

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

April 7, 2016 - 6:34 p.m.  
John F. Kennedy High School

Presiding: Comm. Christopher Irving, President

Present:

Dr. Donnie Evans, State District Superintendent  
Ms. Eileen Shafer, Deputy Superintendent  
Sidney Sayovitz, Esq., General Counsel

\*Comm. Oshin Castillo  
Comm. Chrystal Cleaves, Vice President  
Comm. Jonathan Hodges

Comm. Errol Kerr  
\*Comm. Lilisa Mimms  
Comm. Nakima Redmon

Absent:

Comm. Flavio Rivera  
Comm. Kenneth Simmons

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

Comm. Redmon read the Open Public Meetings Act:

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

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

**Workshop Meeting  
April 7, 2016 at 6:30 p.m.  
John F. Kennedy High School  
61-127 Preakness 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: Dr. Evans, do you have any presentations?

Dr. Evans: No, we don't and I have no other items to report. However, as per a discussion you and I had recently, I would like to request that a special meeting of the Board be scheduled to discuss options for student assignment and program reassignment involving Hani Awadallah and School 16, and then to update the Board as

well on the activity involving the temporary relocation of Don Bosco. If that could occur within the next couple of weeks, I would greatly appreciate it.

Comm. Irving: It's been scheduled for next week.

Dr. Evans: It's already been scheduled?

Comm. Irving: It's already on your calendar. We're meeting next week to discuss it.

Dr. Evans: Fantastic. Thank you.

## **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

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

Mr. Corey Teague: Good evening folks. I just wanted to come and say thank you for taking that first step. I know many people in the community probably think that that was all there was to it, but I know as well as you do that that's just the beginning of a much larger battle. I do thank you. I'm not just going to come down here to scream and yell when things don't go right, but when things go well. That was a good position that you took past night and I thank you. Let's continue to push forward and I'll continue to do my best to keep the parents informed and keep them involved in the days ahead. I'm sure it's going to get pretty hairy, but I'm going to do my part in the community to keep the informed. Thank you.

\*Comm. Castillo and Comm. Mimms enter the meeting at 6:40 p.m.

Ms. Julie Pagan: My name is Julie Pagan. I just started coming to the meetings and I'm learning a lot. I'm sure there are a lot of other people who just started coming. A lot of stuff I don't like, but parents have to come and start yelling and knocking on everybody else's doors and showing up. I know that. I don't have a child in the public school system, but I do work with a lot of kids. I tutor them. I volunteer with my neighbors and my family. One of the kids that I work with died last week. He was a student here. Was there grief counseling? A lot of kids are talking about it on Facebook. It's not only at Kennedy because the kids are mixed everywhere. They're in every school, kids from Eastside and Kennedy. If you didn't have grief counseling, could you just try to reach out to those kids? They're hurting. If you had gone to the funeral on Sunday it was horrible. Our kids see this too much. It was an accident. This time it was an accident, but there are a lot of killings. Two 22-year-olds died last week. Those are babies. I had a couple of questions Dr. Evans or anyone can answer. Yesterday you guys were talking about Tech and charter schools getting money. What happens to the kids that they kick out? Do we get that money back? Why don't they give us at least some of it back, especially if it's in October at the start of the school year? What do we have to do? We have to come up with that extra money now for this new kid? That's not fair. If they're taking that money, they're taking the best of the best. We say that and we know that. Work with them a little bit harder. Keep them there. You already have the money. I know we're a public school and we're supposed to take them. We are, but it's not fair if they already said they were going to take them. They have a whole bunch of guidance counselors. They have everything there. They should be able to keep them and help them out instead of sending them back to us if they're not going to help us with the money. That's just a suggestion. You said there were three nurses at 90 Delaware and you're taking two out. Is there a school at 90 Delaware? If there isn't, why wouldn't you

just take all three out? It's just adults at 90 Delaware. Somebody can call 911 just like they can do it at the schools. It's not fair to the kids. Asthma is very serious. I work for a pulmonologist and there's no time to waste. There isn't. If you can't breathe, that's it. A nurse will know what to do. Hopefully she will be able to help them. What if a kid has an allergic reaction? They can't carry their Epi-Pens with them. They have them in the nurse's office. Who's going to give it to them? One more thing and I'll sit down. I didn't know about this meeting. Someone texted me. At the end of the meetings if you could just announce that there's a meeting tomorrow or the next meeting so people can just know them. I don't look online all the time. I want to come to the meetings and I know a lot of people do, even if they look at it on TV. That's just another suggestion, if you could just say when the next couple of meetings are. I would appreciate it. Thank you.

Comm. Irving: Just so you know, there will be a meeting next Wednesday at 90 Delaware. It will be a special meeting. I like the suggestion that at the end of each meeting we announce what our next one will be. Thank you for that.

Ms. Doris Pagan: Good evening, Doris Pagan from Paterson Education Fund. I'd just like to congratulate you, the Board, on voting no to the budget because it does not provide a thorough and efficient education for our students. Thank you for that. Now that you voted down the budget, what's next? We say well done. Thank you. Now let's get to work. We urge you all to continue to fight for full funding of the School Funding Reform Act. Please. Thank you.

Comm. Irving: Let me get a motion to close and then I'll let Dr. Evans respond. That question about the nurses is actually a really good question. There is a very viable reason why we do have nurses at 90 Delaware.

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

Dr. Evans: I'm going to ask both Ms. Shafer and Lisa to fill in any gaps I leave. The nurses are there to serve special purposes. One of them actually works for Lisa Vainieri in registration because as students come in there is medical information and medical queries that have to be completed and a qualified medical professional has to be the person completing that. If we don't have anyone there then we have to make other arrangements with the parents to get that information or that screening and satisfy the requirements for registration. A second one is there to be available to help in whatever area is needed in our building. We have individuals there who also have medical needs and issues. Typically that's a person that's shared with another site and isn't necessarily there full-time.

Ms. Shafer: In addition to the one that's responsible for central registration, there's a supervisor that oversees all the nurses in the district. Then there are two nurses in her office that are called floaters. They go into schools and substitute when nurses are out. What we're going to do is move those two into schools to cover schools permanently and now we're looking for a pool of school nurse substitutes that we would be able to call upon if a nurse is absent.

Comm. Irving: Thank you. We'll do resolutions for a vote and then we'll go through the respective action items. Dr. Hodges is here for I&P. I'll take care of Operations. Comm. Rivera isn't here so I'll at least facilitate the conversation around Fiscal Management. Comm. Cleaves is here for Personnel. I'll take care of Governance. If

the Technology Committee hasn't met yet, I don't know if Dr. Hodges has any comments.

Comm. Redmon: We haven't met, Mr. President.

Comm. Irving: It's not a big deal. We can just skip that piece. If Parent/Community has a report or something to share, I'd love to hear at a later time about the report we have in front of us because it seems pretty robust as well.

## **RESOLUTIONS FOR A VOTE AT THE WORKSHOP MEETING:**

### **Resolution No. 1**

BE IT RESOLVED, that the list of bills and claims dated March 31, 2016, beginning with vendor number 86 and ending with vendor number 799535, in the amount of \$20,884,606.03; 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. Redmon, seconded by Comm. Cleaves that Resolution No. 1 be adopted. On roll call all members voted in the affirmative, except Comm. Hodges who voted no, Comm. Hodges who abstained on anything pertaining to himself, the YMCA, and Jumpstart, Comm. Mimms who abstained, and Comm. Irving who abstained on anything pertaining to the Workforce Investment Board and Passaic County One Stop, if necessary. The motion carried.**

### **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.

<b>STAFF MEMBER</b>	<b>CONFERENCE</b>	<b>DATE</b>	<b>AMOUNT</b>
Jahmel K. Drakeford	Safe Schools SLE Required Trainings 2015-2016 School Year	April 4, 5, 6, 13 and 14, 2016; May 12, 2016; 1 online course	\$705.00 (registration)
Business Teacher/BTMF @ JFK	Various Locations, NJ		

Gorki Marcelo	Safe Schools SLE Required Trainings 2015-2016 School Year	April 4, 5, 6, 13 and 14, 2016; May 12, 2016; 1 online course	\$705.00 (registration)
Business Teacher/BTMF @ JFK	Various Locations, NJ		
Sarin Ahmed	Teacher Learning Center: Motivating and Managing Hard to Reach, Uninterested and Disruptive Students	April 13, 2017	\$160.75 (registration)
Teacher/BTMF @ JFK	Fairfield, NJ		
Halime Bici	Teacher Learning Center: Motivating and Managing Hard to Reach, Uninterested and Disruptive Students	April 13, 2017	\$160.75 (registration)
Teacher/BTMF @ JFK	Fairfield, NJ		
Alexis Bigirimana	Teacher Learning Center: Motivating and Managing Hard to Reach, Uninterested and Disruptive Students	April 13, 2017	\$160.75 (registration)
Teacher/BTMF @ JFK	Fairfield, NJ		
Vivian Bumbaco	Teacher Learning Center: Motivating and Managing Hard to Reach, Uninterested and Disruptive Students	April 13, 2017	\$160.75 (registration)
Teacher/BTMF @ JFK	Fairfield, NJ		
Azza Eltawil	Teacher Learning Center: Motivating and Managing Hard to Reach, Uninterested and Disruptive Students	April 13, 2017	\$160.75 (registration)
Teacher/BTMF @ JFK	Fairfield, NJ		
Ricardo Llanos	Teacher Learning Center: Motivating and Managing Hard to Reach, Uninterested and Disruptive Students	April 13, 2017	\$160.75 (registration)
Teacher/BTMF @ JFK	Fairfield, NJ		
Jorge Osoria	Teacher Learning Center: Motivating and Managing Hard to Reach, Uninterested and Disruptive Students	April 13, 2017	\$160.75 (registration)
Teacher/BTMF @ JFK	Fairfield, NJ		
Daisy Ayala	NJASBO Environmentally Preferable Purchasing (aka Green Purchasing)	April 14, 2016	\$50.00 (registration)
Business Administrator	Rockaway, NJ		
Kristin Kosky	NJASBO Environmentally Preferable Purchasing (aka Green Purchasing)	April 14, 2016	\$50.00 (registration)
Assistant Business Administrator	Rockaway, NJ		
Maria Choy	IDP Institute for Professional Development	April 15, 2016	\$99.00 (registration)
Purchasing Analyst	Totowa, NJ		

Kim Johnson	IDP Institute for Professional Development	April 15, 2016	\$99.00 (registration)
Purchasing Specialist	Totowa, NJ		
Laurie Newell	Turnaround School Leadership Project Grant Leaders Conference	April 24-26, 2016	\$1,222.50 (transportation, lodging, meals)
Chief Reform & Innovation Officer	Washington, DC		
Jonathan Hodges	NJSBA iSTEAM NASA Field Trip	May 6, 2016	\$140.87 (registration, transportation)
Board Member	Greenbelt, MD		
Errol Kerr	NJSBA iSTEAM NASA Field Trip	May 6, 2016	\$140.87 (registration, transportation)
Board Member	Greenbelt, MD		
Neville Williams	IDP Institute for Professional Development	June 17, 2016	\$152.67 (registration, transportation)
Supervisor of Purchasing	Neptune, NJ		

**TOTAL CONFERENCES:** 17  
**TOTAL AMOUNT:** \$4,490.16

**It was moved by Comm. Redmon, seconded by Comm. Castillo that Resolution No. 2 be adopted. On roll call all members voted as follows:**

Comm. Castillo: Yes.

Comm. Cleaves: Yes.

Comm. Hodges: I abstain on anything that pertains to me and yes for everything else.  
(Abstain YMCA and Jumpstart)

Comm. Kerr: I abstain on anything with my name, but yes otherwise.

Comm. Mimms: Yes.

Comm. Redmon: Yes.

Comm. Irving: Yes. (Abstain from Workforce Investment Board and Passaic County One Stop)

**The motion carried.**

### **Resolution No. 3**

Whereas, the operation of public schools that are clean, safe, and aligned with 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning Standards is Goal 4 of Priority 2 of the 2014-2019 Strategic Plan for the Paterson Public School District (the "District");

Whereas, the District is the lessee of certain real property located at 200 Sheridan Street in Paterson, New Jersey pursuant to a Lease Agreement (the "Lease") between the District, as tenant, and Spectrachem Realty LLC, as landlord;

Whereas, the parties previously extended the term of the Lease until March 31, 2016; and

Whereas, the parties now agree to extend the Lease on a month-to-month basis until June 30, 2016, with no other change in Lease terms or conditions.

Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved That, the District approves this extension of its Lease Agreement with Spectrachem Realty LLC, on a month-to-month basis from April 1, 2016 through June 30, 2016, at a monthly rate of \$30,666.05, for a total cost not to exceed \$91,998.15.

**It was moved by Comm. Cleaves, seconded by Comm. Castillo that Resolution No. 3 be adopted.**

Comm. Irving: Mr. Morlino, I know we said we were not going to sign onto a lease until the repairs that we had specified were done. I assume since the Board is now receiving a lease those repairs have been done and that's why we're going to the month-to-month.

Mr. Steve Morlino: The repairs are almost completed so we're going month-to-month until all the repairs are completed and we work out a lease. In the interim, we're looking for an appraisal for that property.

Comm. Irving: Okay. Are there any other questions?

**On roll call all members voted in the affirmative, except Comm. Hodges who abstained, Comm. Hodges who abstained on anything pertaining to himself, the YMCA, and Jumpstart, and Comm. Irving who abstained on anything pertaining to the Workforce Investment Board and Passaic County One Stop, if necessary. The motion carried.**

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

Whereas, In compliance with N.J.A.C. 6A:7, all school districts are required to develop and submit to the New Jersey Department of Education a Comprehensive Equity Plan by and

Whereas, the Comprehensive Equity Plan must cover school years 2016-2019, to enable the district to address identified equity needs affecting its facilities, programs, pupils, or staff in accordance to state and federal laws; and now therefore

Therefore Be It Resolved, that the Paterson Board of Education approves the submission of the Comprehensive Equity Plan to the New Jersey Department of Education for its authorization of the implementation of the plan.

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

Comm. Kerr: What is that plan like?

Comm. Irving: Can you explain what the Comprehensive Equity Plan is?

Dr. Evans: Let me ask Mr. Rojas to come forward and do that.

Comm. Irving: We got it in our packet as well.

Mr. Luis Rojas: Good afternoon. It's a three-year plan that talks about Affirmative Action and just ensuring that we comply with all federal and state regulations.

Comm. Kerr: That's good enough.

Mr. Rojas: I have a copy if you want to see it.

Comm. Kerr: Thank you.

Comm. Irving: Are there any other questions?

**On roll call all members voted in the affirmative, except Comm. Hodges who voted no, Comm. Hodges who abstained on anything pertaining to himself, the YMCA, and Jumpstart, and Comm. Irving who abstained on anything pertaining to the Workforce Investment Board and Passaic County One Stop, if necessary. The motion carried.**

## **GENERAL BUSINESS**

### **Items Requiring a Vote**

#### ***Instruction and Program***

Comm. Irving: No formal action is being taken tonight, but we do want to entertain any questions from those who are not on the I&P committee and hear the report.

Comm. Hodges: While I do have minutes that were written by the district, I don't have my own personal minutes so I won't give those. I'll simply say to you that I'll be better prepared. The meeting took place on Monday and I've not had a chance given the other meetings to fully compose all the meeting notes, particularly since we spent a lot of time during the curriculum meeting. I'll simply say some of the highlights. We looked at the social studies curriculum, which has been put into place. There are a number of items that we covered. Certainly, we talked about the AP portion. We talked about some of the features of the curriculum. For instance, we talked about mock trial presentations, moving out of rote memory, moving into debating practices with the students and getting them to look at analysis as part of the social studies curriculum as opposed to just memorizing. There are other items that we covered, but I don't want to go into all of them right now.

Comm. Irving: With regard to Item I&P16, that's the PD for the Young Men's Academy. Given all the conversations we've had over the past few days, has the I&P committee had the opportunity to speak with the principal about his vision for the program? If so, can the Board be privy to that conversation in a presentation? In light of what we know the school has ended up this year we know what the intention was in driving this. I want to make sure on the record that the Board has the information necessary to make sure that this program is supported. I'm not sure if you guys had that opportunity.

Comm. Hodges: We didn't go into his total vision, only as much as it revolved around the resolution in place. We talked at length about some of the concerns we had about the professor-in-residence, which is one of the features that he was trying to promote. He says that what he wanted to do was present a program that involved a lot more hands-on operations for students and that the professor-in-residence was going to



assist in this type of learning. Our male students get penalized because they're very active. They're moving around and people see that as being disruptive or being unable to exhibit self-control. What he wanted to do was channel that into useful activities by giving them hands-on experiences with projects they could do with their hands. This would enable them to express themselves and at the same time learn. We were concerned because obviously we've had a number of professors-in-residence in the district and we've not necessarily seen the return on investment there or have been able to verify the return on investment. There were a lot of questions about how you demonstrate that what the professor-in-residence has done has yielded any at all value. In fact, there was overwhelming pushback. Because of the news of his program if it passed the Board we asked him to look at what they're presenting and what the professor-in-residence is doing and have them provide us a statistical analysis of worth and value for their time spent here. They have to justify that.

Comm. Irving: Can I make a request of you? Once we work out where the boys will be moving within the district, can we have a presentation to the full Board about this program, where it is presently, where the principal sees it needs to go, and the resources needed to do that?

Comm. Hodges: I'm not sure that they know that yet. I think the curriculum committee has asked them to present a more comprehensive discussion on science to find out what we're going to do given the enormous challenges ahead of us in that area. It might be something we can bring up in May once he's gotten his feet on the ground, he knows where he's headed, and the resources he has available so he can map it out. I have no objections to that.

Comm. Irving: Sure. If it's okay with Dr. Evans, at the May workshop can we have a presentation on the Young Men's Academy? By then we would have made a decision for location. The location is just one small piece to a much bigger part of the pie, which is the direction of that school and the admittance criteria used to select young men into the program. I think a lot of that will have to come from the principal himself and his ability to share with the Board how he sees that process unfolding over the next few years.

Comm. Hodges: Is there anything else the committee wants to chime in on regarding that discussion? If not, I'll move ahead. There is a trip and there was a grave concern that there wasn't Board chaperons. I think that needs to be reviewed and certainly addressed. I'm not quite sure how we can measure the true worth and value of these trips overseas if the Board is not there to monitor very carefully and to ensure the safety of our children. I will save the rest for my formal report in the next meeting.

## ***Operations***

Comm. Irving: The Operations Committee met on April 5 at 5:30 p.m. Admittedly, I will let you all know I was not there. Unfortunately, my flight was delayed in Mexico and I was stuck in Cozumel for an extra day. I know you all were thinking about me during that point in time. My flight was delayed so I had to miss the actual subcommittee meeting. Comm. Simmons stepped in to facilitate the meeting. I know Comm. Mimms was ill that night as well. The staff members present were Dr. Barker, Ms. Vainieri, Ms. Lepore and Dr. Newell. There are only five action items. O-5 through O-26 are out of district placements. There were three questions posed. The first question was about O-4, to approve the award for the medical drug evaluation screening services. That is a new contract that is needed due to the budget cuts last year and the uptick in the number of students who are now being tested. Comm. Kerr, I know that was a question

you asked Ms. Lepore about the number of students who were being tested for substances. I assume that was answered. O-3 was a transportation resolution. Lastly, O-2 was the approval of the amended transportation contract. Athletics needed to go out to bid for that. We need to bring that back in the amount to make sure they don't exceed the bids. Are there any questions on the Operations resolutions that are here?

### ***Fiscal Management***

Comm. Irving: Fiscal has not met yet this month. We met in March, but we've not had a meeting for February. At the March meeting Comm. Rivera has a report. Ms. Ayala, help me out with just a head nod. I know we have one of your staff members who writes the report for us. Do we have a copy of that report? Has that been sent to the Board yet?

Ms. Daisy Ayala: I do not. Unfortunately, she left sick and went to the hospital yesterday so I don't have the minutes. It was a very brief meeting. We went over the bills list and discussed some of the things in the budget. That was about it.

Comm. Irving: If we can just get the formal minutes of the meeting so the Board has them that would be great. At the meeting the bills list was thoroughly discussed and signed off on. In addition to that, we discussed action items F-1 through F-19. In addition to that, we had a lengthy conversation about the tax levy and the conversation for facilities centered around the process for lead. Mr. Morlino apprized us of the information that Dr. Evans gave us last night. Are there any questions for F-1 through F-19?

Comm. Hodges: There's a concern regarding F-19. I'm going to be very brief about this concern. There's a certain public official who's listed as part of that package and that public official is listed as receiving a campaign contribution. There may be some Board members on this panel that could be conflicted. You need to make sure legal clears that before you move forward or have any further discussions regarding F-19. I would be particularly careful because that company was removed because of some prior considerations that were not working to the benefit of this district. So I would look at that very carefully before you move forward.

Comm. Irving: Sure. I'll have legal look into it.

Comm. Hodges: Please do.

Comm. Irving: I think you're talking about the disclosure form that was submitted. We'll have him look into it. Thank you. Are there any other questions on Finance?

### ***Personnel***

Comm. Cleaves: The Personnel Committee met on April 4. The presiding officer was myself and members present were Comm. Redmon and via telephone Comm. Simmons. Staff present was Ms. Esquilin. We reviewed the April packet and the April agenda. Comm. Cleaves requested that an additional column be added to the personnel minutes section H under appointments and/or any staffing transitions to show personnel committee who previously held a position and where that person went. Did they leave the district or were they placed in another position? The Board could then better understand the staffing transactions and movements of the staff in the district. Number two, the vacancies at School 21 and the preparedness for opening of school. Substitutes have been a big issue almost all year for School 21. We had questions and

we wanted to know are there permanent substitutes teaching in regular full-time positions as regular classroom teachers. If so, how many substitutes are at School 21. We don't want to go into September 2016 with the same problems at School 21 that we saw in the beginning the school year in 2015. We reviewed the current vacancy list as of 4/4/16 and a few questions arose with that. Are all the vacancies listed on the April 4, 2016 list true vacancies with active valid PC numbers? Comm. Cleaves advised that the committee would like a better understanding of the role of the permanent substitutes. Currently at International High School there is no vacancy on that list. If you look on the list, it does not have any vacancies listed for International High School. However, the Arabic class at International has had a substitute all year. You're saying that we have no vacancies, but that's a substitute. Technically we have a vacancy in that classroom. On the list that we're being provided, it shows that there are no vacancies when technically there is because it's a substitute filling that position. We wanted to know how we can distinguish between permanent substitutes and a regular full-time certified teacher in a classroom on the list that's provided to us in our Board packet. There was discussion on the recruitment activities. What are we doing about the recruitment for special education, ESL, math, and science? The response was our current recruitment efforts include the upcoming teacher job fair on May 7, 2016. A copy of the flyer was provided to the personnel committee. Additionally, staff will be attending job fairs at Montclair State and Woodrow Wilson Fellows in the coming weeks. Board members asked questions about process to return to local control. We were just brainstorming and we wanted to make sure that when the brainstorming started for the transition to local control for the Board when it comes to personnel that it mirrors what's happening in finance. We want to make sure that the transitions that are taking place for finance also take place in personnel and that they sync in together. So we won't have one department transitioning and then the other department not transitioning. That's it. Tonight, the personnel committee is presenting P-1. Are there any questions?

Comm. Irving: Just to be transparent and clarify, I've been told by the Superintendent that the transition plans for finance and personnel have been drafted and given to the Department of Education. Dr. Evans received it and the next step in the process is them being notified along with you for a meeting to present the plan. Just like we did before with operations, I would then bring the plan back to the Board. We'll have an executive session to discuss and review the terms of the transition. If we don't like certain sections we have the opportunity to reject and make recommendations, and send it back to the Commissioner's office. Ultimately, the Commissioner has the final say. Then we will do a formal adoption of the transition plan. I'm hoping that they will be reaching out to us much sooner than later. I did let the Commissioner know when I spoke to him last week that we still had not been reached out to. He said someone should be reaching out to us regarding both plans. I felt the finance would be first and personnel would come second. From what I understand, both plans have been submitted to the state so we'll probably get them at the same time and we'll have the opportunity to review them collectively as a group.

Comm. Hodges: Did we have any input into those plans?

Comm. Irving: Not at all. We didn't have any input in operations. They will give us the plans as they see fit and then we'll have the opportunity to discuss them and make our recommendations back to them once they've been drafted.

Comm. Hodges: It was made clear to me that there is an opportunity to do something different this year from what was done in the past.

Comm. Irving: That's not what I heard.

Comm. Hodges: We were quite insistent upon it.

Comm. Irving: That wasn't what I was told. I think the process they've used with other urban cities when they got their transition documents is the same process they used.

Comm. Cleaves: That concludes my report.

### ***Governance***

Comm. Irving: Governance has not met. We are meeting next week. We have just one area. It's a settlement and release agreement. Then we also have the adoptions of the policies for the Family Leave Act for second reading and adoption. Are there any questions on those two?

### **Subcommittee Reports**

#### ***Technology Committee***

Comm. Irving: Is there anything on technology?

Comm. Hodges: I actually didn't come prepared to discuss technology. I don't remember what we talked about.

Comm. Redmon: We covered that at the last workshop.

#### ***Parent/Community***

Comm. Mimms: We are meeting on Monday.

Comm. Cleaves: We have this document in front of us. Can we get some context from Mr. McDowell?

Comm. Irving: In other words, you just can't drop a 40-page report and think that's cool. It has Mark Fisher's face on the second page.

Comm. Cleaves: It looks good.

Mr. Kemper McDowell: Thank you. This is our second year performing this task and we were asked to put together a mid-year report to Ms. Shafer and the Board. The committee asked about our activity up until the January time period so we can take a look at what we're doing and we can pace ourselves for the remainder of the year. We've come up with a report that encompasses our key components to our department, PTOs, parent and community engagement, Parent University, and community outreach. We've presented in cabinet in a brief timeframe a little bit about the report. I'd like to engage my staff just to give an overview of the three major components, if I may. I present to you Mr. Mark Fischer who is our supervisor for the department. His area of expertise and responsibility are PTOs, our action teams, and our parent issues. I'll have him explain the first part of the report.

Mr. Mark Fischer: Thank you. Good evening everyone. Just to be really brief, everybody has it, if there are any parents in the audience who would like a copy of this, we do have copies as well so you can follow along. If you guys can turn to pages 8 and 9, that gives you an overview of our PTOs, compacts, and action teams. We've done

exceedingly well this year of gaining more PTOs in our schools, as we address the cabinet a couple of weeks ago. We're getting more and more compacts in, which is good. All this is built on principal buy-in.

Comm. Irving: What is a compact?

Mr. Fischer: The contract between the administration, the parent, and the child. Basically, what are you going to do to be a better student? And what is the parent going to do to make your student better even at home? That is also in the document here. Every school is supposed to have a compact. It's a contract or agreement. It's not a legal contract where you can go to court if you don't do it, but it gives credibility to the child and some responsibility. This is what they're supposed to do and they signed that. You start giving ownership to the child and the parents as well as the administrator. They work out really well that way. We've more than doubled our PTOs taking the Brighter Futures approach and working harder to make parents more and more accountable. With that being said, our action teams, which are from the PTOs and the faith-based community members, businesses, and administration as well anybody in the community who would like to be part of the team. It's just a better way of having a parent group at a school. The action teams work very well. We've done the Hall of Fame at School 6. We've done so many different things at the health fairs. We've done a lot of things with action team involvement. Our PTOs are really doing a great job. Also, our recruitment in PTOs, we had to come up with some carrot to get parents more involved. We've come up with the PTO membership card. You can't go to Macy's or McDonald's with it yet, but it gives you a little self-worth. We have about 1,000 signed up already that actually have PTO cards. We'll have incentives in the future to go along with them. Are there any questions?

Mr. McDowell: Thank you, Mr. Fischer. Just one tidbit about action teams - action teams actually provide a school with a purpose capacity. In some schools if you were to attempt to have a carnival or fair and you said, "Who could donate a box of hot dogs or a case of soda?" some schools may not have the capacity to participate at that level. The action teams go out on purpose and we involve community leaders, clergy, business owners, and other members of the community that have a certain capacity and bring different types of experience to a school that may not have that. It's a great model. Now Mr. Choudhury is going to come up and talk about our community engagement initiatives and some of our new programs, for example our college readiness programs.

Mr. Gilman Choudhury: Good evening everyone. On the community outreach portion of our department we've done a plethora of different programs and initiatives. Our target goal is the fact that we're trying to meet where the parents are. A great deal of our parents work two or three jobs. They have barriers that are denying them an opportunity to partake in this society that we all live in. To give you an example, one of the biggest programs or initiatives we're doing right now is the medical service fairs. The medical service fairs are a little bit different from a normal health fair. Whereas a normal health fair would be more informational, a medical service fair acts as a mini hospital at a particular school. We sit down and target five schools throughout the academic year and these schools may have one or two multiple barriers - crime rates and economic depression. We go into the school and provide basically a free hospital. The hospital itself is free with eyeglasses, dental cleanings, HIV testing, child support education, and legal services. The building itself is turned into a hospital. If you look at page 11 of the book it generally streamlines everything else we were able to give out, such as 211 flu shots, almost 700 blood sugar screenings, 127 dental screenings, and that includes cleaning the teeth. We've done bone density screenings, asthma, eye

exams, eye screenings, HIV, cancer screening, and health insurance sign-ups. We find that by helping to remove those particular health barriers if the parents are not economically in the position to provide these services for themselves we're able to provide them free of cost with all our partnerships. One of the success stories I can say is that not only are we able to actually help find people that are HIV positive in the community, we've been able to couple them with medical services and therapy so they can go forward. Another thing is the cancer screenings. A lot of this is done through St. Joseph's Hospital for free. We've been able to have the Rainbow of Care come over. They provide these screenings in terms of signing up people for appointments. We've been able to find two people directly that had stage 0 breast cancer. One of them is in complete remission. The way the program works out is if they do find cancer they are legally obligated to make sure the hospital pays for all the treatments and checkups. In our last medical fair on January 30 at School 13 they were able to find someone else who had breast cancer as well. The same rules apply to that person. They will have checkups and treatments. This is the direct service that we're providing to the community parents. Again, in my situation I would say it's easy for me since I have health insurance. But a lot of these parents may not be in that same ideal state. So for us to provide these medical health fairs are one particular service that we're providing to parents and then we couple along with the fact that we have a particular report card coming out, Board members, and PTOs. We always make sure to put that parent piece. Every parent that comes into a medical fair leaves with a grade expectation guide. So we're doing multiple things using different aspects to try to get parents. Some other events that we do are citizenship drives. We help people become US citizens. We do health heating system programs, Section 8 housing drives, and community gardens. We also do a college readiness family mentorship program. That program tries to handle our students that are on track. These are the students that have academic grades, but they need a little more mentorship, not only in terms of themselves, but also the parents. Coupled with our Parent University program we've been able to offer these free programs for parents such as financial literacy and college admission standards along with the students that are having extra SAT classes and going on college tours with their parents. We're making sure on the parents' end that they're receiving the same services so they will be able to reinforce whatever is happening in the classroom or the enrichment program. As you can see throughout the pages from 16 on, we've done a great deal of different variety of programs. Our Parent University portion itself is another means for us to try to bring education to the parents directly. A lot of our parents may not know what a PARCC assessment is. A lot of parents may not know why a graduation requirement exists, what the SATs are, or how can they be more financially stable to make sure that they have money left over for tuition for their child. These are the classes that we're providing, either on a school-based location or a parent-friendly location, which may be a public library or whatever traffic-wise is easier for parents to go to. All these services are being provided almost free of cost or with in-kind donations. Generally we're providing all these programs and initiatives through our existing partnerships, which doesn't really cost the district any money. One of the things that we're really happy about as well is the fact that within our Parent University program we have about anywhere from 15 to 16 different cycles in terms of the semesters. It's 15 or 16 different classes that are provided for the parents. On top of that, to ensure that we're continuing to help them, we also do a big media section push. We're using our department website which is update every couple of days. We're doing social media aspects for parents that are on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. We're continuing to help them at that point to let them know we have this Parent University class or this Board meeting happening. We also make sure that we do a constant contact email blast with our existing PTO parents and parents in the community. We do believe in our department itself and this is one of the things Mr. McDowell really makes sure that we doing, that there's constant communication with the

parents so they can always be part of the process. We feel as if there's a situation for us in which we can provide a relationship building with the parents, that in itself will help us ensure that these kids are making the best possible decisions in high school and then go on to college and professional careers. Thank you.

Comm. Irving: We can tell you work for Kemper.

Mr. McDowell: That's an overview of some of the activity up until January. We've taken the approach, and I've said this to many of you, I'm a Baptist Christian and we learned a long time ago that you just can't have a pretty church with beautiful blinds and sit back on a Sunday and hope that you can catch people walking into your church and save some souls. You have to have outreach, a tent service, walk the streets. We feel through our community engagement and reaching out on social media and moving beyond our buildings that we can capture more engagement with parents and try to infuse in them some of the things that we would have them really know how to do, such as monitor your child's progress, choose your mentors wisely, how to save for the future, how to approach administration, how to transverse through the system, and how to get the best out of this \$18,000 or \$15,000 that comes through your household to the school system to educate your children. I thank you for all your support. Are there any questions?

Comm. Kerr: I want to commend your department, Mr. McDowell. Some of the things that were mentioned just now I did not know that the work that you guys do covered all of those areas. If it was a song-writing thing, you would have a very heavy catalog. It's significant. However, my problem is I'm not sure the community is getting the information that all of these things are available to them through that department. If there's any weakness it's the communication. To be honest with you, I was surprised that you guys covered such a vast area of operation.

Mr. McDowell: One of the things we tried to increase, and Ms. Shafer helped us with it, was our electronic and paper newsletter. While individuals that are being serviced in a particular area are aware of that, they may not be aware of all the groupings and everything that's encompassed by the department. We have stepped up our use of social media. We use constant contact. I believe we have maybe 100,000 contacts so far this year. We blast out announcements and different activities. We have our Facebook page that is kept up to date daily. Through our communications department we utilize our school messenger system where we send out parenting tips weekly. We give out our tips. I think we've stacked them a few days a week ahead of time. So, we're trying to meet parents where they're at. Gone is the day where we can really advertise an event via a paper flyer. How do parents communicate? How do they like to be communicated with? Of course everyone, regardless of their economic status, has one of these. Many people watch Cable. Some people surf the web. A lot of people get phone calls. We try to utilize as many of those avenues as possible. We are still working with the Infinite Campus system that's coming on board with the parent portal. Our hope is that through that system we can gather more contact information. Right now we're gathering information on our own. We go out and gather emails and phone numbers and we put it in our database. We use a Survey Monkey database. We put that on there and we can do some reporting. Next year when the parent portal is up and running we can utilize that. If we have a database of many more parents we can blast better and do social media. Recognizing that we need to increase that, we're going to work with Ms. Anita on that.

Comm. Kerr: The other piece of it is I realize from what was said that a very large chunk of what you do comes from partnerships and volunteerism and such. I know that

the district is really strapped for resources and because your department is not directly tied to the classroom it is something that I don't think the Superintendent will really want to consider considering our present situation. However, I'm a big proponent of the parental piece and the development of education. To me, that's very important because I believe if you shortchange the parent then by extension you're shortchanging the child. Your department to me is very important in the total equation of the educational business. I think that at minimum your department should have a grant writer, somebody who will be able to sit there and his sole purpose is to make sure that they find ways of writing grants so that we can extend the programs that we now offer and even make them more comprehensive in scope. That individual would pay for him or herself. This is a recommendation to the Superintendent. I'm not expecting him to do more because the reality is we are really strapped, but the minimum we can do is recognize the need for the operation of that department and try to get a grant writer in there whose job would be tailored for that purpose.

Comm. Irving: Is there anyone else? Thank you, Mr. McDowell.

Mr. McDowell: Thank you for your support. We have a program called College Ready Families. We want to create families that are ready for learning. It's a waste of money if the Board goes out and advocates for computers, buildings, and teachers if the child sitting in the seat is not ready for learning. We're trying to do our part in making sure that families know how to create and develop learning-ready children.

Mr. Fischer: Dr. Hodges, like us on Facebook and you'll get everything.

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

Comm. Hodges: Speaking of Facebook, I sent the Board members and the administration a communication that was on social media referencing one of our schools and unfortunately myself.

Comm. Irving: No, not you!

Comm. Hodges: I'm concerned because this issue, which is extremely important, is being reduced to one that's rather derogatory and does not address the overall needs of the district or most importantly the children. I'm going to make an issue of it because I think an issue needs to be made. I personally have worked extremely hard for all of the schools we've managed to open in this district. As a matter of fact, I don't think there's anyone here who's worked as hard over the years because they haven't been on the Board to get those buildings opened.

Comm. Irving: Or they're not as old.

Comm. Hodges: Which is largely the reason why I've had the experience. So I'm a little taken aback as to how this issue is being framed and I do intend to respond vigorously. That's number one. Quite frankly, I expect some response from the administration and possibly from the Board as well. The issue is being trivialized when it shouldn't be. Number two, Board members need to be reminded, and unfortunately not all of us are here, that district employees work for the Superintendent of Schools, not at the behest of the Board members. They should not be abusive or bullying. None of that should go on from the Board members. If you have an issue that's not being addressed appropriately, they're supposed to go through the Superintendent of Schools. That is not happening consistently and it needs to. Quite frankly, if the situation continues the people who are involved are liable for ethics charges. Be mindful, anyone can level



ethics charges against a Board member. Anyone! It could be the individual. It could be a secretary who's watching what's going on. This is inappropriate and it needs to stop. It should never have happened. It should never have been allowed to go on like this. It should be stopped. If anybody sees that kind of behavior going on they can file ethics charges. We are in a position here where any kind of ethics violation would cost this Board dearly in terms of governance and moving forward. The Board members need to take note of that. Quite frankly, if it continues and I hear about it, I may respond that way, even though I'd prefer not to damage the Board's reputation at this crucial time. Number two, did this Board pass a resolution that says it wants to send out for a new auditor a year ahead of time?

Comm. Irving: Good question. I don't think we passed a resolution. I know it was discussed.

Comm. Hodges: I know it was discussed, but did we pass a resolution that says that the Board's position is that we're going to do this a year ahead of time? Then the question becomes will any kind of result be held over for a year? And will anybody be able to quote a year from now what they're going to be able to charge when we still have a contract with somebody else? That's why I have issues. If the Board has not made that resolution pass, then I'm concerned that we're moving forward, if we are.

Comm. Irving: I heard there was no resolution, but let me find out what's going on in finance and we'll make sure we get back to you.

Comm. Hodges: Actually, I need the Superintendent to find out what's going on in finance. That's where his people are doing it, if it's being done.

Comm. Irving: Got it. Let's get him to do that because I don't know what you're talking about. I know we talked about the auditors.

Comm. Hodges: Whether it's going out for an RFP or RFQ at this particular point in time. Since we're still in the contract until next year it seems to be inappropriate to me, particularly since this Board hasn't voted on it formally.

Comm. Kerr: If that's the case, the Superintendent or the Business Administrator should at least know if that's the case.

Comm. Hodges: I'd like the information whenever you have it available because that should not happen. Lastly, Dr. Evans, we spent a lot of time talking about the impact of this current budget. Quite frankly, I need to see the numbers. I need to see the resulting numbers and what the configuration of this district is going to be under this current financial regimen. I need to understand how we comport or don't with what we're supposed to have. Then over time we're going to have to discuss what you plan to do about...

Comm. Irving: Can I take it a step further? On that point, I did ask the Superintendent in our weekly meeting to prepare to the Board a plan for how the Superintendent plans to implement and provide that thorough and efficient education with the reductions that they have outlined. In addition to that, how they expect to roll out all the reductions. When are the people who are being RIF'd going to be notified? If schools are being transitioned, when will those parents be notified? There needs to be a transition plan as well. Just cutting isn't enough. To that point, I have asked Dr. Evans to prepare that for the Board. I think we're going to be getting it in two weeks at the regular meeting.

Dr. Evans: Yes.

Comm. Hodges: I want the comparison. Rosie Grant gave a list of some of the areas of concern, but I will give you a more comprehensive list when I come back.

Dr. Evans: Comparison of...

Comm. Hodges: What's supposed to be in place versus what we're going to end up with, which is a definitive difference. By the way, I'm still waiting on that wish budget. I never quite received that yet, Dr. Evans. I don't intend to be quite as patient about this information. I think that we need to understand where we are and what the impacts are going to be for our students. It will dovetail very nicely into the plans. There's a curricular impact that's going to be substantial. If we're cutting back on after-school programs, stipends for teachers, administrative staff, professional development, and curriculum writing, then how in the world do we plan to realistically improve the curriculum or even stay where we were in terms of the curriculum? How will that affect our children's performance moving forward? We need to be able to explain that to our community. I know people are going to ask me those questions, so I want to be prepared to have those answers and I also want to be able to challenge the Superintendent because he made it very clear that we're going to be prepared to offer less as opposed to even what we have before, let alone more. So I need to know what less looks like. I need to know what's going to be the impact in terms of class size, student/teacher ratios, and all those lines. That's what the funding is going to impact in real terms. The Board needs to see that information. The community needs to understand what they're facing, particularly in view of potential short funding next year, which I'm not going to wait until February to start talking about. That's information that I think is critical at this point in time and that's what I'm looking for. I'll be more thorough in my questions when I come back.

Comm. Irving: Is there anything else?

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

The meeting was adjourned at 7:44 p.m.