a taxpayer and moving here and being a Superintendent who said he wants to live in the community in which he serves. Not many folks would have done that. Wherever the next chapter in your life takes you, I wanted to say I wish you the best and I wish your lovely wife the best as well. I thank her for allowing her to let us borrow you most evenings, sometimes well into the night. She's an awesome lady. I'd like everyone, if we can, to give Dr. Evans a round of applause for his service. It is so important for us as a Board to remain steadfast and vigilant even in the midst of the transition. For those who are not aware, our Deputy Superintendent Eileen Shafer will be assuming the mantle of the Interim Superintendent of Schools as the Board begins to discuss and figure out where we move forward together. I want to say to you, Ms. Shafer, I look forward to working with you. I think that you probably have had a significant amount of support and training working alongside Dr. Evans. I think that has prepared us to hopefully not skip a beat. I think that's also significant and important. I'm saying thank you Dr. Evans on behalf of the Board and also welcome to you Ms. Shafer in working with the Board in a new capacity. I wanted to make sure we mention that for the record.

PRESENTATIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Dr. Evans: Thank you, Mr. President, for your comments. I will have comments of my own to make in the upcoming Board meeting two weeks from tonight. It, too, has been a pleasure for me. It's been eight years and one month almost exactly. Ironically one of the issues raised by both Board members and lay folk in general in the community has been continuity. When I reflected recently on my tenure here, even though I've had over eight continuous years, I've worked for six Commissioners of Education over that period of time, one of them twice. One of them served as an interim twice. Perhaps there are some lessons in that for the Department of Education as well.

Progress Towards the 2016-2017 School District Goals – Year End Report

Dr. Evans: I will make comments initially for both presentations tonight. The first presentation is regarding information that I think each Board member has seen already. It is an update on district goals. We provided you a mid-year update and this is the end of the year update. The reason I think you've seen it already was because it is the focus of information that we uploaded in relation to my evaluation. I'm hoping that each Board member did have a chance to review it because then that lessens the amount of time I'm going to spend on it. If you have questions about any of it, feel free to ask. Between me and our staff we can answer them. For each of the goals I provide an update on activity associated with each one of the action steps in the action plan. Recall that there is an action plan attached so you can see what the original action plan was when it was developed. We gave you an update mid-year and now this is the outcome to date. There is activity still occurring there. Mr. President, I won't go through and read them unless there is a desire from the Board for me to do that, since I'm fairly certain that each of you have already read through them. By the way, there's a copy of

what I have in front of me for each one of you. Again, it includes the goal. For example, Goal 1 – develop a plan to close the gap in the pre-k through 3 language arts barrier experienced by the district. I've noted 13 items which illustrate progress or in many cases concluded activity around the realization of whatever it was we were calling for in each one of those goals. For example, we provided professional development. One of the action steps had to do with professional development. We provided that information for principals, teachers, and others who obviously are the focus of our attention. For number three – provide more professional development around curriculum. Remember, a lot of work was done around curriculum and one of the goals focuses specifically on that as well. Provide professional development to curriculum and instruction supervisors. Basically, all our staff is subjected to intense professional development. When we talk about student outcomes we're talking about staff. Staff is responsible for those outcomes. Teachers are the number one factor. You've heard us talk about that a lot. Number seven, master teacher and preschool intervention and referral teams. I'll stop there because I know you've read through this already. If there are any questions about any of these, I can go through item by item if you'd like for me to.

Comm. Irving: I prefer you didn't because we did get it. In your evaluation, there are a significant amount of comments. I asked Commissioners specifically if there are any goals or items which they have questions for. I have just one. The question I have has to do with Goal 3, enhance STEM capabilities in the district. What's the forecast in light of the budget reductions and the impact of funding that will have on our opportunity to expand STEM opportunities in the district? I don't want to assume one way or the other.

Dr. Evans: If we're talking about expanding opportunities for youngsters to enroll and participate in the STEM program, which means growing it, that will require money that we don't have. That is a fiscal issue. If we're talking about building internal capacity within the staff that we have to help our teachers who are really good to perform even better, then we can do that with less funds. Again, we're talking professional development, which costs also. Any way you slice it or dice it, it requires additional funds. It is a program worthy of expanding.

Comm. Irving: Thank you. Are there other questions?

Comm. Martinez: My comment is in keeping with yours pertaining to Goal 4. It boils down to funds or lack thereof in order to continue with the extracurricular, expanded learning programs, and after-school programs we were able to make up a lot of ground in the past. Without the funding being there we're going to have to get very creative to try to find ways to sustain that program, not only for the sake of the academic development, but also for the social/emotional and everything that comes into it. Between the hours of 3:00-6:00 when students are leaving school and parents are still working that's an area that we have to be very mindful of because that's when students are left unattended and can essentially find a lot of trouble if they don't have productive avenues for outlets. Again, that basically boils down to funds and lack thereof. I just wanted to make that known.

Dr. Evans: That was a comment that we heard over and over again from our principals. We do have a significant number of offerings after school and before school. I'll refer to them as extended learning even though sometimes it may be more recreation than academic in our schools. Principals said over and over again they'd like to add this or that for the reason you just gave, but there are no funds to facilitate that expansion. Yes, we've heard that over and over again.

Comm. Irving: Other questions relative to any of the goals?

Chronic Absenteeism Update

Dr. Evans: The second one frames what you're going to hear in the next few minutes from members of our staff. About a month ago we received an absenteeism report that was first given to us in the form that it was in by Rosie Grant of the PEF. We've since done our own research and reviewed the data to assess where we are and analyze the data to begin to get at some root causes for some of the hotspots that emerged in that data – schools with larger numbers than the norm for the district in terms of absenteeism or what the state defines as chronic absenteeism. We've been spending a lot of time of recent getting inside that data, helping to make meaning of it, and beginning to optimize or maximize some of the strategies that we already have in place or create new strategies or venues through which we can create new strategies for improving on the absenteeism rate, whether it's influenced by suspensions or other factors. The memo indicates that there are attachments that I'm going to call on staff to come forward and briefly address as it relates to strategies that we are implementing. I'm going to first call on Dr. Campbell who actually provided the framework from which I expanded for this report to talk about several items that are indicated near the bottom third of that memo you have regarding chronic absenteeism definition, Power School, which is a tool that should help us to at least keep accurate data and do more with that data, and other information that you see there associated with his name.

Comm. Irving: I just want to underscore, I think we want to have a very pithy conversation. Brevity yet thoroughness I would really appreciate.

Dr. Jeron Campbell: Absolutely. I believe you all have the New Jersey guidance for calculating chronic absenteeism, if you could look at that document briefly a couple of the items that Dr. Evans had my name next to. One is just the backside of the front page where it says 'definitions.' This is essentially the state's definition. When the data was presented the other week they essentially took that data from the state website, and that's available publicly to everyone, but this document explains how the state comes up with those numbers. Essentially, chronic absenteeism is defined as a percentage of a school's students who are not present 10% or more of the time. It's a very basic definition. The state calculates it one time. At the end of the school year if a student is chronically absent on the very last day of school, then they mark them as chronically absent. You could have been chronically absent through February, but then started attending regularly and fell off of being chronically absent and the state would not count it against the school. It only counts once, and that's at the very end of the school year. We need to track it throughout the year, but it really counts at the end according to the state. I've been producing this year reports from schools which show monthly how many students are absent and actually give the names of the students so they can see and therefore do work in their school to see what's going on with those students and try to get them to school more regularly. That way obviously throughout the year you can work with those students and by the end of the year we shouldn't see a problem. The next page is actually new information even to me and my team. It's page 3 at the top. This is something that we're going to do in terms of actions going forward and it's better training for our school staff. Within every school teachers take attendance and they have to enter codes if a student happens to not be present on a given day. According to the state, there are several reasons in addition to your normal reasons that a parent might bring an excuse or something like that in which the membership of the student doesn't count against them. Religious observances would be one. Then there are college visits. The juniors and seniors in our district get three college visit days per year and if they have legitimate college experience that they're on

that day those days don't count against them. I'm not sure, if I were to go back and look at our records and students were to show evidence of being on a college visits, whether we would count that against them. That small thing may be something that would help us as well. Things like take our children to work day, participation in Veteran's Day, and also closure based on busing. We knew of some of those, but there are a couple of them there that was new to me and my team in data. We'll do a better job in adding this to the training for this fall so that we're accurately reporting attendance for every student. That's a couple of the things that are in there. The rest of the pamphlet talks about examples and calculations.

Comm. Irving: Dr. Campbell, I assume that PD is going to be held with the attendance officers in the school, the folks who historically take it.

Dr. Campbell: Yes. There's the general leadership of the school meetings that we have in the fall and during that presentation I will be introducing some of these factors. Then also within my team every fall we have a spreadsheet. You can imagine in different schools the same person isn't assigned in one school to do the registration versus another, or to do other functions in the office. We ask them to literally tell us who the person is so that when we invite them to PD we make sure we're getting the right person. In some schools, it might be a teacher, a vice principal, or a secretary who is doing a particular role in that school. Once we get that list in the fall, we do hold special trainings for them here at central office for them to come and look at attendance and registration concerns.

Comm. Irving: I would assume if you want to ensure a level of compliance and accuracy, a standardization of some sort would have to be implemented. You know on day one or two on the PD day when teachers are excused from here all the secretaries who are responsible for administration and enrollment has PD for this time. There should also be a level of support that exists amongst the group. If I'm at School No. 18 and you're at School No. 21 and if I'm having a registration issue, I know who to call because we all share the same function. I think that's something that definitely needs to be discussed because it just seems like it only makes sense to standardize that process.

Dr. Campbell: I would agree.

Comm. Irving: Far be it from me to add more stuff. I just think that's a relatively low-hanging fruit. If we're looking for low-hanging fruit ways to try to capture this, to me the standardization of that job or role would make sense.

Dr. Evans: You're absolutely right. Historically we've had problems with data and one of the reasons has been the lack of consistency in people doing it across schools and the training they have. I agree with you and that's something we really need to do a better job at, making sure that the individuals who are there are consistent across schools, that they're known and well trained.

Comm. Irving: I'm sure there is going to be some really good questions and discussion that comes from this. I would love to see us now pivoting to the Deputy Superintendent sometime in August with a follow-up of the recommendations from the Board so that we know that the recommendations that have been suggested are indeed being implemented. I'm sure that will make your lives easier in the unit levels as well.

Ms. Sandra Diodonet: We have a chronic absenteeism task force right now in place. Part of that is an attendance protocol to say what period we're going to take. Obviously,

homeroom would be the period to take the attendance. Who's in charge and what time would all be in place and we will be reporting back in August with a full report.

Ms. Cicely Warren: At this time the homeroom teachers take the daily attendance and that is certified in the main office by one secretary who is designated with that duty. The other component that Dr. Campbell is referring to is the scheduling and tagging of students. Various people do that. At the high school level they have schedulers and at the elementary level there might be other people who are tasked with that duty. He's going to be addressing that in the training for the new SIS. The daily attendance protocol is pretty standardized, but the task force will be refining that procedure.

Comm. Irving: The scheduling piece is one, but you're saying the folks who take attendance are typically the secretaries in each school. The classroom teachers, but that gets certified and brought to the central office and the secretaries do that function.

Ms. Warren: Yes.

Comm. Hodges: Was the data in the initial report accurate? So currently we don't have a principal that looks each month at the attendance or what's going on in the classroom who says Johnny is missing 10 days and let me call the parent or the teacher?

Ms. Diodonet: Currently we do have a process in the district. When the child is absent on the third day phone calls are made. Every day that a child is absent the RoboCalls go out. On the third day there's a form that you have to sign and phone calls are made home. The fifth day and the tenth day is where a court date will be assigned and parents will be taken to court. There's a difference between truancy and being chronically absent. The child that's chronically absent on the tenth day will get a court notice. T.J. will be a much better person to break this down to you.

Comm. Irving: Thanks for coming to work. You look so casual.

Dr. Evans: I'm going to apologize. Mr. Best had some dental work today. That's why he's just getting here.

Comm. Irving: Are you numb?

Mr. T. J. Best: I'm still numb right now. What was the question?

Comm. Irving: The difference between chronic absenteeism as compared to truancy and what happens if a child is truant by definition compared to being absent by definition.

Mr. Best: Chronic absenteeism denotes a student who misses 10% of the school year, which is 18 days. The state identifies what chronic absenteeism is and they require us to report students who are chronically absent. However, where we need to take action is when a student becomes truant, which is 10 days. At 10 days absent a student is considered truant and at that point we take a parent to truancy court. Before we get to that point, the protocol we have in place is that the parent is supposed to receive a RoboCall every day that the student is absent. If the student misses more than two days in the first month in September an administrator from the school is actually supposed to reach out to the parent to find out what the problem is. Then moving forward on the fifth, seventh, and ninth day our office calls. There are people from our office who contact the parents to find out what the issues are and resolve if in fact there were any excused absences from doctor's notes, college visit, or a reason for them to

be absent. Then we would clean that up in the system. However, on the tenth day absent we have two field investigators who were traditionally considered truant officers who would visit the actual home, do an address verification to find out if in fact the parent and the student lives in that house and serve them with a court notice to appear in truancy court. We have truancy court twice a month. We would normally see about 70 parents and students as part of that process.

Comm. Irving: 70?

Mr. Best: Twice a month so it's about 140 cases a month. A lot of times not all the parents show up. In the cases where the parents don't show up, they're given a bench warrant. At that point, the judge has the ability to fine a parent up to \$250 in addition to the bench warrant for their child not being present in school. However, we've been working with the judge and the court system to make sure that is not an automatic fine for parents. We take each case individually. A lot of times there are some real serious issues that are outside of just a kid who doesn't want to show up for school and we try to address all of those issues. We've been working with the court system to put in place a corrective action plan for each student. Normally the judge would do a 30-day trial period. If the child doesn't miss any more days within that period the judge will essentially pull the case off. However, if the student does miss we relist the case and we see multiple individuals throughout various months. That's why the numbers are all so high. In some cases, we'll see a parent multiple times throughout the course of the year.

Comm. Hodges: That raises some questions. You can essentially have chronic absenteeism before the end of the year. What is being done to flag those cases and bring some sort of action before it gets to the 10 days or whatever it is? What role does the guidance counselor play?

Mr. Best: Ms. Diodonet will talk about that in terms of individual strategies which actually take place at the school level, which is supported by the district. I did want to point out that according to the state statute, which is the compulsory school attendance law it only covers students between the ages of 6 and 16. The majority of our chronic absenteeism is taking place for preschool students, kindergarten students, and juniors and seniors in high school. We do not have the ability to take a junior or senior if they're over 16 years old or if they're under 6 years old to court. If you look at our preschools, they have a high rate of chronic absenteeism as well as all of our high schools. That's mainly due to the inability of our office to take a parent or student to truancy court because they're over the age of 16. In terms of individual strategies that are taking place at the school, Ms. Diodonet was going to go over that.

Comm. Hodges: Are these new strategies or what's already in place?

Ms. Diodonet: This is what we're doing currently with the task force. We'll have a complete report in August so I'll go through this quickly.

Comm. Cleaves: Can I ask my question regarding truancy?

Comm. Irving: One more second because there are two more people in front of you. Let me get these questions and if they can be answered in your presentation please do so.

Comm. Castillo: Is it only on daily attendance or are we doing it for classes during the day?

Mr. Best: We do take attendance in every single class. However, what's recorded for truancy purposes is only once a day during homeroom. The judge will see the kid for the purposes of daily attendance has only 15 absences. But then we'll show them their entire transcript where they will see that they cut ninth period 80 times. That comes into play as well, as well as being tardy, in terms of just knowing if a student is not showing up on time.

Comm. Martinez: Comm. Castillo stole a little bit of my thunder in that Dr. Campbell met less than a month ago and due to a situation that I observed at Kennedy I had similar questions. The first one is that it seems that there are several students who come in first period, check in, are marked present for the day, but then there's a falloff between the actual number of classes they're attending throughout the day. More importantly, the reporting and tracking of that, you may have 80% attendance in first period, but then significant falloff taking place throughout the course of the day. We have to put a system in place whereby we're able to better monitor what students are actually attending classes. From the information I've gathered in speaking with folks it seems that there is a core of specific individuals who are repeat offenders. It doesn't really speak to the general population. I would say the general population is attending classes regularly, but there are some students who are regularly not attending those classes. Further in that conversation with Dr. Campbell, I think a good example of something good that's taking place in the district is happening at New Roberto Clemente. I had a chance to sit down with Principal Montes and thoroughly go through the processes by which they're able to track this. They actually incentivize it for teachers, students, and classes. At the end of every day, week, and month students and teachers are given shout-outs and meager incentives. But it actually becomes competitive where students are saying to other students we need to make sure we're in school today because the class next door had two more points than we did. I noticed that can be kind of a template that we can use throughout the district. That's a very effective model to be using.

Ms. Diodonet: We're going to talk about that model. I have New Roberto Clemente's data right in front of me. He is leading our principal strategies committee for the task force and his chronic absenteeism rate went from 16.62% in 2014-2015 to 14.05% in 2015-2016. Currently he's at 6.6% using Success Mentors.

*Comm. Rivera enters the meeting at 7:00 p.m.

Comm. Martinez: 14% to 6%. That's amazing.

Ms. Diodonet: That was going to be part of my presentation. He's using Success Mentors, which is one of the key strategies that we want to use.

Comm. Cleaves: To be considered a truant student, are they 10 consecutive days? Once a student hits 10 days, are they all considered truant?

Mr. Best: Yes.

Comm. Cleaves: So you're considered truant before you're considered chronically absent?

Mr. Best: Yes. If it's in September and you miss three days of school, you're considered chronically absent because it's more than 10% of that particular month.

Comm. Cleaves: The chronic absenteeism is based on a month?

Mr. Best: It's actually 10% each month.

Comm. Cleaves: Okay.

Comm. Irving: The longer days you're in school that actually helps you.

Ms. Diodonet: The easiest way to do it if you want to know if your kid is chronically absent based on the 128 days of school, it's 12.8 days. It's almost 13 days. That's the easy way to do it. Many schools do the countdown. That's pretty easy to figure out.

Comm. Cleaves: A lot of students would have the label as chronic absenteeism but not necessarily truant.

Ms. Diodonet: It depends on the month.

Comm. Hodges: If you miss a day each week you're chronically absent.

Dr. Campbell: If it's early enough in the year.

Comm. Capers: I wasn't clear on what you said in the beginning. If the child is just absent for the day, does the parent get a phone call?

Mr. Best: The parent is supposed to get that phone call. We have a system in place where attendance is taken in the morning when it's supposed to be and then given to the secretary and inputted into the system before 10:00 a.m. If it's in the system before 10:00 a.m., then automatically all the students who were marked absent will receive a phone call. One of the things we need to understand about our student information system is that the default method is that a student is marked present. You have to individually go into the system to mark a student absent. Sometimes we have some schools who are a little late submitting those attendance reports and in that case the phone calls won't go out. We were able to identify those schools and we're working with some of the schools.

Comm. Capers: How many schools?

Comm. Irving: Get the information back to us.

Comm. Capers: I was a substitute in this district as well and I didn't have access to the student portal. There are a lot of substitutes we have in the district and they're not equipped on using the portal. How do they get their attendance in accurately?

Mr. Best: That's another problem.

Ms. Diodonet: Schools are supposed to have a process in place for that. I can speak about School No. 5 and how we did it. If we knew the teacher was absent we would print out the attendance form and every morning substitutes get what we call the School No. 5 way. We would let them know and give them the attendance. Then the secretary would mark them present or absent. You're right. Substitutes do not have access to that data.

Comm. Capers: If they don't hand it in on time, they don't get the RoboCall. Are we doing this per period? I worked at Eastside. A child can leave during the ninth period towards the end of the day and the parents won't know their child is cutting school.

Ms. Diodonet: You would get a packet for the day because you can print out the schedule for the students in the period and then they would mark it and the secretary would be able to put it in. More importantly, it's that homeroom one. I can only talk about elementary school, but that is the protocol we have to put in place so that we're all talking the same language.

Comm. Capers: With the new system we have coming in, Power School, are the substitutes going to have access?

Dr. Campbell: Obviously we could define that, but likely not. That's the type of policy we probably would not change strictly for that. It's a matter of enforcing the policies we do have in place. Like she said, there are best practices in our district. It's just that they have not been implemented across the board to the same fidelity. Going to a new SIS is giving us the opportunity to define and improve our practices and procedures. We will be taking that into account. For instance, attendance is taken every period now and it will be in Power School. In Power School, we will be turning on the parent portal just a few months after it's launched. Before your kid gets home you will be able to see whether they went to every single class. That's an example of how we intend to improve our attendance too with the parent's help if they enforce it at home.

Comm. Irving: And they're also able to see that in real time. Am I correct?

Dr. Campbell: Absolutely. When it's entered into the system you'll have access to it.

Comm. Capers: The parent can see, if they want to check in, if they were on time. What time is the cutoff that equals to an absent? If a child decides they want to come in at 11:00, is that child considered absent or just tardy?

Mr. Best: It's different between elementary and high school. In order to be present you have to be present for four hours. However, we won't turn a child away at any time if the child walks into the building. If a child walks into the building, then the child is ours. If you're there for two hours, you're considered to be there for half a day too. There are ways to put that into the system if it's being put into the system the right way. Normally it would be like the next day where it would happen.

Comm. Capers: Let's say for a week straight a child comes in after 10:00. Would that child become truant?

Mr. Best: That child would be considered tardy.

Comm. Capers: That's it?

Mr. Best: Yes.

Comm. Capers: And the parent would never know that child is tardy.

Mr. Best: They would know about the tardiness.

Comm. Capers: What's the process?

Mr. Best: In that particular case it would be the school. The school would hopefully reach out to the parent. Again, if they come in after 10:00 the default in elementary is that they would be marked absent.

Comm. Capers: How about high school?

Mr. Best: They will be marked absent if they weren't there for homeroom.

Ms. Diodonet: A lot of this Dr. Campbell went over. One thing that I want to bring your attention to is that chronic absenteeism is different than the average daily attendance. A lot of people say we have 97% attendance rate, but they're talking about the average daily attendance. That 3% could really talk about your chronically absent children. We need to know the difference and be able to identify those students. Just to let you know what the research says in New Jersey, on average 12% of students are chronically absent. We're not in this alone. This is a national issue that's been going on since the 1970's. Last year was the first National Conference on Chronic Absenteeism. Paterson was represented. Rosie Grant and I and Cynthia Rice from the New Jersey Children's Advocacy Group went and presented there. We're not in this alone. I'm going to show you a Passaic County chart so that you can see how we compare. 20% of twelfth graders are chronically absent and ninth grade attendance is a predictor of dropping out of high school. It's really important for our ninth graders to show up. The research says that studies on fourth grade students that are not absent in the month prior to testing score about nine points higher than those that are absent and 13% compared to those that were absent three days. The NAPE is what they call the national report card. Those are important indicators. We're not alone in Passaic County. This is from 2014-2015, but I just want to show you Passaic County versus Paterson for k-3 and eleventh and twelfth graders. 61% of eleventh and twelfth graders in Passaic and we are 46%, which is pretty high, and then 20% of k-12 and 19% of Paterson. If you look at the numbers we have a much bigger student population than Passaic so we're not in this alone. I was really looking for Newark's numbers because they do fare the same way we do. They're on top of their attendance as us, so we're not in this alone compared to the other urban districts. We're monitoring it, so this is just going to get better and better. If you look at our data, it is. Dr. Campbell discussed how we're addressing it. I put 'we' in capital letters because clearly it's a united effort that needs to be done. Dr. Campbell at our unit meetings does provide principals with the numbers and the amount of children that are chronically absent so that they can monitor that. That's something new that has been happening that we don't have. It is a clear eye-opener because many were thinking of ADA and now they're looking at children. Every number represents a student. Again, we're leading the task force and we've been meeting since May. The goal is to decrease chronic absenteeism in double digits. I don't want to say decrease it by 10% because if you recall some have decreased quite significantly. When we tried this as a trial at School No. 5 we were able to decrease it by 76% and that was just a trial run. If we put a lot of fidelity into our work we should see those numbers decline in double digits. The possible solution is using Success Mentors. Every chronically absent student in the country would have a supporting caring adult that would be their mentor to check in with them and see why they are absent. That is the goal of the national Success Mentor is that over 1 million kids would have this mentor. There's also an article that we can send to you. I don't know if Dr. Evans sent this. It's the high cost of chronic student absenteeism and it does talk about having mentors as well as one of the strategies. If not, I'll make sure you get that. Success Mentors meet and analyze attendance data. They check in with students. They report chronic absenteeism by classroom. You can do it schoolwide or you can do it by child. Schoolwide is when you have a chronic absenteeism issue. You would go to it by classroom. You track perfect attendance for classrooms. You talk to parents all the

time and the Success Mentors would advocate for their mentees. They would be that caring adult. Actually, that's a picture of a Success Mentor at School No. 5. It is happening in some of our buildings, especially at New Roberto Clemente. Some best practices are that you send messages to parents early and often. You contact parents immediately when they start to show a pattern. The goal is if you're chronically absent in September or October by November we correct that behavior if you do this. You talk to students about why going to school is important. You do email blasts by Success Mentors to the building so that everybody is on board. You explain to parents the instructional hours students miss when they are absent. If you're absent 10 days essentially your child has missed 55 hours of instructional time. That's a lot of time. When you look at attendance and hours of instructional loss it's an eye-opener for parents so having those conversations and explaining that attendance does impact instruction. If you meet with parents and you see that the child has 36 days out and you're wondering why they're failing, there's a clear indication they're not getting the instruction that they need in order to pass the rigorous tests or the unit assessments. These are our next steps. We're going to be conducting parent focus groups that are going to be done by Kemper's team. Rosie Grant and Ms. Romanella from School No. 5 are running elementary school strategies. Those are teachers who will be coming up with high school strategies and strategies for principals. That's where Mr. Montes is involved. A Board presentation will be done in August. September is Attendance Awareness Month. We're trying to look for a logo so that we can really enforce attendance. Remember showing up matters. Attend today, achieve tomorrow.

Comm. Hodges: I'm a little troubled here because four years ago when you were so upset with the conditions of Eastside High School with the lights not working one of the presentations was about chronic absenteeism. We talked about how that was going to be addressed. I don't understand why it wasn't. Why wasn't it done uniformly across the board? That's at least four years ago. It hit the papers, but this has been going on. School No. 5 had an approach but the other schools didn't. Things were supposed to be done and they weren't being done. I don't understand that. Why isn't this universal practice?

Dr. Evans: The next item on the agenda is NJPBSIS. Are you doing that, Ms. Peron? We started implementing it back then in part because of what you just said. That is a major strategy. It focuses on strengthening the culture which impacts everything from attendance to grades to everything else. That was one of the things that came into existence as a result. We did start and that was one of the major strategies.

Comm. Hodges: My concern is that this is not being monitored to the degree we're saying we're going to now. The concern was established at least four years ago. In fact, after that didn't the Governor threaten to take money from us because our attendance rate was so poor?

Comm. Irving: That was statewide.

Comm. Hodges: Statewide, but still the idea was we were going to lose additional money. This wasn't something that had slipped underneath the table. We had forgotten about it. This should have been a burning consideration. I'm trying to figure out what it doesn't seem to...

Dr. Evans: I'm telling you that it was a burning consideration. We acted on it. If you look at our attendance rate each year starting four or five years ago it's progressively been going up. It's been getting better. In fact, we report it in the annual report every year.

Comm. Hodges: So then how is this separate issue being addressed?

Dr. Evans: I don't know that the state defined chronic absenteeism in the way that it does several years ago. I think this is relatively new in how they define it.

Comm. Irving: It changed over three years ago.

Dr. Evans: We've been focusing on individual student attendance.

Comm. Hodges: So now this is a different emphasis.

Comm. Irving: When the Governor instituted that policy that's when the DOE created that whole chronic absenteeism.

Comm. Hodges: Hence my real question is fidelity.

Ms. Diodonet: Right now there was a bill because Rosie Grant and I went to the New Jersey Assembly to testify. There really isn't a clear-cut definition of what chronic absenteeism is. We're using the 10% and that's what the state is doing, but the bill would be to really define it without a doubt as to what chronic absenteeism is and what the definition is. We're using the 10% which is national, but there is a bill so that we can really define it. 10% is what we want. We're not going any differently than what the state is saying. That's what we want. It's still up in the air as to whether it's the definition.

Mr. Best: There were a couple of things that impacted the numbers too. About four years ago we were about at 76% daily average attendance. Today we're at about 93%. 93% is slightly higher than the state average. I think the state is 92%. We're right there in terms of daily average attendance rate. That's not just urban school districts. That's all school districts including our suburban counterparts we well. In addition to that, there are some things that the district has done to increase graduation rates and decrease dropout rates. We're keeping a lot of students now that traditionally we weren't keeping before. Where a student would have dropped out if they missed 20 days of school, now we have alternative high school programs to keep those kids in school. If you saw the report, YES Academy, for example, had about an 80% chronic absenteeism rate. But in order to even get into YES Academy you have to be chronically absent. So what we're doing is everything in our power to ensure that students actually matriculate all the way through high school graduation, which actually is helping us increase our graduation rate but it does hurt our daily average attendance rate because we're making stronger efforts to keep those kids in school.

Comm. Hodges: So the goal is to implement these strategies across the board with fidelity.

Mr. Best: Yes. There is another thing too. Our district policy has that at 20 days a student may lose credit for the year. But that word 'may' makes it very difficult and was interpreted differently by principals. Some principals said at 20 days absent you automatically lost credit for the year and you were retained. Some other schools said this kid is making a good effort. If they missed 30 days and they're doing well academically we'll go ahead and promote that student. So we've developed in January a standard operating procedure on how to interpret and implement those policies uniformly across the board. So now every principal in every school understand that what to do at certain benchmarks of days that you're absent - at two days, five days,

seven days, ten days, fifteen days, twenty days, and twenty-five days. Before the policy stopped at twenty, but we're recognizing too that we have kids who missed up to 60 days. What are we doing? We have it going all the way out so that if a freshman in high school has missed 50 days of school we're still working on that student. We're not giving up on that student who missed 50 days of school. We're trying to keep them here and ensure that they're able to graduate. Even if they're unable to get full credit for that year we're still trying to ensure that they matriculate towards graduation.

Comm. Castillo: That sounds great. That sounds awesome. I commend you for that work. For the elementary school, I don't have all the numbers in front of me. For the high school level, they come in at 100% attendance and we lose them by second period. I don't want to drive down the street and see all of our high school students on the street. What can we do to implement that even though it's not technically a state mandate because they're there in homeroom but they're exiting the buildings?

Mr. Best: That's more of a cultural issue across the board. It's not just an attendance issue. I'm not talking about racial culture. I'm talking about a school going attitude. One of the ideas around creating thematic academies is if you give kids something that they're interested in doing then they'll probably show up to school more and it has had an impact. That's part of the reason we went from that 76% up to 93%. Even though it's not part of my department we're working with curriculum and instruction to shore up our thematic approaches and academies with the courses we're offering to entice kids to want to actually be in the building.

Comm. Castillo: How can we enforce their attendance to be in the classrooms? Maybe that area may be more of your expertise. Yes, we want to entice them and keep them there. But what can we do to enforce that they come to every period through attendance for them to be in homeroom?

Mr. Best: Unfortunately, we can't do anything to make them.

Comm. Castillo: Try to keep them in while they're in there.

Mr. Best: Exactly. We're taking parents to court. We've been much more aggressive than in the past with our truancy. As I said, we're averaging 70 cases per court appearance. What happens is you see a 15-year-old kid who is 6'3" coming from a single parent household and the mother is saying she can't control her kid anymore. The only thing that the judge can actually do is fine the parent. At that point, the judge looks at me and asks me do I really want her to fine this parent and I tell her no. The mother is crying. She can't control this kid. We're trying to get through to the kid as best as we can. Moving forward for next year we're actually going to have additional services to be with us at truancy court. Right now it's just our department that's at truancy court. However, Mr. McDowell's department has agreed to come with us. Family Intervention Services has agreed to come with us. So now at every single court appearance we're going to have multiple agencies there that are able to address the parent and the student while we're in court. We'll go off and have conversations in the side chambers to try to really get to the student at that point when you're talking about high school. Elementary without question is the parent, but when you get to high school most of the time it's the kid. We have to try to get through to the kid.

Dr. Evans: If I may, I think one item in that standard operating procedure that Mr. Best just referred to will have an impact. That's tying attendance to grades. If a kid goes above 40 days absent they don't get credit for the course. Mr. Best is saying that's 40.

Maybe we need to go back and tighten that up a bit. It ultimately would be an incentive for youngsters to be there.

Comm. Rivera: To Ms. Castillo's point and to Mr. Best's point, I do agree with you. We have to change the culture. I guess it hasn't changed since the time I went to Eastside. I remember attending Eastside and having the security guard open the doors for the students to cut class. I remember seeing that. I know you cannot hold students against their will, but we do need to make the parents aware of what is going on. I know it is their job to be aware, but as a district we have to make sure that we make them aware. I think that needs to be addressed. It's the culture. I was a great student there, but there was a time that I might feel a little tired and I just felt that it was okay to just step out and go home. We have to change that culture.

Comm. Irving: You didn't live with my mother.

Comm. Rivera: I didn't do it often, but I felt that I could just step out and go home. We have to change that culture and make parents aware. Every time they cut class, we have to let them know that has taken place. A lot of them don't know this is going on.

Mr. Best: I hate to say too, but from a budgetary standpoint as well at Eastside and Kennedy, especially at Eastside, there are only two entrances into the campus. There are 50 doors at Eastside High School where a kid will just leave at any time. By putting a gate around the building, you can get in on Market Street and Park Avenue. That's it. As it stands right now, we don't actually have security guards manning those guard stations and they're just walking out.

Comm. Rivera: I never suggested trying to keep them against their will. What I'm saying is maybe use technology.

Mr. Best: To keep record.

Comm. Rivera: In the classes we keep records with the teachers.

Comm. Capers: I worked at Eastside. He's saying that when students just walked out the security guard used to take their ID and then report that they're cutting class. They will let them go. They're not going to keep them against their own will.

Comm. Rivera: My suggestion is using the data from the teachers, and then using technology to communicate with the parents. I don't suggest sending letters every time someone cuts a class, but at least use technology. I know you mentioned that previously, but we have a lot of plans here in the district. I'm not second guessing you. I'm sure you're going to go through. I just want to see it done.

Comm. Capers: You said something that caught my attention. You said if the high school kids are going to court, you guys suggest putting them into an alternative school to control the absences and things like that. Once you make that move, how long are they supposed to stay in that alternative school? Some of the time they're just staying there and not going back into regular school.

Mr. Best: It's supposed to be just for the year. Essentially, they're all supposed to start fresh at the beginning of the year.

Comm. Capers: That's not happening.

Mr. Best: It's not really my department, but one of the things I have noticed is that if a student is achieving success in the alternative setting it can be detrimental in some cases to put that student back into an environment in which they were not successful. If you saw a student who was missing on average 50 days his freshman year and 50 days in his sophomore year, we put them into YES Academy or Great Falls Academy and now that student is only missing 10 days and their grades are going up, are we doing that student a disservice by sending them back to the large comprehensive high schools? Or do we want to keep those students there so that they can actually achieve success? I think that has been a determination of keeping the kid there. On the reverse end, this kid really isn't ready yet to go back.

Comm. Capers: How about the kids that are ready and showing improvement?

Mr. Best: They go back. I don't know how many.

Comm. Hodges: Who's the judge of the truancy court?

Mr. Best: Judge Guzman.

Comm. Hodges: When is it held?

Mr. Best: The same day as the Board meeting at night. It's the same time as the Board meetings, which is why if you don't see me I'm normally in court. We're actually moving it next year to Thursday so that it doesn't conflict with the Board meetings.

Comm. Hodges: It used to be Thursday morning. I used to attend those with Judge Graves. It's Wednesdays at 7:00?

Mr. Best: 5:30.

Comm. Irving: Are there any other questions?

Ms. Susana Peron: Good evening. My portion was just to talk about one of the strategies and initiatives that we did take on in 2014-2015 school year, which was the Positive Behavior Supports in Schools. It was an initiative funded through New Jersey's special education office in conjunction with Rutgers University. We began this initiative in early childhood for years prior and then we reached out to the RAC. We wrote a special letter to them, gave them some data, and we were actually allowed to join the initiative for all of our Priority Schools and Focus Schools. The school teams in the Priority and Focus Schools did receive the training. It is an intervention. It is about changing culture and climate in the schools. It's a three-tiered intervention. The first tier is universal. It begins with the entire school environment. You take a look at how the school welcomes parents, how it welcomes children, how the staff work with each other. You talk about the office referral conduct. You look at incentive programs. Some of what Mr. Montes is doing at New Roberto Clemente and over at School No. 5 are very much a part of New Jersey Positive Behavior Supports in Schools. It is to incentivize good behavior. The focus of it is catching kids doing good things, talking about them, and making them explicit so that they do understand the difference of what behavior looks like. It goes through different tiers. There is training and there is a universal team for each of the schools that are comprised of different staff members. Some of them are the child study teams. Some of them had guidance counselors. Some of them had teachers. There is a lot of professional development involved. There is also a portion of it that several members of the team will learn how to actually use a tool to assess behavior. You don't have to be certified or take a class to learn it. You just have to go

through this professional development. What gets implemented with fidelity absolutely shows the outcomes. Some of our schools have really taken to heart. The staff has participated in professional development. They have gone together. They have worked with their PTOs as well. It's a school community effort. We have very good implementation in many schools and we have mediocre implementation in other schools. Sometimes we talk about needing funds to buy incentives for kids. You'll see that some schools give out paper tickets. During the first year of the grant we were given funds to actually reimburse substitutes for coming into the schools and our staff going out to professional development. We were given funds to buy some of those incentives. That funding is not here. However, the schools are creative and the ones that have really invested in this have come up with creative ways to provide incentives to kids. It's not always about a monetary thing. It's also about having some privileges and doing some different things in school. Positive Behavior Supports is going to be a priority for our next coming school year. Dr. Evans did charge me with trying to identify the best implementers in the district and have them turnkey professional development for our other schools. This effort and this initiative have not gone by the wayside. It just needs to be reinforced and we do need to have additional staff trained in this effort.

Comm. Hodges: I sincerely hope that an investment in project-based learning and Maker Space is made. It's an activity where students are truly engaged in the curriculum and it will have a much less expensive impact on this problem. I spoke to Dr. Evans about meeting other groups of students. Their lack of engagement in the classroom is a primary issue. I think I gave you the list of questions. They were adamant. They wanted to do more things. They wanted to be engaged. I think this may be a way to entice the students to stay in the classroom if they're not bored or are more engaged in what's going on in the classroom.

Ms. Peron: That's exactly right, Dr. Hodges. As a district, we need to listen to our students a little more and give them a little more voice into what they feel is important. That way we reach them. Project-based learning, hands-on learning, and student-centered instruction is definitely the way to go. It won't happen overnight, but it is very much possible and a lot of our curriculum and tasks are focused around project-based learning and hands-on learning.

Comm. Martinez: I second both what Dr. Hodges said and what Ms. Peron just alluded to as well. I just wanted to double back to what I was saying about what's happening at the New Roberto Clemente. I can't speak to what's going on at any other schools in the district because I haven't seen it, but what I see happening at New Roberto Clemente is rather simple. It's because he makes it a priority. People buy in because people respect what you respect. On a daily basis by 10:00 he's calling for numbers. He's asking people, "Are you rounding up your numbers?" That breeds itself and that culture grows. He makes it a priority. It's no surprise that his numbers are where they are because he demands it. Everyone in that building gets on board and it's a primary focus. It is a main priority of his. That has to permeate throughout the district.

Ms. Diodonet: I would be remiss if I don't say this. A lot of our Priority Schools and Focus Schools have made chronic absenteeism part of their SIP goals. If not all, most have hit their target. Chronic absenteeism has decreased and I guess we can put a report together to show that. A lot of schools have used chronic absenteeism as a goal and they are monitoring them. There is action being done. It was a goal and many are hitting them, if not all.

Comm. Irving: There's a great deal of research relative to truancy in schools and absenteeism. What's uniform is that it varies on the school or community the respective

use of structure. What may work at New Roberto Clemente may not work at School No. 18. What's important is for staff to share best practices. There might be a method that's working at one school that works. But there might be something that a colleague can take from another colleague who's successful and be able to utilize it. Using many different research-based strategies is really good, coupled with the fact that you get professionals in an environment who have the opportunity to germinate those ideas together and help support other colleagues who may be struggling with innovative strategies that may or may not work. I have to acknowledge the fact that there is not a one-size-fits-all to these issues. There are several different methodologies that exist, but there are also methodologies that are research and tested that have proven that they work. PBSIS is a great example of one strategy, but there might be other strategies that they employ. I just think it's always important to communicate that together.

Comm. Castillo: I think there is a numerous amount of strategies because it doesn't work everywhere. As Comm. Rivera has said often, the change of culture within the schools so that principals make it a priority. Not only the principals, but the teachers are just as engaged. I think I've seen the curriculum from every single grade from kindergarten through grade 12. The district has done a good job at making it where they involve the students. Their methods and their new ideas are taken into consideration. But also having the teachers come into this new method of technology and learning and making it a team work type of thing. We can't have the principals on one side and the students aren't engaged because they don't understand and the teachers can't get into the curriculum. It has to be a full-blown initiative.

Comm. Irving: It makes sense.

Ms. Diodonet: Also, the research shows that partnering and engaging parents works the best, which is why our focus groups and our parent involvement committee will be reaching out to parents to see what else we can do. The article we will be emailing to you is clear on there.

Comm. Irving: I want to commend Dr. Evans and staff for putting together a very thorough report. I think this is a much-needed discussion. I do look forward to hearing the update of the implementation component of this when we get to the August meeting. Cheryl, make sure that this is one of the presentations for the August meeting when we get back before school starts.

Comm. Hodges: I'd like to know the percentage of schools that are implementing these suggestions with fidelity. That's what's really important, making sure that's happening. It's nice when four or five schools do it, but...

Comm. Irving: Makes sense.

REPORT OF STATE DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT

Dr. Evans: I have no additional items.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

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

Comm. Cleaves: Those that are speaking note that you have a three-minute limit to your remarks for the Board.

Comm. Hodges: Is everybody aware that they have to sign up in order to speak?

Ms. Marcella Simadiris: Praise the Lord everybody. I just wanted to come up and speak on class size a little bit because I was informed that the district has given instruction that we are to expect about 30 kids per class and that the district won't be receiving any complaints until it hits 31. I just wanted to remind you all on some regulations. 6A:13-3.1 class size in high poverty districts, which is districts that have 40% or more students at risk, shall not exceed 21 students in grades k-3, 23 students in grades 4 and 5, and 24 students in grades 6-12. I'm hoping that you all adhere to those regulations. With regards to policies, I come here a lot and I watch a lot of presentations. Just because things are on paper and people are drawing up these different reports it's not true. That's why I keep on stressing the importance of relationships, if the district had better relationships with teachers and parents and children. I always go to the children because if you're not making them happy you're not going to be happy. They're not going to learn. They're not going to be motivated. Part of the issue in this district, especially in Priority Schools and Focus Schools, is you're so focused on testing them on skills and standards instead of providing spaces for them to actually apply those skills. I really appreciate you, Dr. Hodges, with your recommendation for Maker Spaces. I don't feel like our children, especially the children I have contact with, have enough of those opportunities. Lastly, I was informed that Mr. Rojas has completed a reorganization timeline. Within this reorganization initiative it includes looking at what opportunities for different classes like art and music are available by looking at what teachers are in what buildings. I would really like to have access, if that's public. I don't know if I have to fill out an OPRA request. If you want to help in building relationships and share, I'd appreciate it. Thank you.

Ms. Taja'nae Chapman: Hi, my name is Taja'nae. I have been informed that School No. 15 and School No. 26 playground was just completed. Can you please inform us about our playground? We need space to communicate to you. We can help with fundraisers. I also noticed that in today's agenda there's nothing about DFN's playground. I tried talking to my principal about it but he said he hasn't been told anything.

Ms. Sailys Cabral: Good evening Board members. I must say standing before you today I'm very upset and disheartened. I've come to several Board meetings as you know and I've come to every single workshop and budget meeting. Not once was the PCTI busing ever discussed. The fact that the busing was going to be potentially eliminated was never discussed. That bothers me to many lengths. I know that you label it as courtesy busing, but either route you take to Tech is dangerous. There are no sidewalks either on Preakness Avenue, Hamburg Turnpike, or Oldham Road. There are no sidewalks. Let's discuss the students that will be walking home after 5:30 on daylight savings time. Have any one of you walked that road at that time of year? Even now you go at night, turn off your headlights, and drive that road. You would not dare because it's dark. There isn't proper lighting. How dare you ask our children to walk that road and tell us that it's courtesy busing! You didn't give us an opportunity and option to voice our options. You didn't give us any options. What if you would have brought it to the table? We would have had an open discussion. Would you at least have given us the opportunity to pay for it ourselves? As discussed it's \$930,000 that we're talking about. Is that worth the life of a child if they get struck by a truck? If we break it down in numbers, it's 700 children in total counting children that aren't going to Tech. We're talking about \$1,328.57 per student. I would pay that times two because I

have two children that go to Tech. Give me the option and I'll pay it. Give us the option. We would raise money for it. If we're just talking about the hazardous roads, because everyone else's roads are unsafe, Tech alone is \$652,328.57. Is that worth the life of a child? Is that worth the life of your child? Your grandchild? Your niece? Your nephew? Your friend? Your neighbor? Anyone? Yourself? The point is this isn't a dictatorship. We have a voice. I've been present. I've heard you mention several times to other parents, "You have my phone number. Why haven't you called me?" Now I tell you, you have my phone number. Why didn't you tell me what was coming? This is upsetting beyond borders. This isn't courtesy busing. Eliminate that word from the Tech students because it is crucial. It is dangerous to walk those roads. I've walked them. I was a Tech student. I walked them recently when you asked my child to walk it. I called Channel 11 when I heard that. Unfortunately, parents weren't complaining about this. The parents didn't get notice right away. Immediately upon me reading that I called Channel 11. Let's record the route. That's it. Open discussion. I must say as well, it's not on here. We have frivolous things on here. Field trips, I'm sure it's important, but this is someone's life and it's not on any documentation. That's my frustration. It's not on any documentation. When are you going to have this discussion with parents? I see here approve F-13. It already happened. School No. 3 has their playground. It should say 'approved.' Have an open discussion with parents, please. This is important. I would pay. I'm a parent of two children that's saying she would pay. The life of my children is worth that and more. Thank you.

Mr. Robert Scott: Good evening everyone. The young lady in front of me brought up it is significant and very important. I'm coming to you based off that. I tried to think about what I was going to say and how I'm going to address it. Understanding the problem, dealing with the problem, and coming up with a solution. We're asking, especially on behalf of the parents, is to identify and please tell us what's driving the decision, especially with what's happening with the schools. That can be given out to the parents so they understand the problem itself. There is different information that's coming out different ways and it's bringing a lot of emotions. If transparency was there it would assist the entire situation. Part of what we're doing and part of the leadership council's opinion is to open up the transparency so that every single parent being affected knows why this is happening. Because we're advocates for parents, regardless of who the parent is, we would like to stress, especially with the emotion that was displayed a little earlier, that this Board take the time and open up negotiations with the county in order to solve this issue. With the solving of the issue and bringing everything to the forefront it will allow to not have on anybody's conscience god forbid something happens to one of our children or my child. One of my children goes to Tech also. It's something that's personal and it comes into play. I worked 14 years as an EMT in the City of Paterson. With me working there I've seen children get hit. I've seen a helpless child that's on the floor. I had to help a child that got struck by a car on a street that's not as precarious as the street that they're going to be walking up. All I'm asking and all I'm humbling myself and begging for is to please take any negotiation that you may have with the county seriously and stress whatever the problem is. Regardless of whoever solves the problem, please come to a solution. It's not my kid that's being affected. It's other kids that are being affected. It's other parents that are being affected. We spoke about our lord earlier. I hope and pray that everybody here makes the right decision. Please open up the negotiations so we can solve this issue. Thank you for your time.

Comm. Irving: I just want to clarify something. You brought up a good point and I think it's important that there's a level of clarity on everyone's end. For the folks who are here, I want to give all the parents the opportunity to share their opinion and voice their concerns. When they're all done, I would like to clarify the Board and the district's position for where we are. I think that is missing. Let me be real with you. Nobody

wants to be here right now. This stinks and sucks for all of us. But I do think that the level of disingenuous nature on behalf of folks at Tech to send parents down here without sharing the full story is not fair either. I do want to give parents the opportunity to voice their concerns. I'd love to share for the folks that are here at least the district's position on what's going on. I appreciate you sharing that.

Mr. Scott: I don't know the state regulation that might be pushing this. But I'm respectfully requesting share that information with the parents and let them know so we know what's driving everything.

Mr. Rafael Fontana: Good evening everyone. Rafael Fontana. Some of you may know who I am and some of you may not. Some may like me. Some may hate me. I apologize in advance because I am going to offend somebody tonight. I am here to speak about the PCTI bus issue. Before I get to that, the level of incompetence and stupidity that I heard before I just couldn't sit there and say I'm really listening to this garbage. I don't know who's making the decision of cutting the bus. But what I'd like to know is whoever voted on that on this Board I'd like to see you walk with that child every day. I want to see you walk the two miles. I want to see you walk Preakness Avenue where there is no sidewalk, like the lady mentioned. I want to see you walk when it's dark from that school. If you're not going to walk, why did you vote? Tell us why. I got the letter from Tech. That means that the district is the one at fault doing it. Tech is telling us they have nothing to do with it. If you want to tell us something else, somebody is lying to somebody here. Tech is saying it's not their doing. The Board and the district is saying it's not their doing. Somebody is lying and we have the right to know who is lying and who's not. Again, I'd like to stress that you do have a culture issue. The problem is that like the old saying – the more things change, the more they stay the same. If we're not learning, we're not going to change anything. We're patting ourselves on the back saying we have the data and the numbers. The numbers lie. I can make the numbers say whatever I want them to say. Please, you have to understand this bus situation is a serious thing. We need to know why. If you tell me you don't have any money, you can get rid of a lot of the administration to pay for that. I'm sure you have people who are doing nothing and getting paid for nothing. Thank you.

Ms. Margaret Padilla: Hello everybody, Margaret Padilla. My son goes to Tech. He's always been in Paterson Public Schools. I got the letter from you guys. I got the email from the principal at Tech. Tech is a Passaic County school. I just want someone on the Board who knows me for a long time because you see the shaking and the nerves. I can do a lot, but this is my child. I'm 2.8 and that's from Tech. That's me trying to figure it out on my own. I'm right by School No. 12. I don't know if that has anything to do with it, but that would have been my son's school before. I just need it explained to me in my knowledge of things. I need it in simple language. I'd appreciate it in simple language so I can prepare to figure out how I would have to fix the problem not caused by me, but to organize a way for my child to continue what he's worked for, for so long. My son has moved so many times. You're retiring and I just want to thank you for the things that you've tried to do. It's too much. Things have to work out. Dr. Hodges, could you guys pull me over for one second?

Ms. Carrie Gonzalez: Good evening Board members and Dr. Evans. I stand before you tonight to express my dismay at the decision of the Board to cut the busing for the children attending PCTI. This is my daughter right here. The roads that they travel are treacherous, busy with construction vehicles and an outright hazard. Before I proceed, I'd like for all the parents and the students that attend PCTI that are here tonight to stand up. This is not a choice the children have. There are no sidewalks. The view is

obstructed and presents a major concern for not only myself, but the parents standing beside me tonight. What happens if it's snowing, icy, or after 4:00, as Ms. Cabral said, when it gets dark sooner? Did you all take that into consideration? It seems this decision was made with the hopes of having the difficulty imposed to bring these children back to the district. Is this over money and egos? The district feels Tech takes the talented and gifted kids from Paterson. You are not offering anything to them but fights in the schools, no type of security, and most teachers go in just for their paycheck. If you were more strict and removed troublesome students, like Tech does, the kids would feel safer and just maybe the teachers would teach. As Dr. Hodges stated, this is what happens when people do not pay attention. The impact of eliminating the courtesy busing program was not fully disclosed at the budget meetings. That is correct because I've been here. You didn't give parents an opportunity to voice their concerns or provide suggestions. Dr. Irving, I believe your response was Passaic County should address the safety concerns for our students. How about you both go to the table and come up with a feasible solution instead of throwing your hands up adamantly saying there is no money? Thank you.

Ms. Rosie Grant: Good evening ladies and gentlemen. I thank you for the time you spent and the attention you gave to the chronic absenteeism issue. It is a serious issue because we are losing kids. We're losing them to the streets. We're losing them to the jails. We're losing them to the hospitals. For whatever reason that kids are not in school they're not learning and it's a very important issue. I want to point out that you have amongst you a star. Ms. Diodonet mentioned the presentations that we did, but she's the person that implemented it at School No. 5. Attendance Works, the national organization that's promoting chronic absenteeism across the country, came to Paterson to talk to Paterson parents about what it is that prevents them from getting their kids to school every day. Their preschool toolkit, which is available free online, was developed based on input from Paterson parents. It's tailored to us and there's no reason for us to not take full advantage of what is a free resource and a very good resource. I do want to add that one of the success factors at School No. 5 is they're also a Full Service Community School. They have a lead agency in NJCDC. They had AmeriCorps workers. They already had the culture and climate that helped them along the way to improve chronic absenteeism. There were teachers and other staff members and parents willing to volunteer to put their heads together to think about how to address the problem. There were staff members, because of the culture and climate there, that were ready to be Success Mentors to make sure they had four or five kids in their care that they're looking out for and an advocate for every day of the year. Thank you for this. I want to clarify the definition of chronic absenteeism by the State of New Jersey. Absent for any reason. Some of it is not in your power to correct, but I think working with parents to correct what you can we can crack this nut. I want to share some good news. We had our 50 Book Club celebration last week. 1,450 children read 50 books this school year. A round of applause to them! I do want to thank the Commissioners and the staff members that came out to support them. Comm. Cleaves, Comm. Martinez, Comm. Castillo, and Comm. Capers took some time. This is the first one you ever missed in 15 years Dr. Hodges. Others of you have been there. Ms. Shafer came and greeted us. Dr. Evans, I think this is also the first one you have ever missed. You have been very supportive of this over the years. Dr. Campbell came for the first time and worked. He didn't just greet people. He stood there and handed out juices. If I may, two more points. I want to thank the parents of PCTI for coming out tonight. This is an issue that affects the kids in Paterson that attend the school in Wayne. I want to encourage you to also take it to your Board in Wayne so that they consider the issue as well and take it to the State of New Jersey. We would not be in this position if Paterson's budget had not been underfunded for \$280 million over the last nine years, \$332 million including the next year. Dr. Evans, I want to thank you for

the work you've done in your tenure here. You have taken us a long way. The major point is graduation rates, which went from 45% to a current 79%. We will miss your collaborative spirit and we hope that we will find ways to carry on the initiatives that you have implemented that have worked for our kids. We will be pushing that agenda to make sure that the things that are good and working do stay in place. You have earned your retirement. Thank you on behalf of Paterson kids.

Ms. Kathy Muhammad: Good evening. My sister went to Tech in the 1970s. I graduated in 1987. My brother graduated in 1994. My son graduated last year. Now my daughter is about to complete her freshman year. That meant a lot to me and my family. We work hard and we want to see our children excel. Never did I think I would get that letter in the mail saying that now after all these years, especially in my family and counting other parents, our safety would be in jeopardy over a busing issue because of the distance that they happen to live in. I have driven up that hill going to pick them up for nightly events, plays, and shows and nearly was run off the road from cars coming down that hill past Preakness. I'm in a car. These children have no way. Not even thinking about animals that are near my house on Chamberlain that come along. You don't know what types of things they will run into. There are inclement weather conditions. The lighting is not good. There's nowhere for them to walk going up that hill or down. I don't know if you understand the ramifications if this goes badly with any children being killed or hurt coming up and down going to school. Then you think about when the weather is bad. Then they wind up getting wet. That plays on their psyche as well when it comes to school having to deal with this. You're going to have school buses passing them by coming back and forth. Then they have to see other students on the bus while they're walking. Then they get ridiculed and that's looking bad. They're going to school on bad weather days wet and not in the best mood for class. Then they have to sit there all day dealing with these issues. It's a whole lot of things that are factoring in with this over saving some dollars. It really needs to be rethought because I hate to know how the Board is going to look on this whole situation with children that's really trying to better our life. This is our future. If we don't take into consideration the future of those who are trying to excel and this is how we treat them over a few dollars, it's really sending a bad light and making me think what you're thinking. That letter from the district was disheartening to all of us, but it's only going to get worse until you really do something. How many buses are we really talking about and dollars that are going to value these children being in jeopardy this way? I really want you to consider this. Like the other parent said previously, you've seen it as a courtesy but these children earned that to come here. I think you really need to take it in your hearts and really consider on the table each of these individual lives of our Paterson children. Not all of them, but because of the distance they are being cut off that and now they don't have the safety that some other children have that are being bused. That's really disheartening. I can't stress this enough. Please take that into consideration and have our children bused.

Ms. Patricia McNeil: Good evening, Patricia McNeil. I have a child that goes to PCTI as well. They dealt with the bus thing so I don't need to deal with that. They're not doing summer school at PCTI. Those students that fail have to come back into the district and their district has to pay for it. I was told that was going to be taken care of. How are these parents being notified? That's my first concern. I don't know what the solution is. I'm just a parent here with a concern that has a child that's not doing what he's supposed to be doing in school and he has to go to summer school. I don't have anything from PCT saying my child needs to go to summer school and he needs to register in the district. I haven't received anything from Paterson Public Schools saying if my child goes to PCT and they're failing, they need to register. Talking about saving money, I'm not going to talk about any particular academy. Wild, Wild West! Every time

I come up here I'm talking about security. How can a parent go up to a school and you can't even find your child and nobody even knows if they were in school that day? We have a new sheriff in town, you know. He came from Eastside. He's supposed to be the best in town. Why isn't he doing his job? He needs to be replaced. Thank you, Dr. Evans for the academies. I think that's the best thing that has happened inside that school. Most of them are running okay. I walk that school a lot. I have children in there and they're going to see my face. They may not see me inside, but I'm outside somewhere looking. I'm semi-retired so I have some time. Right now, there are no children in that school after 2:00 o'clock. Close it down. Save some money. Close the school down. I know they have to give them so many days. Close it down. Save that money. Those children are not in that school. They're leaving that school in droves.

Ms. Cathleen Hames: Good evening. I only have three minutes, so I'm going to do this as fast and as accurately as possible. I'm going to ask that nobody look at their cellphones or that nobody talk and have side conversations. I had to sit here and listen about absentees and I don't have a car. If I don't get any busing my child is going to be absent from school because he's not going to Eastside and he's not going to Kennedy. There was a video that a parent took of that commute walking. She tried to see if she could get it for you guys to see. According to the rules and regulations it has to be approved by your Board. At a later date, because you have another meeting coming up on the 24th or whenever you're going to have your surprise meeting, I feel that during that meeting you should view the tape or one of you should take the time and walk that commute. It's not right and it's not okay. You talked a lot about absentees and students not going to school. If you were really concerned about students going to school you would see that PCTI has a very high attendance rate. You're jeopardizing that attendance rate because of busing. I understand people don't have money. I live on a budget. I know what money is. But I went to work and I've sat here since 5:40. I watched everybody walk in. I watched you eat food that I guess my tax dollars are paying for. I watched you with Shoprite waters because I know they had to be purchased. I know no one bought them out of the kindness of their heart. I work in that office. I know you send out a purchase order. You sent for a check to be refunded if you spent money. I'm not stupid. What I am saying is that I understand that times are tough and money is tight. But at the same time, what we need to do honestly is look where budgets can be cut. If you're not qualified, you need to be cut. You shouldn't have people making \$100,000 in a failing district. I'm not saying this because I don't believe in the Paterson Public School System. I'm saying this because somebody needs to ask for someone to do an internal audit and see where the money is going. If we don't have money, that's the time when you go back to the drawing board and start looking at people's paychecks. You start looking at people's spending. That's what needs to happen. I've written the Department of Education. I have written a lot of people because there needs to be an internal audit, like I said. I'm saying it again. Somebody needs to question where the money is going. Somebody needs to see why is this person making this much money and they're not qualified. Then you want to talk about we don't have money for my child's busing and that's not okay. I was told that PCTI was a school choice. This is a list of the choice schools in New Jersey at every county. PCTI is not on that list. If you call the Governor's office, the state legislature, or the Department of Education it's not on that list. If you don't have a copy or if you don't know what it is here you go. Please consider the fact that we are not dumb and we are not stupid. Like I said, I sat here and I watched you eat food. There are kids here. Did these kids eat? No, they didn't. That's rude. I sat here and watched people text. I sat here and watched people take personal phone calls and check their emails. That's rude. You should do better.

Ms. Lydia Soto: Good evening. I'm also a parent of two Tech students. I work for Passaic County Community College at the Public Safety Academy in Wayne, which is right next to PCTI. I drive every day for the past 12 years that road that those kids will have to take. The only bus that goes up Hamburg Turnpike which turns into Central Avenue is the 748. It will leave those children by the William Paterson campus. It will leave them on the right side. They're going to have to cross that street, which is a turnpike, to get to the other side to be able to go down Oldham Road. I did a video today in my car of how that road is. In some spots, you can't even go single file. When it rains, it rains up there. We're up on a hill. When you're getting flurries here, there's already half an inch of snow up in Wayne. You're telling me that there's no money? That's the main thing that pissed me off. You didn't even give us the choice to say you need to put this amount of money up and we'll help you out. No one said anything like that. We don't have money. What are these kids supposed to do? Those kids don't just get into Tech. You have to prove yourself. You have to have good grades. After you get accepted, both of my daughters have to sit there in front of a panel of teachers to see if they're even worth still after all their grades to be accepted into that school. They come out of there with certifications for anything that they do. My daughter is a sophomore and she's going to become a junior. If there's no busing and if I couldn't take her to school she would go back into Paterson and do what? Now she has two years of something that she's not going to get a certification for. What is she supposed to do? Some of you need to go up there. I don't know if any of you have ever taken that ride, but you need to. Some of these kids do sports and are in extracurricular activities. Have you seen what it looks like in the end of November at 4:30 in the afternoon? There is no sunshine out there. It's dark. There are deer. There's a quarry up there where there are Mac trucks coming in and out constantly. I feel the shaking up by my job when they blast. There's no money and there's nothing we can do. I suggest you guys really do something. Get the parents together. It's not 50 students. It is 491 students that deserve where they're at because they earned it.

Ms. Oneka Grier: Good evening everyone. My name is Oneka Grier. I am a Paterson resident. I know the tension is high and emotions are high when we're talking about our kids because they matter. So it's expected. I stand before you as a concerned parent about the cancellation of our busing going to and from PCTI, which tentatively is supposed to start August 1, 2017. As the President of the Passaic County Technical Institute PTSO and a Paterson resident whose child depends on busing to and from PCTI, I'm disconcerted. When bus routes and stops are eliminated our students are the ones directly affected. Parents are often left with the thought of how will I get my child to school. How will we afford other means of transportation? Will my child be safe? Additionally, there are concerns about the dangers, as you heard tonight, from traffic due to a lack of safe infrastructure such as no sidewalks and crosswalks and stranger dangers if a child's only option is to walk or bicycle to school. Also, cutting bus routes will likely lead to greater traffic congestion due to an increase in parents being forced to drive their children to school. This will lead to delays and safety concerns for the residents of all towns that send their children to PCTI. It is essential that school districts collaborate with parents and city officials to come up with a backup plan for students and parents, particularly when cuts to school bus services are being proposed. Our children matter. Whether you have a student at PCTI or not, all of our children in the City of Paterson matter. They have a choice of where they need to go to school. You guys made that option for them. Don't stop it now. We have to fight. To all the parents tonight, don't allow your voice to be shut down. The fight starts now. Thank you for your time.

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

BOARD COMMENTS

Comm. Irving: I think Mr. Scott's point and some of the parents' points are correct. There is some really important information that needs to be provided and I want to give the parents who are here the context. As you all were talking I was taking notes and I'm making reference to a lot of the comments and questions that were asked. I'm going to try to hit every single one. If I miss some, I'm going to ask anyone who feels like to jump in. I'm going to try to cover it as thoroughly as possible with the information that I have. I want to give everyone a context historically for what we've done. Then I want to give you a real-life scenario of what's happening now, some of which many of you who have been here know relative to our fiscal realities, what that has meant for us here in Paterson, and how that has impacted Tech. Then I want to tell you what has been done since the letter and notices have gone out. I will say now before I end the information I'm going to share with you, although I believe it to be true and the truth of this district and the people who sit here, you still may not like at the end. I think you still deserve the right to know and need to be shared with. At the end, I will make and ask the Board to comment on recommendations. The last speaker came up and thank you so much for your comment because the collaboration piece is important. I want to start with that. I think it's important for us to understand that. There is a law in place relative to busing that indicates that a district is responsible, whether it's a school district or a sending district. PCTI is not a choice school. That's correct. It is a separate school district. It has a separate school district code. Paterson and Tech are two separate school districts, but we send kids to that district. Because we do so, kids who are beyond 2.5 miles in high school we are required by law to provide transportation to. Again, I want to give you context for that. For the last 20 years, out of the 16 municipalities that comprise Passaic County, the City of Paterson has been the only district who cared enough about their kids to transport them. No other city, not Bloomingdale, Ringwood, Pompton Lakes, Wanaque, West Milford, Clifton, Passaic, Hawthorne, Little Falls, Totowa, Prospect Park, Woodland Park, Wayne, Haledon, North Haledon has ever offered courtesy busing to their children. We're familiar with these towns. We know where they are and there are different ways and routes that kids feed into Passaic County Tech. For the last 20 years this district has offered that service to our kids knowing the hill and the condition. I think I would be remiss to say as I move forward that as we have this conversation I don't think anyone here has made any discussions or takes this decision lightly. Nor do we take the lives of our children lightly as well. I'll explain more about what I think this Board has done to try to help communicate that to Passaic County Tech and make the administration aware of our concern and realities and what that whole collaboration piece I think can and should look like for that matter. Again, we've offered a service that no other city in our county has ever been willing to do for any of their kids. With that said, for the eight years this district has been grossly underfunded by Chris Christie to the tune of \$280 million. This fiscal year it comes out to \$322 million. That has made this district make considerable cuts for the last four years. I'm estimating in my mind given the first layoff we did about 300. We have laid off in total almost 700 people and reduced more than 150 central office positions thus jeopardizing the quality of education for the kids who live and operate in the Paterson Public Schools. I tell you this absolutely sucks. I fast forward all that to all the notes that I have here for you all today. In the beginning of our budget process we were faced with close to about a \$40 million deficit. We had a \$40 million hole not of our own doing. Pensions, benefits, salaries, and utilities go up but the revenue has always remained flat. So we have to find a way to balance that budget. That's where the whole

notion of balancing the budget comes to be. Decisions had to be made. Conversations had to be had about how we do that. To that tune, we laid off and additional 200 staff members. I appreciate the comments talking about central office staff. If you look at the central office second and third floors in this building compared to two years ago, it's like a ghost town. I will invite parents to walk with our security department and walk the second and third floors of this district. There is no one left upstairs. We have cut as bare bones as possible. We have removed and consolidated positions. There are people who are sitting to my left and to the back of you who are now going to do two or three people's jobs. Why - because they have to and because we require them to. In addition to that, there was a conversation courtesy busing and the impact that it has. I'm saddened that conversation was not clear and coherent enough. That might be our issue, but there were four forums that were held to discuss the budget. The courtesy busing issue was covered by the Paterson Press and the Paterson Times twice before actual budget adoption. There was mention in the newspaper about the impact that it would have. We knew even before the budget was adopted how many students would be affected, roughly 490 for Passaic County Tech but also almost 200 for the City of Paterson. While there are 490 kids who are affected at Tech, there are also more than 200 children who are affected in our district as well when it comes to courtesy busing. I'm trying to move along, folks. Just follow me because I want to make sure I hit all the points for you all. In addition to that, this Board and the central office staff was faced with the horrible decision of looking at how we balance the budget after we've laid off so many staff members, closed two schools, have consolidated programs, laid off teachers, and nurses. You folks know and have read and are aware of our fiscal realities. We were faced with a really tough decision. I'm not going to lie to you. I don't think anyone makes this decision lightly, but here's the background for our thought process. There is a per-pupil cost. There is a cost that every child who goes to a high school receives in the State of New Jersey. The per-pupil cost for a child who goes to a Paterson high school is \$14,126. The child who might go to Eastside, Kennedy, or Rosa Parks is allotted \$14,126. On the inverse, the per-pupil cost for a Passaic County Tech student is \$20,101. We found out last year that Passaic County Tech had a significant surplus, meaning that they had money left over in their budget where we did not. In good conscience we had to look at ourselves and look internally and say while we know we've offered this service and while we know the roads are dangerous there has to be a different conversation with Passaic County Tech. The courtesy busing we offer, honest to god, we just can't afford. As many of you know, this Board has done everything possible. Many of you have kids who go to Tech schools and also go to schools here in this district. I hope you would say, if you followed us through the budget process, that we've done everything possible to try to salvage the level of education and not put the kids who live in this district and who you all elect us to care for at risk. It was under that mindset and it was with, not just a heavy heart, but a heavy soul that the members of this Board made that decision. We encouraged the Superintendent to reach out to the Superintendent of Tech to let her know of our realities given the fact that there is a surplus and that Tech is expanding and adding more schools. I want to also make this point. There was an opportunity earlier in the year where the Board was petitioned to encourage Tech not to build that facility and add that addition and we voted that down. There were some of us who did not, but as a group we decided no. I personally am a school choice advocate. I believe parents have the right to choose and decide where they want to send their babies. That is your decision. But we didn't think it was fair for us to impose our opinion. I was one of the people who felt that it wasn't fair to impose my opinion on parents about where they need to send their children. The fact that is Tech has had a significant surplus. The fact is that the per-pupil cost is higher. Of course there is going to be additional surplus and money because they get more per-child than we do, although the money that Tech gets comes from our budget directly. It was our hope and intention that the Superintendent of Schools and the

Superintendent of Passaic County Tech would have an honest conversation together about where we are fiscally and where Tech is. You folks know. You have kids who go there. If you go up to see their facilities, it's like night and day. It is what it is. It is absolutely night and day compared to what we have down here. If that's an indication of how much we are struggling financially I don't know what else is. I want to be very honest with you and say I think we do need to have a conversation, but I think it is absolutely disingenuous for the leadership at Tech to advise parents to come here and not provide that information and let parents know that there is money there to provide courtesy busing for their students if they wanted to provide it. Again, we've done it for 20 years and had the money to do so. I don't think anyone challenged the issue or concern. This year it came up, but there is money out there to be able to bus those 490 children. As I said in the paper, if the leadership there is concerned we invite them to work with the district to be able to do so. Two more points and I will let my colleagues weigh in. There was a conversation with the district leadership and the Tech leadership a few weeks ago. Unfortunately, we shared our position, told them where we were, and asked for any ideas and support. I'm not comfortable with divulging what the sentiment was, but the bottom line is we went away with no mutual decision. I think that there is a way to fix this, but at this stage the solution rests with the sending district, with the district I know has the revenue and the surplus to be able to do it. They know where we are. They know how much they receive from us. They know all too well. I'm personally sorry that you're all here. I'm sorry that we as a community are in this situation. This underfunding puts us against each other. It puts people from Paterson whose kids go up the hill against people from Paterson whose kids go down the hill. It's not fair. We don't have an honest conversation with each other and say this is what's happening here. We don't have it, but here's the reason why. The money does exist somewhere else and here's the reason why. I have shared with you at least 15 points relative to where we are, but I do want to ask my other colleagues to comment. Then I'd like to see if we can offer some suggestions or recommendations to the parents who are here. The words that I shared with you are not going to give you any comfort. The issue is you're still going to have problems in making sure your children get transported. The law tells us that we do not have to transport children below 2.5 miles. For 20 years we did and I swear to you if we had the money we would figure it out. We can absolutely do it. We can actually transport the 490 children. But that \$930,000 that we'd have to do there we'd have to take away from somewhere else. That is not easy money to find in a budget that's already lean. Thank you all for listening. I want to say I appreciate it.

Comm. Castillo: First of all, good evening. I know you don't want to hear sorry. I know there's nothing that we can say that's going to make you feel better and walk out the door feeling confident about this. I graduated from Passaic County Tech just eight years ago. I know what it is. I actually just volunteered to take my neighbor's daughter to Tech every morning because she was hurt by this courtesy busing. They go in to work at 6:00 a.m. and the idea of how they were going to get their child to school was a fear. Being on this side and having to see where we stand and where Tech stands and the surplus that they have, there's a difference of \$6,000 per pupil that Tech gets that Paterson children don't get. That's where it is that we have to work together. Did I vote on stopping the extension of Tech? No, because I went there and because I believe that our students are working hard and they deserve the best education that they have worked for. Until we offer something just as competitive we can't fight that. I love the Paterson School District. I'm a product of the Paterson district, but I also had the opportunity to go to Tech. My neighbor goes down there now. The reality is I can't make a decision to take away from the education that we're barely giving our own students, take away more money from them to give it to 491 students attending Tech when they have the money to provide it for you. If they didn't have the money, I completely understand, but it's there. I think it's a matter of working together. You're

already getting an extra \$6,000 from us. Let's work together on providing these children buses. If per-pupil here is \$14,000 and Tech is getting \$20,000, it's almost a \$6,000 difference. You're getting the students. Great! The students are doing amazing there. I commend and congratulate them. I appreciate the parents who take the time to help their students to work with them every day for them to reach that level and they are here tonight. But now we have to work together and have them do their part in this. It's not only Paterson. Now they have to come in and unite together in order for this to work. I'll be taking that horrible drive every morning and I hate every part of it. I hated it when I was in Tech. I hated it when I had a car because of massive traffic. I'm not going to like it now. But the traffic and how horrible it is we understand. They have to come on now.

Comm. Hodges: I'm terribly sorry that you've been put in this position. I'm extremely sorry that Tech gave you incomplete information. I don't know what the letter said, but perhaps we did as well. As the Board President has said, we've had eight years of underfunding. Just this year, \$80 million was denied us that we were entitled to - \$320 million. What's happening to the Paterson School District is our staff is contracting. If you were here for some of these budget discussions you heard us talk about losing nurses and having to share nurses between schools. If you have children who are asthmatic and have allergies, you know how dangerous that is. We're doing that. We're sharing nurses between schools. We're cutting security staff. That's not happening up at Tech. They're building nice new facilities because they have the money. Actually, they have our money. We can't do those things. We're losing staff. Our class sizes are increasing. You just heard a teacher come down and talk about how that's a problem. We're looking at what's happening to the educational program that we're putting in place for the 25,000 students that are here in our district. We have to ask given the fiscal realities how do we maintain a contracting school educational environment plus provide an additional service? It's called courtesy because it's not required. We can only do things that are required because we don't have the money anymore. Next year not a single gubernatorial candidate has promised us any additional money. So we're going to be facing another 6% to 8% increase in the shortfall that we're going to have to close. That means more teachers being laid off, higher class sizes, and more staff that we're losing. By the way, people always say fire the administrators. Two years ago we lost 14 administrators to smaller school districts who could afford to pay them more money. We can't do that. We're currently in negotiations with our unions and we don't have the money. We understand your position and we would love to sit across the table from the Superintendent up there and talk about how to serve our students, because they are our students. But we are competing for funds and the result is we're at each other's throats over diminishing dollars. First of all, this shortfall in our budget is illegal. If you heard anything in our meetings, you've heard it called the illegal underfunding of millions of dollars year after year. This is the result. We have an obligation to raise our standards. We don't have the luxury as Tech does of sending kids back to another district when they don't do well. They're here. That's our job. When those students fail, struggle, or can't go to summer school evidently, they come back to us. We have to provide those services with no additional funds. If Tech surprises us, we have to scramble and find the money. You should have been told the whole story, but you weren't. You've heard they're receiving \$20,000 per child and we have \$14,000. If they recognized that they run the risk of losing \$9 million because they don't want to pay \$1 million in order to pay for the busing, it doesn't make sense. They have a \$6 million surplus on those students. Understand that. They have \$6,000 per student extra that they're receiving.

Concerned Parent: So what happens to the money of the students that are sent back to the district?

Comm. Irving: I'm glad you asked that question. That's an important question. We have as a district argued that fact year after year. There's a cutoff period when a child gets sent back into the district when the money does not come back. It's October 15. Again, I do not want to theorize. The bulk of students we get back always come back at Halloween. It's strange and bizarre that happens. Our kids come back and we take them back because they're ours. When they come back the money does not come back. That is critical as well because then they have the equivalent of an additional \$15,000 surplus per child that they send back if they're not filling that child's spot with another kid from another school or sending district.

Comm. Hodges: You're asking us why we're fighting Tech. We're fighting the state for \$80 million. We're battling Trenton. We're battling the Governor for \$80 million. We're going to all these hearings and challenging our legislators to push this agenda because it's killing our system. If you hear anything you know that Paterson has been fighting for its money because it's doing severe damage to our educational system. This issue is front and center to you, but all of the issues, such as the loss of teachers and nurses. Talk about a kid getting hit by a car. What happens with an asthmatic that suddenly has to wait 20 minutes for the nurse to come from school whatever to attend to them? That's what's going on here in Paterson. Lack of security guards - that's what's happening in Paterson. That's not happening in Tech. They own buses and we don't.

Comm. Irving: Folks, everyone had a chance to have their statements. I do want to give the Board members the opportunity.

Comm. Hodges: I'm going to conclude. We're not ignoring you. We're not unsympathetic, but unfortunately in our fight for our diminishing resources it's hard to tell legislators to take money out of their districts to pay Paterson some extra money while we're turning around and giving money to another school district that has a higher financial level than we do for courtesy busing. How do they justify that? That's what we're up against. I will come and talk to you later. I'll come down there. I don't have a problem doing that. I just want you to understand what we're facing. You're looking at 491. We're looking at the welfare of 26,000 kids who are all struggling and who are enduring all of these situations, not just the lack of busing.

Comm. Cleaves: There are not much more facts that I can present to you other than what Comm. Irving and Comm. Hodges have already stressed to you. What I can do as a citizen, resident and taxpayer of Paterson is stand in solidarity with you. When you go to Passaic County Tech for their Board meeting, you let me know and I will be there with you. The same way that I fight for our children here in the district, in Trenton, and in Montclair or wherever these meetings are held, I will stand with you also in solidarity as a taxpayer, resident, and person that lives in Paterson and cares about all of our children. Just because they go to Tech that does not make your children any less than the children that we have here. You let me know when you're going to the Board meeting at Tech and I will be there with you.

Comm. Martinez: I can just about guarantee that all nine of us will be there with you all standing in solidarity. I will commit myself and I'm pretty sure everyone else will commit to that as well. I think the context that has been painted tonight has been thorough and I hope it sheds some light on this. Hindsight is always 20/20. I think we could have been a little bit more timely and done a better job of conveying some of this information to you all. We take that. At least I will. I'll take ownership of that. For that you guys deserve an apology. Even more so than an apology, you guys deserve results. That's why you came here tonight. That's why you've voiced your opinions. Ultimately what's being compromised is the safety of our children. Beyond the safety it goes to what you

spoke of here in the front row, the implications of those students who now will have psychological impact going to school wet and uncomfortable. Those are some of the costs that maybe weren't taken into consideration and those are real. I'm very confident. We all know the money is there. I'm very confident that once we're able to sit down at the table and lay the facts out accordingly and empathize how serious this is that we will get this done. That's why you put us here. That's our responsibility and I'm very confident that we will.

Comm. Redmon: I have to say that I'm real sympathetic and empathetic to all the parents that are sitting out there because that's my neighborhood that's affected. I live right off Chamberlain Avenue. I do understand your plight. Yes, I have walked to Tech backwards and forwards on Preakness Avenue and also coming down the other end. I do understand. But I will say to you when that decision came it saddened me. We now have to make a decision for 491 students. That hurts. We want to see your children excel. We want them to get the certifications that they have at that particular school. But other municipalities are not getting hit. When Dr. Hodges talked about the budget crisis in Trenton, Paterson was the only municipality going down year after year fighting for the money that we were grossly underfunded. It hasn't become an issue until it started hitting suburban areas. Now you're starting to see more suburban schools talking about the gross underfunding that this Governor has put on us for the last eight years. I will be there with you when you go to Passaic County Tech's Board meeting. I'm also the representative of Passaic County school districts. I do understand both sides of it. Again, you can contact us here at the Board and I will go with you so you can understand, but I do apologize. My name is Commissioner Nakima Redmon. I do apologize on behalf of the district. We all got a copy of those letters that you got. We saw them. We do have to apologize if there was some miscommunication on the district's part. We had to make sure that you guys were aware of it early so that it doesn't happen in September when we're already putting bus routes out. We tried to give you guys a heads-up. I do apologize on behalf of the district.

Comm. Rivera: Good evening everyone. I just want to reassure you that when you speak we listen. We're up here because you guys put us here. We have faced many tough decisions during this whole process. Just so you know, a lot of kids that attend our district are being affected also by these transportation cuts. Just to give you an overview, we anticipate sending approximately \$18.5 million to Passaic County Tech to educate our kids. They're still our kids although they're there. That we understand. That's why when they decide to send them back I don't agree with them sending them back. They pick and choose the kids that they're taking. Again, it's not related to transportation, but if you want to talk about fairness, let's talk about fairness. They pick and choose the kids that they're taking. Then when they fail to educate those kids, they send them back to the district. We welcome them. They're our kids. I think they're doing those kids a disservice. If they take them from the district because they believe that they will be great students, then they should remediate the situation and keep the kids. They should not send them back. I just want to point that out. I hate playing politics and getting the business of the district done utilizing the residents. Like Comm. Irving said, how about we sit at the table and see how we can provide a solution to this situation? I attended Eastside but my brother attended Tech. I understand a lot of people in Paterson don't have the transportation. Even if they want to take their kids to school we're a poor city. You can say we're a poor city overall and it's going to be an issue for a lot of our kids that go to Tech. We should sit with them at the table and if they care so much about our kids they should provide a solution. Not complain about it, but provide a solution. On another note, Tech is also expanding. This situation is going to get worse in this district because more money is going to go there. I agree with Comm. Irving. I respect the parents' decision to choose wherever they want to go and

wherever they feel comfortable. In don't want to prolong this. Comm. Irving hit it on the nose. We should have that discussion with them before we start putting blame on one another. Thank you.

Comm. Capers: I want to say this was my first time on the Board going through this whole process. The parents that do attend the Board meetings this has to be the first night that the whole Board is in agreement about a situation that is very detrimental to our children. You have to really understand where we're coming from and understand the facts that the senior Board members have given. This has been going on for years upon years. I just pulled up something on the Tech website. We have to take this fight on to the Tech board of education. The fight cannot stop there. Each of their Board members are not voted in. They're appointed by the chosen freeholders. We have to take that to the freeholder board as well. We will stand with you guys and I will go on record as standing with you guys too. Thank you.

Comm. Irving: I know many of the parents here are parents that work with our PTO. I'd like to share with you a lot of the data and information that I've given you that you can go to the next Tech Board meeting with. The next meeting is on June 22 at 3:30 p.m. If we ever tried to have a Board meeting at 3:30 p.m. you all would have our heads. Nonetheless, June 22 at 3:30 p.m. is the next Tech Board meeting. I know our colleagues have agreed to go and share our concerns with you. I'm just being real. The people you see in this group are people you see in the supermarket, walking down the street, and in the park. If we could, we would damn sure do it. I promise you that. The challenge we have is that we don't and we know another entity that does. There has to be a conversation about what's fair and equitable. I'm sorry. What's happened to us isn't fair and is not equitable. At least we're willing to have the conversation. We're not pointing the finger. I think what we're doing is providing information and I would ask that our colleagues from Tech do the same thing. Provide the data relative to their budget and their surplus and the revenue that they take in every year. Those are important questions that should be asked. We're going to move on with the rest of this meeting agenda. I just want to sincerely thank you all for being here. I'm sorry you had to listen to the report earlier. I didn't know how long that was going to be. Our meetings are always open. They're in the evenings on purpose. Our information is published. Our phone numbers are public information on purpose. We need and want to be accessible. I encourage you all to continue to reach out to us. Many of you have my cell phone number and text me about community events and meetings that we have. I thank you all for being here tonight, but at this stage we need to get into the business that we have. Thank you all for being here. Let's take a quick recess and come back.

The Board took recess at 9:10 p.m.

The Board reconvened the meeting at 9:21 p.m.

Comm. Irving: There is actually a lot that needs to be discussed in executive session. I'd like to know if we could go through the resolutions and then if there are any specific questions pertaining to any of the general business items let's take them. I'm just going to take an open piece. I'm going to ask all the respective colleagues to submit their report and just dictate them at the public meeting on the 21st. Then we can go into executive session because we need to discuss the Superintendent's evaluation and transition of the Deputy to Superintendent as well. Are there any questions on any of this?

Comm. Redmon: The personnel committee wants to have a motion to go into RFQ for substitutes. We need to present that.

Comm. Irving: You work with the business office to initiate it. It gets presented to finance or you work through Daisy. You don't need a motion to execute that. I assume that is the outsourcing of the substitutes that we discussed in the budget.

RESOLUTIONS FOR A VOTE AT THE WORKSHOP MEETING:

Comm. Irving: Before I get to Resolution No. 1, I want to thank you all. I mean that sincerely. I think everybody spoke in one voice. Many times we may differ relative to our interpretations of our voice, but I think we are all united in that this stinks but we know that there is significant and robust resources up that hill. It's not fair to the parents to not even be offered that or shared that information. I'm not going to call anybody out, but if the leadership was so dismayed they should have come here with the parents and provided the same level of depth of information that we did. I'm thoroughly disappointed with that.

Resolution No. 1

BE IT RESOLVED, that the list of bills and claims dated April 2017, beginning with check number 205039 and ending with check number 205415 in the amount of \$14,079,775.28, and payment of bills and claims dated May 31, 2017, beginning with vendor number 799272 and ending with vendor number 4000915C in the amount of \$14,361,760.69; and

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

It was moved by Comm. Martinez, seconded by Comm. Redmon 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

- 4th and Inches
- Westside Park Group

Comm. Castillo

- Passaic County
- Scholastic (Transportation)

Comm. Cleaves

- Pertaining to herself

Comm. Hodges

- Pertaining to himself
- Jumpstart

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. Mimms

- Star Hope
- Planning Board of the City of Paterson
- Churches in the City of Paterson
- Brothers United Developing Spiritually (BUDS)
–School based program (JFK)

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.

STAFF MEMBER	CONFERENCE	DATE	AMOUNT
Collin Boyle	Educational Leaders as Scholars	July 17-19, 2017	\$75.00 (registration)
Teacher/RPHS	Princeton, NJ		
Florita Cotto	Educational Leaders as Scholars	July 17-19, 2017	\$75.00 (registration)
Principal/School 24	Princeton, NJ		
Lauren DiPalma	Educational Leaders as Scholars	July 17-19, 2017	\$75.00 (registration)
Art Specialist/School 24	Princeton, NJ		
Natalie Elder	Educational Leaders as Scholars	July 17-19, 2017	\$75.00 (registration)
Media Specialist/School 24	Princeton, NJ		
Anne Ortiz	Educational Leaders as Scholars	July 17-19, 2017	\$75.00 (registration)
Teacher/RPHS	Princeton, NJ		
Cora Quince	Educational Leaders as Scholars	July 17-19, 2017	\$75.00 (registration)
Principal for Fine Arts	Princeton, NJ		

Gina La Conte	Microsoft Excel Seminar, Fred Pryor Seminars	July 26 & 27, 2017	\$128.00 (registration)
Preschool Intervention & Referral Specialist	Parsippany, NJ		
Gisela Cuello	Microsoft Excel Seminar, Fred Pryor Seminars	July 26 & 27, 2017	\$128.00 (registration)
Senior Specialist/Early Childhood	Parsippany, NJ		
Nicholas Flattery	Microsoft Excel Seminar, Fred Pryor Seminars	July 26 & 27, 2017	\$128.00 (registration)
Business Analyst/Early Childhood	Parsippany, NJ		

TOTAL CONFERENCES: 9
TOTAL AMOUNT: \$834.00

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

Paterson Board of Education Standing Abstentions

Comm. Capers

- 4th and Inches
- Westside Park Group

Comm. Castillo

- Passaic County
- Scholastic (Transportation)

Comm. Cleaves

- Pertaining to herself

Comm. Hodges

- Pertaining to himself
- Jumpstart

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. Mimms

- Star Hope
- Planning Board of the City of Paterson
- Churches in the City of Paterson
- Brothers United Developing Spiritually (BUDS)

–School based program (JFK)

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, the Paterson Board of Education Policy Manual receives periodic revisions and additions, and

WHEREAS, the Governance Committee has reviewed policies for submission to the Board for first reading, and

WHEREAS, a special public comment session will be held at the June 7, 2017, meeting on said policies and regulations, now therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education approves the following policies for first reading:

P1510	Americans with Disabilities Act (M)
R1510	Americans with Disabilities Act (M)
P2415.06	Unsafe School Choice Option (M)
P2418	Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 – Students (M)
R2418	Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 – Students (M)
R2460.16	Special Education - Instructional Material to Blind or Print-Disabled Students (M)
P2464	Gifted and Talented Students (M)
P2622	Student Assessment (M)
P3160	Physical Examination (M)
R3160	Physical Examination (M)
P4160	Physical Examination (M)
R4160	Physical Examination (M)
P5116	Education of Homeless Children
P5460	High School Graduation (M)
P7446	School Security Program
P8350	Records Retention
P8600	Pupil Transportation
P8631	Bus Conduct

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the following policies have been recommended to be abolished:

P2320	Independent Study Programs
P5465	Early Graduation

FINALLY RESOLVED, that in the event any policy, part of a policy or section of the bylaws is judged to be inconsistent with law or inoperative by a court of competent jurisdiction or is invalidated by a policy or contract duly adopted by the State District

Superintendent or Board of Education, the remaining bylaws, policies, and parts of policies shall remain in full effect.

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

Comm. Irving: Just so you all know, the transportation policy was submitted to the Board. They were dropped off to each one. Please review it. The second reading and adoption will be at the 21st meeting.

On roll call all members voted in the affirmative, except Comm. Hodges who abstained. The motion carried.

Paterson Board of Education Standing Abstentions

Comm. Capers

- 4th and Inches
- Westside Park Group

Comm. Castillo

- Passaic County
- Scholastic (Transportation)

Comm. Cleaves

- Pertaining to herself

Comm. Hodges

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Comm. Irving

- Workforce Investment Board of Passaic County (WIB)
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Comm. Martinez

- New Jersey Community Development Corporation (NJCDC)

Comm. Mimms

- Star Hope
- Planning Board of the City of Paterson
- Churches in the City of Paterson
- Brothers United Developing Spiritually (BUDS)
–School based program (JFK)

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. 4

Whereas, The Paterson Public Schools is committed to providing student enrichment through various programs, initiatives and wishes to provide students with the opportunity to learn beyond the traditional school atmosphere; and

Whereas, John F. Kennedy Educational Complex Boys and Girls Track Team have won the Passaic County Championship and have advanced to the state sectionals;

Whereas, The track has qualified to compete in the NJSIAA groups- state track championship June 2, 2017 – June 3, 2017

Whereas, our school desires to compete in interscholastic sports, which foster the positive value of sportsmanship and teamwork through fair play

Be It Resolved, that the Board of Education shall remit payment as part of the district's regular bill list upon submission and approval of invoice and proper execution by John F. Kennedy Athletics Department through the district voucher and other documents which may be required by the proper fiscal management of public school district: and

1. Hotel Cost, \$0 cost to the district (15 Athletes 4 coaches) 6/2/2017 & 6/3/2017
Athletes and coaches will be staying at the Wingate by Wyndham, Egg Harbor, NJ 08234 NO COST TO DISTRICT FOR HOTEL
2. Transportation Cost not to exceed \$3500.00

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

Comm. Irving: Is this a confirming order?

Comm. Cleaves: It has already taken place.

Comm. Irving: When it's a confirming order there is normally documentation that comes with it. I don't remember seeing it. We're not going to be able to pay it. Who initiated the motion?

Ms. Williams: Mr. Cozart.

Comm. Irving: There's normally documentation in the cover sheet we do.

Comm. Capers: What's a confirming order?

Comm. Cleaves: It comes after the fact.

Comm. Irving: Who initiated the motion?

Comm. Cleaves: I rescind my motion.

Comm. Irving: There's normally a cover sheet that gets attached with the Board action.

Ms. Shafer: This is the track championship. As you go along you qualify. It probably happened at the end of May and the event was the first week in June. It happened in the middle of two Board meetings.

Comm. Irving: That's fine, but we still have a process. Cheryl, was there a cover sheet for it? It will get paid. Just make sure we have a cover sheet and we'll put in on the agenda for the 21st.

Comm. Cleaves: I rescind my motion.

Resolution No. 5

WHEREAS, the State District Superintendent forwarded Paterson Public Schools' preliminary 2017-2018 budget to the Commissioner of Education and the Passaic County Executive County Superintendent of Schools for review and approval on March 9, 2017, and

WHEREAS, the 2017-2018 budget for the state-operated Paterson Public School District was prepared consistent with the New Jersey Quality Single Accountability Continuum (NJQSAC) focusing on quality performance indicators in all five areas of school district effectiveness: Operations Management, Instruction and Program, Fiscal Management, Personnel and Governance; and

WHEREAS, the 2017-2018 budget was prepared consistent with the district's revised Fiscal Policy 6220 addressing budget preparation, with primary consideration given to educational priorities identified by the Board and Dr. Donnie W. Evans, Paterson State District Superintendent, and;

WHEREAS, consistent with 6A:23A-5.8, the following selected expenditures are identified as included in the 2017-2018 budget with either "not to exceed" appropriations in the case of "maximum travel" or professional services and extracurricular activities, the maximum expenditures for which can be exceeded with prior board approval:

	2016-17 <u>Pre-Budget</u>	1-Feb <u>YTD Actuals</u>	2017-18 <u>Budget</u>
Maximum Travel	\$296,478	\$49,001	\$168,705

2017-18

Budget

Professional Services

Legal	1,165,000
Engineering	100,000
Architect	125,000
OT/PT/Speech Services	425,938
Nursing Services	231,798
Audit Services	<u>125,000</u>

Total \$2,172,736

Extracurricular Activities

Band	8,715
Football	202,805
Volleyball Girls	49,881
Girls Basketball	102,386
Boys Basketball	103,186
Wrestling	45,103
Bowling	22,124
Boys Volleyball	48,703
Softball	67,213
Baseball	73,130
Indoor Track	63,454
Outdoor Track	117,860
Tennis	37,048
Golf	14,824
Cross Country Track	34,934
Cheerleaders	62,190
Soccer	77,590
Equipment Manager	11,824
Security Staff	56,000
Game Workers	105,840
Athletic Facilities Coordinator	36,000
Doctors	11,000
Reconditioning	80,000
Conferences	4,800
Drama	6,515
JROTC	21,570
Other Fees	<u>114,729</u>

Total \$1,579,424

WHEREAS, that Board of Education approved the 2017-2018 School Year budget on April 24, 2017, at a special meeting with the omitted transfer from the Operating Budget-PreK, in the amount of \$552,585,398; and

WHEREAS, the budget submitted by the District and approved for advertising by the Department of Education for the 2017-18 School Year consisted of the following, with revenues and appropriations balanced:

	<u>Budgeted</u>	<u>Local Tax Levy included</u>
General Fund Revenue		
Local Sources	\$ 47,455,676	\$ 41,455,956
State Aid	403,735,340	0
Federal Sources	1,176,484	0
Fund Balance	<u>15,451,793</u>	<u>0</u>
Total General Fund	\$ <u>467,819,293</u>	\$ <u>41,455,956</u>
Special Revenue Fund (net of operating budget transfers)		<u>Local Tax Levy included</u>
Local	\$ 2,275,105	
State Aid	52,554,511	0
Federal Aid	<u>28,632,489</u>	<u>0</u>
Total Special Revenue Fund	\$ <u>83,462,105</u>	\$ <u>0</u>
Debt Service		
Local Sources	\$ 505,858	\$ 505,858
State Aid	<u>798,142</u>	<u>0</u>
Total Debt Service	\$ <u>1,304,000</u>	\$ <u>505,858</u>
<u>Gross Budget</u>	\$ <u>552,585,398</u>	\$ <u>41,961,814</u>

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the State District Superintendent hereby fixes and determines that the amended amount of money necessary to be appropriated for the use of the public schools for the 2017-18 School Year is \$552,585,398 (five hundred fifty-two million, five hundred eighty-five thousand, three hundred ninety-eight dollars) of which \$41,455,956 (forty-one million, four hundred fifty-five thousand, nine hundred and fifty-six dollars) is the General Fund local tax levy; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the State District Superintendent hereby certifies that the reallocations and modifications needed to present a balanced 2017-18 with an adequate amount of funds to provide for a thorough and efficient education; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the State District Superintendent shall hereby forward to the Commissioner of Education of the State of New Jersey the budget statement, budget statement certification, form A4F (Certification and Report of School Taxes, 2017-2018 School Year) and supporting documentation as required by statute and code; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the 2017-2018 tentative budget passed on March 15, 2017, be amended as follows:

2017-2018		2017-2018
<u>Tentative Budget</u>	<u>Revision</u>	<u>Final Budget</u>

REVENUE

Tax Levy	10-1210	<u>42,616,723</u>	<u>(1,160,767)</u>	<u>41,455,956</u>
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GENERAL CURRENT EXPENSE

Instruction:

Regular Programs	11-1XX-100-XXX	\$ 2,666,096	\$ 4,614	\$ 2,670,710
SBB-Regular Program		11-1XX-100-XXX	27,555,646	(75,167)
<u>Guidance</u>	<u>11-000-218-104</u>	<u>5,509,432</u>	<u>(1,090,214)</u>	<u>4,419,218</u>
TOTALS		\$35,733,174	(\$1,160,767)	\$34,572,407

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

It was moved by Comm. Redmon, seconded by Comm. Rivera that Resolution No. 5 be adopted.

Comm. Capers: Before I vote I just want to make sure I'm clear. This is the tax levy that was submitted that we voted down.

Comm. Hodges: No.

Comm. Capers: I don't know what this is. Can somebody explain what this is?

Ms. Daisy Ayala: Good evening. The last presentation that we did to adopt the budget was to reduce the tax levy that we had put in as an increase. In doing so, the appropriation side had to be reduced as well. What we had presented to you guys was a little different than what Dr. Evans had presented. We have minutes saying that at a later date you would get a revision and amended copy to reflect what was discussed that evening, which is reduction of substitutes instead of what we had previously submitted and presented for your approval.

Comm. Irving: So this is the balance sheet that compensates for what we pulled from the tax levy that got funneled into the general fund.

Ms. Ayala: That's correct. It's a process that I have to get your approval for so it can match the DOE budget submission.

Comm. Capers: So we can balance the budget. Is that what you're saying?

Ms. Ayala: No. The budget was balanced.

Comm. Hodges: These are changes that she made.

Comm. Irving: In layman's terms, she balanced the line items so that they made sense.

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

- 4th and Inches

- Westside Park Group

Comm. Castillo

- Passaic County
- Scholastic (Transportation)

Comm. Cleaves

- Pertaining to herself

Comm. Hodges

- Pertaining to himself
- Jumpstart

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. Mimms

- Star Hope
- Planning Board of the City of Paterson
- Churches in the City of Paterson
- Brothers United Developing Spiritually (BUDS)
–School based program (JFK)

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. 6

WHEREAS, the Paterson Public School District encourages open public bidding for goods and services; and

WHEREAS, the Paterson Public School District recognizes the need for obtaining the lowest responsible bid for goods and services; and

WHEREAS, approving the following routes for student transportation services will support Priority 4, efficient and responsive operation, Goal 3, Increase Accountability for Performance; and

WHEREAS, formal public bids were solicited for student transportation services for the 2017-2018 extended and regular school year for in-district special needs and regular education students; and

WHEREAS, the solicitation was made by a public notice advertisement in the Herald News on Friday, May 12, 2017. Sealed bids were opened and read aloud on Wednesday, May 24, 2017 at 10:00 a.m. in the Conference Room C, 4th Floor, 90 Delaware Avenue, Paterson, NJ.

WHEREAS, the Department of Transportation as per attached bid analysis, recommends that the bid for student transportation services for the 2017-2018 extended school year, using PPS Bid#521-18 be awarded to the lowest responsible and responsive bidder; and second and third bidders in the event that the lowest bidder cannot perform as stated in our bid specifications

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, each vendor has been notified that no goods or services will be provided to the District without first receiving a fully executed purchase order; and that the terms on the purchase will be honored completely; if the vendor does not agree with the terms on the purchase order, the vendor will not provide any goods or services to the District until such time a new purchase order is completed and delivered with terms the vendor will honor; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that this resolution to award contracts to the lowest responsible bidder to transport special needs and regular education students to in-district programs as stipulated on the attached page(s) and shall take effect with the approval signature of the State District Superintendent. The approximate cost for the 2017-2018 extended school year for the attached list of contractors and routes is \$268,364.00.

It was moved by Comm. Redmon, seconded by Comm. Cleaves that Resolution No. 6 be adopted. On roll call all members voted in the affirmative, except Comm. Hodges who abstained. The motion carried.

Paterson Board of Education Standing Abstentions

Comm. Capers

- 4th and Inches
- Westside Park Group

Comm. Castillo

- Passaic County
- Scholastic (Transportation)

Comm. Cleaves

- Pertaining to herself

Comm. Hodges

- Pertaining to himself
- Jumpstart

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. Mimms

- Star Hope
- Planning Board of the City of Paterson
- Churches in the City of Paterson
- Brothers United Developing Spiritually (BUDS)
–School based program (JFK)

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. 7

Whereas, Dr. Martin L. King, Jr. Educational Complex/Paterson Public School 30 has a culture that is inviting and responsive to the needs of the students, parents and community and expands partnerships with Community Organizations, Agencies, and Institutions

Whereas, Dr. Martin L. King, Jr. Educational Complex Paterson Public School 30 has been chosen by 4th and Inches Foundation for a field day on June 9, 2017 from 9:00am – 11:00am with a Bouncy House, T-shirts for grades K-2 and Pizza for students in grade 8.

Whereas, the administration at Dr. Martin L. King, Jr. Educational complex has reviewed the field day activities provided by 4th and Inches Foundation – Bouncy House, T-shirts for the students in grades K-2 and Pizza for grade 8.

Now Therefore Be It Resolved, that the Paterson Board of Education approves the event with 4th and Inches Foundation to provide a Bouncy House and T-shirts for grades K-2 on June 9, 2017 from 9:00am – 11:00am and Pizza for grade 8.

It was moved by Comm. Cleaves, seconded by Comm. Martinez that Resolution No. 7 be adopted. On roll call all members voted in the affirmative, except Comm. Capers who abstained. The motion carried.

Paterson Board of Education Standing Abstentions

Comm. Capers

- 4th and Inches
- Westside Park Group

Comm. Castillo

- Passaic County
- Scholastic (Transportation)

Comm. Cleaves

- Pertaining to herself

Comm. Hodges

- Pertaining to himself
- Jumpstart

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. Mimms

- Star Hope
- Planning Board of the City of Paterson
- Churches in the City of Paterson
- Brothers United Developing Spiritually (BUDS)
–School based program (JFK)

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. 8

Whereas, the District is a State-Operated School District which has a need for Outside Legal Counsel; and

Whereas, pursuant to the Public School Contracts Law, N.J.S.A. 18A:18A-1 et seq., legal 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 State District Superintendent has the authority to award contracts for professional services and to enter 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 the following firm be reappointed as Special Legal Counsel, pursuant to the terms of a Professional Services Agreement, for the period May 27, 2017 through June 30, 2017:

Barto & Barto LLC
15 Warren Street
Hackensack, New Jersey 07601
NOT TO EXCEED \$30,000.00

It was moved by Comm. Cleaves, seconded by Comm. Martinez that Resolution No. 8 be adopted. On roll call all members voted in the affirmative, except Comm. Hodges who abstained. The motion carried.

**Paterson Board of Education
Standing Abstentions**

Comm. Capers

- 4th and Inches
- Westside Park Group

Comm. Castillo

- Passaic County
- Scholastic (Transportation)

Comm. Cleaves

- Pertaining to herself

Comm. Hodges

- Pertaining to himself
- Jumpstart

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. Mimms

- Star Hope
- Planning Board of the City of Paterson
- Churches in the City of Paterson
- Brothers United Developing Spiritually (BUDS)
–School based program (JFK)

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. 9

Recommendations/Resolution of the State Operated School District of the City of Paterson, County of Passaic, State of New Jersey, for the Custodial Services, RFP-401-18 for the 2017-2018, 2018-2019 and 2019-2020 school years.

Whereas, the Paterson Public School District recognizes the need for complying with the New Jersey competitive contracting pursuant to 18A:18A:4.3, and

Whereas, On the Authorization of the Business Administrator formal public Request for Proposals (RFP) were solicited for Custodial Services. Sealed proposals were mailed/e-mailed to nineteen (19) potential vendors, and two (2) responded, and

Whereas, this Request for Proposal (RFP) solicitation was made by advertised public notice appearing in The Bergen Record and The North Jersey Herald News on Friday, April 28, 2017. Sealed proposals were opened and read aloud on May 17, 2017 at 11:00 am in the Conference Room, 4th floor, 90 Delaware Ave, Paterson, NJ 07503 by the Purchasing Department; and

Whereas, each committee member evaluated the proposal(s) by assigning a score for each criterion using the scoring scale mentioned above. The weighted score was then calculated by multiplying the assigned score by the criterion weight. All weighted scores were then added to obtain a Total Technical Score. The proposal with the highest Total Technical Score is selected to receive a contract for Custodial Services, and

Whereas, that it is the recommendation of the Evaluation Committee that an APPA LEVEL 3 contract for Custodial Services, RFP-401-18, excluding the alternatives for Equipment, Supplies/Material, Landscaping, Exterminating and two Way Radios, be awarded as follow:

Pritchard Industries
147 Columbia Turnpike
Florham Park, NJ 07932
IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$6,883,744.71

Whereas, the awarding this contract is in line with the “Brighter Futures Strategic Plan 2014-2019”, Priority II – “Creating and Maintaining Healthy School Cultures”, goal 4 – “Create/maintain clean and safe schools that meet 21st century learning standards.” and

Now Therefore Be It Resolved, the State District Superintendent supports the above mentioned recommendation that the bid for Custodial Services RFP-401-18 be awarded to the lowest most responsive bidder for the 2017-2018, 2018-2019 and 2019-2020 school years in the amount not to exceed \$6,883,744.71 annually, during the three year contract period.

It was moved by Comm. Cleaves, seconded by Comm. Rivera that Resolution No. 9 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
• 4th and Inches

- Westside Park Group

Comm. Castillo

- Passaic County
- Scholastic (Transportation)

Comm. Cleaves

- Pertaining to herself

Comm. Hodges

- Pertaining to himself
- Jumpstart

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. Mimms

- Star Hope
- Planning Board of the City of Paterson
- Churches in the City of Paterson
- Brothers United Developing Spiritually (BUDS)
–School based program (JFK)

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

GENERAL BUSINESS

Items Requiring a Vote

Comm. Irving: Let's just get into the general business. Are there any questions about any action items? The Board members have the written reports. I'm going to ask each colleague to submit them. If there are any pressing questions, I'd like for them to be addressed now before we move into executive session.

Comm. Hodges: I do have a question that pertains to I&P-3 and I&P-4, one's a math program and the other is a literacy program.

Comm. Irving: Can we get a response for Dr. Hodges? Can we get some clarity?

Comm. Hodges: I know what they are. My real concern is we're paying money for these programs and repeatedly our test scores aren't that high. We're paying money for these programs. It's a grant. When are we going to develop our own in-house method of addressing these issues so that we cannot rely on the reading programs or the other programs? When are we going to do that? I don't see tremendous improvements with the reading programs that we do use. I know this is a grant, but the idea is how do we address language arts and math in a comprehensive manner in-house so that it benefits everybody, as opposed to this school using that and that school using the other? And how do we develop a way to roll that out to everybody? That's my real question. It's a rhetorical one because you're not going to be able to answer that tonight, but I really want to begin to think about that because we just can't go shopping when our test grades are low. We can't go shopping. We have to find a credible way to address these. If we took some of the money and actually went out and hired a specialist who could teach our teachers how to do some of these things or invent a districtwide approach, it would save us tons and it might be a little bit more effective. I'll forego the rest and just submit those. That issue in terms of math and language arts, we have all these programs. How do we begin to turn the focus away from buying things to developing things in-house and then rolling it out across the board?

Comm. Irving: Can we work on getting Dr. Hodges an answer for that?

Comm. Castillo: This program we can actually keep.

Comm. Irving: He's asking a much broader context.

Comm. Hodges: It's not a new question. You know what it is.

Ms. Peron: The grant actually has stipulations. They come with specific things that schools need to do. The school had to purchase an intervention program, instead of hiring or giving us the money to hire a reading specialist or develop mentalist. Those were the stipulations. An intervention program had to be found and purchased. Ms. Warren and I worked with Mr. Medley after this came to my office. We worked with him to really find the specific focus and the targets that he wanted to improve for certain grade levels. He had to spend this money in this way. I'm with you in terms of looking at how we address literacy and math across the district. In instances like this we would definitely lose the money. These are good resources for teachers to have in the classroom to help with intervention in reading and math. It's a different way and a different strategy and differentiates instruction for some of our kids that may need something different.

Comm. Hodges: I don't object to the program, but it offers the opportunity to have that discussion again. I think as money becomes tighter the discussion becomes more real. What's going to happen pretty soon is we're going to be asked to make choices about which reading program and so forth. Before we get to that point I'm hoping we develop something in-house that we can use comprehensively across the board and be able to train what few teachers we have remaining.

Ms. Warren: Duly noted. I just want to say that some work is under way so that we're examining the interventions that we're using in the district. Dr. Campbell is doing some of that work along with the assistant superintendents. We actually collected that data from our principals today. One of the stipulations of this grant is that there are strategies and professional development included with this resource. They have to have a plan for sustainability after the funds are gone.

Comm. Hodges: That sounds familiar.

Ms. Warren: The work that you mentioned is under way.

Comm. Hodges: Excellent. Thank you. It's another rhetorical question about the SAT testing program.

Ms. Peron: The Princeton Review. We did an RFP for our 21st Century learning community programs. In that grant we hire this year. Vendors are taking care of the extra-curricular programs in schools. We did an RFP and this was the agency that was awarded the contract for the summer program at International. 21st Century grants focus on career and college readiness. SAT prep is in line with that grant.

Comm. Hodges: My concern was finding a way to incorporate those techniques that they're teaching in our curriculum so that we don't have to have them taught, and in addition to that, finding ways to make that rigor so it becomes superfluous. That's the only comment I was making. We know that they're teaching some techniques. Let's find a way to take that and add it to our curriculum so that we don't need them anymore.

Ms. Peron: That conversation and discussion is being had and that's another collaboration with Dr. Campbell. We helped out and had a practice test this year with our students at John F. Kennedy on a Saturday morning and we had a great turnout. From that we want to develop more activities like that because we don't have the opportunity to give the practice test during the school day because of the time. That's actually in discussion as well.

Comm. Hodges: That's it. I'll mail the rest.

OTHER BUSINESS

It was moved by Comm. Martinez, seconded by Comm. Castillo that the Board goes into executive session to conduct a summary conference for the Superintendent's evaluation.

Comm. Hodges: At some point we need to discuss negotiations. We've not had a comprehensive discussion on negotiations and there are some items. We need to know what we're asking for, what they are asking for, and we're supposed to submit additional concerns from the Board. That hasn't happened in quite some time.

Mr. Murray: That will be fine. Mr. Rojas and I will be ready.

On roll call all members voted in the affirmative, except Comm. Rivera who voted no. The motion carried.

The Board went into executive session at 9:46 p.m.

The Board reconvened the meeting at 11:00 p.m.

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

The meeting was adjourned at 11:01 p.m.