

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

April 5, 2017 – 6:03 p.m.
Administrative Offices

Presiding: Comm. Christopher Irving, President
Comm. Chrystal Cleaves, Vice President

Facilitator: Kathleen Helewa, Field Service Representative
New Jersey School Boards Association

Present:
Dr. Donnie Evans, State District Superintendent
Robert Murray, Esq., General Counsel

*Comm. Emanuel Capers
Comm. Oshin Castillo
Comm. Manuel Martinez

Comm. Nakima Redmon
Comm. Flavio Rivera

Absent:
Comm. Jonathan Hodges
Comm. Lilisa Mimms

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

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:

**Special Meeting
April 5, 2017 at 6:00 p.m.
Administrative Offices
90 Delaware Avenue
Paterson, New Jersey**

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

Comm. Cleaves: I'd like to thank you all for attending this meeting this evening. We are going to begin the meeting with our Discussion on the Superintendent's Evaluation Process. We have a guest here with us, Board members. She will introduce herself.

DISCUSSION ON THE SUPERINTENDENT'S EVALUATION PROCESS

Ms. Kathleen Helewa: Thank you very much. My name is Kathleen Helewa and I am from the New Jersey School Boards Association. I am your Field Service Representative for this district and all the districts in Passaic County. Thank you very much for having me at the meeting tonight. I appreciate the invitation. We are going to discuss the evaluation process, as Comm. Cleaves noted. We are going to just go through a little bit of dos and don'ts and things that you need to know as you embark on evaluating your Superintendent. If you have any questions during the presentation, by all means don't hesitate to ask me about it. We'll start with the legal and ethical requirements of the process. We will discuss an overview of the process, the online evaluation system that the Commissioners will be using, and some effective strategies and tips for you all as you go through the evaluation system. I do have supporting materials. I do not have enough for every Commissioner so if we could share that would be ideal because we are just updating these right now in Trenton. I will see to it that you're sent enough for everybody. In the folders, we have a copy of the statutes and codes that are relevant to completing the Superintendent's evaluation process. This is a part of the QSAC governance section so you do need to complete it in a timely manner and in a way that complies with the statute. The copies that I'm referencing are in yellow right underneath the white copy of the slide. What we're talking about here is statute 18A:17-20.3 and the section of the code 6A:10-8.1. Basically, there are some timelines that you need to agree to, and also some conditions that you need to agree to at the outset with your Superintendent as you begin this process. The first thing that I'd like to note is that it's most important for the Board and the Superintendent to agree upon what instrument you will use to evaluate the Superintendent. As it happens, if you look on the second page, there should be another yellow sheet. I'm so sorry. I'm not familiar with these quite yet because we're just updating them, but there is an awful lot to the statute that the evaluations should ideally have in them. Our online system from New Jersey School Boards Association takes care of all of those so it is a very popular instrument that is used by Boards throughout the state. I understand that that is the instrument that the Paterson Board is going to use, which is ideal for tonight because I have screen shots and all of this stuff so we'll go through it together. By July 1, to be in compliance and make sure you don't lose any points under QSAC once you gain the governance section back in QSAC, everything needs to be completed in the process by the first of July. That means that your Superintendent needs to be presented with a complete document that is compiled of all of the Board members' thoughts and opinions and assessments, or at least the majority, and the Board President and Superintendent will sign it. As long as that's done by July 1 you're in good shape. After it's all signed, the Superintendent, if he so chooses, can attach to that evaluation supporting documentation and a statement. That needs to be done 10 teaching days after the evaluation is presented. It does not have to be approved by the Board, but it will be attached to his formal evaluation. When the Board has a document together for your Superintendent, to take a back step, we recommend that there is a summary conference that takes place. It's actually in the statute so it's not only a good idea to do it, but it's rather important that you do it. The Board has a meeting in executive session in which they present the Superintendent with the document. The Board President, or whoever is presiding over that meeting, goes through it with him, reads it, and has commentary. It can be as formal or as informal as you'd like, but it's important that the whole Board be part of that process, with the exception of Board members who are conflicted out of the process, which we'll get to later. Not everyone who is on the Board might be able to participate because there may be conflicts if you have family members who work in the school district. On the slide here, I have a couple of visuals that will also be in your packet. If you have immediate family members who work in the school district you are not to participate in the process of reviewing the Superintendent.

Comm. Irving: They need to live in your household. Is that the caveat?

Ms. Helewa: Immediate family members are right here – parent, child, spouse or sibling residing in the same household. Correct. However, another one is a relative. If your relative is employed by the district, here is a whole slew of things. We've got your spouse, your parent, your stepparent, your siblings, your this and your that. If any of these people belonging to you work in the district then according to the School Ethics Commission, which has made these decisions... It's not in the statute, interestingly enough, but the School Ethics Commission has come out with a few advisory opinions that state that if you have a relative, any of these people, working in the district you are conflicted and you may not participate in the process. If anyone has any questions about that, I'm happy to answer them because I know it's...

Comm. Cleaves: The process meaning just the verbal process or also the written process?

Ms. Helewa: The entire thing, unfortunately.

Comm. Cleaves: The entire thing?

Ms. Helewa: The entire thing. You can't do the written and you can't be part of the summary conference. It's the whole nine yards here. You're out.

Comm. Cleaves: Got you. Thank you.

Ms. Helewa: You're welcome. If there are any questions on that, we always advise that you consult your Board Attorney. There are two things that are most difficult for Board members when it comes to the Superintendent's evaluation process. One of those is keeping to the timeline. It's difficult. We have a lot to do. It's a pretty comprehensive process and it's not just a matter of a Board member or trustee or Commissioner filling out a paper really fast and putting them into a pile and handing them to the Superintendent. The Board President or his designee has a lot of work to do to get all these together. So that requires a lot of commitment from the Board and the first commitment you need to make is to stick to the timetable and commit as a Board to get this done before July 1. This is the cycle that we recommend at New Jersey School Boards where the Superintendent begins the process. He reviews himself first online through the New Jersey School Boards website, which we'll get to a little bit later, thereby opening the door for all of you to go in and enter your evaluations of him. After that, I collate them into a confidential package, which I present to your Board President, and your Board President will present those results to the Board. The Board has a meeting in executive session about how everyone ranked the Superintendent's performance based on the criteria in the evaluation. These are all anonymous contributions, you're not going to know who said what, and you'll come to a consensus on what you want that review to say. Then the Board President puts together a narrative review. So, as you can see here from our nifty slide, you have a November election date. We recommend that the Superintendent begins the process in April or early May, at the latest. The Board does its' part. The Commissioners do their individual parts in May. The Board discusses those results in executive session sometime in May or June. Then you have your summary conference in June so that everything is done and wrapped up by the first of July. I added this particular visual on goalsetting because now that we've discussed the mechanics of the process, I want you to think about what you will be evaluating your Superintendent on. It's not going to be something that's off the top of your head, obviously. You're going to need some kind of

criteria and basis on which to evaluate your Superintendent. In the circles about goalsetting, if you've done the New Jersey School Boards training I'm sure you've seen this slide before, what we're looking at are three of those circles – the Superintendent goals that the Board sets for its Superintendent annually, the district goals that the Board sets for its district, and if you have merit goals for your Superintendent. Is that the case here? I don't think you all have that.

Comm. Irving: The state does that.

Ms. Helewa: The state does that so you guys don't have that. What you're going to be focusing on are your district goals and I understand you all have a strategic plan here. I was able to access that on your website. I wasn't sure if you all had annual goals. Do you set annual goals here? Or are you working off of your strategic plan?

Comm. Irving: We have our strategic plan, but we also set annual goals through School Boards.

Ms. Helewa: Right. So those are what you will be using if you have access to them on your website or in your Board minutes. Beautiful! So that's what you'll be looking for. I'm not sure if you have seen this particular sheet from School Boards. It's a pretty popular one. Generally, we recommend that Boards use these throughout the year because when you are evaluating the Superintendent or the Board it really shouldn't just be a one-time thing where you're sitting down in April and May. You should really be keeping these goals and the Superintendent's performance in mind throughout the year and how it's relating to the goals that the Board set. If you were to use something like this, which I can get you copies of if you don't have them already, you do your goal statement at the top and the major activities that the Superintendent is using to accomplish that goal are listed on the left. There are a few other categories, such as the staff that he will need to participate in the major activities to accomplish the goal, the resources they will be using, the timeline that he expects them to be able to complete their tasks, and how he will measure whether or not the goal has been successfully attained. It's just a streamlined way of thinking about it. The chart itself is not important. It's orderly, but these are the components that you should be thinking about when you sit down to say how we did on our goals. Well, who worked on it, how long did it take, what do we need to accomplish it, and how do we know that it was successful or not? That's the kind of thinking that you need to embrace as you go in to review your Superintendent and actually to review yourselves too when you do your Board self-evaluation. We're already past bullet point one on initiating the evaluation process. The Board and Superintendent have agreed to use the New Jersey School Boards model. We've talked about the calendar. When you're using New Jersey School Boards, the Superintendent self-assessment sets everything in motion. So your Superintendent will log onto the website. Once that portal is open, then you guys can all start to participate from it. This is a sample one. What I'd like you all to do now is to open your packets. I believe it is in blue and it should be on the right side. There is a sample of the process that we'll be using. How many of you have been able to participate in the Superintendent's evaluation via the New Jersey School Boards website in the past? Oh, okay. Does anybody have any questions about these indicators? This is going to be a mighty short presentation. I heard 30 minutes, but I can do this in 10. Well, alright. Sounds good! Well, let's walk down Memory Lane, shall we. You're familiar with the format. That's what it looks like. I suggest that Boards use these as a template. You write down your thoughts beforehand so that when you're sitting at the computer it's just a matter of data entry. Here are the standards that you'll be measuring. You're familiar with them already. Then these are the overall considerations of the standards in part three. Basically, what are the

greatest strengths? What do you want the Superintendent to focus on? What should the Board do to help the Superintendent achieve greater success? You probably already know this but just in case we'd like to make sure the Board realizes they need to issue a Rice Notice to their Superintendent. It doesn't necessarily have to be for tonight because we're not talking about his performance, in particular. We're just talking about the process. But once you all start talking about his actual performance it needs to be Riced. Again, like we mentioned, we discuss the document as a full Board process and then President Irving will tabulate them and get them all into a nice narrative summary. That majority document bullet point I didn't hit just yet but it's an important one. The sentiments that are expressed by the majority of the Board members are what go in the summary. There may be, and usually are, outliers. Just because you say it does not guarantee it's going to get a spot in the narrative. If no one else agrees with you or if there are only two Commissioners who share that opinion, it will not find its way into the document. It is recommended that you discuss it with the Superintendent, not who said it but that it's been said, just so that he knows, but it will not be part of his formal review. Here is a sample. I'm not sure if you guys use this particular sample, but I will be sending you a couple of templates for you to use. I'm guessing you've seen them before, but you'll see them again. That's an example there. We've talked about this. I think we're good. Now, let's look at some screen shots for the evaluation itself. This is our new website. You will go into Our Services and click on the Field Services tab. Some people do have, I will admit, difficulty navigating the website so you may want to pay attention to this part. It's been recently revamped. If you start the process and you run into a snag, please call me and let me know. I will guide you through it. I'm expecting calls so it's really not an issue. Once you click on Field Services, you go to the left side and you'll see Online Evaluations where that red arrow is. The red arrow will not be on the screen. I just have it on the slide to direct your eyes towards it. Click on Access the Evaluation Tools Now and it's pretty self-explanatory. The Superintendent one is at the bottom there and you'll begin the Superintendent process. There are also some questions you can click on just in case you want to do this without bothering me, although you're not bothering me, trust me. Then it's like any other kind of thing that you do for New Jersey School Boards. You log in with your user name and password, and then you begin. So, this will pop up and you scroll down a little bit. That trips people up. The way that the website is configured now, people don't realize that you have to scroll down. It's not evident that you have to scroll down an awful lot of time to get to where you're going and this is one of those examples. Scroll on down and proceed to the evaluation at the very bottom of all of that information. That should be easy enough. What happens is once you start the process, I get notice that you're all doing it and I keep my eyes on it. When I see that you all have completed it is when I compile it for you. You don't all, by statute or code, need to complete it. It just needs to be a majority document. So I'll work with the Board President. If we have people who are just not completing it and you're getting close to that deadline and you want me to run it, I'll run it for you. But that's a decision that you need to make for the Board after asking, maybe even repeatedly, for people to participate in the process. It is important that everybody share their voice in this. It really is one of the most important jobs of a Board of Education. What I'd like to note for you all, and this kind of comes into the whole timeline thing, is that once that document is compiled and delivered, we hold onto it in our system until the 31st of December. I can access it until the 31st of December. I can access contributions until the 31st of December, even if we haven't completed the process by July 1. Once the 31st of December is over, I cannot access this year's contributions at all. Sometimes Boards just don't get around to doing this and they try to do it in January and it's just unfortunately not something that we can do - all the more reason to keep that timeline going on. It's also the same process for the Board self-evaluation. It's the same tool. I have a copy of that in your packets as well. If you have any questions about the Board self-evaluation, I can entertain that too. Do you all do

your Board self-evaluation? It's not statutorily required, but I commend you for doing it. That pretty much concludes my presentation on the Superintendent's evaluation. Unless anyone has any questions, I think we are finished. Are we good?

*Comm. Capers enters the meeting at 6:25 p.m.

Comm. Irving: Are there any questions?

Ms. Helewa: Alright. Thank you very much. I'll give you all my card and I will send extra packets to you. Like I said, they're new and I want everybody to have a copy of it just for reference.

Comm. Irving: We appreciate it. Thank you so much for taking your time to come down to go over this process.

Ms. Helewa: My pleasure. Any time and I look forward to working with the Board however you all need me.

Comm. Irving: Thank you.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

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

Comm. Irving: Are there any comments from the public relative to the Superintendent's evaluation?

Ms. Marcella Simadiris: Peace and blessings. I apologize for being late. I missed a lot of it. I was just wondering if there is any portion on the evaluation... Are you the voice for the whole public? Is there any opportunity to get any community engagement involved in the evaluation process? Did they speak on that?

Ms. Helewa: No. It is a Board evaluation of the Superintendent. The public does not participate.

Ms. Simadiris: And this goes all throughout the whole...

Comm. Irving: Yes, every single district and every single Board.

Ms. Helewa: Every district from Sussex County to Cape May.

Ms. Simadiris: Thank you.

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

Comm. Irving: Just procedurally, so everyone knows what we're doing, we need to adjourn the Superintendent's evaluation meeting and then go into the regular workshop meeting that we need to have.

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

The meeting was adjourned at 6:29 p.m.