

MINUTES OF THE PATERSON BOARD OF EDUCATION WORKSHOP MEETING

March 2, 2016 - 6:45 p.m.
John F. Kennedy High School

Presiding: Comm. Christopher Irving, President

Present:

Dr. Donnie Evans, State District Superintendent
Ms. Eileen Shafer, Deputy Superintendent
Lisa Pollak, Esq., General Counsel

Comm. Oshin Castillo
Comm. Chrystal Cleaves, Vice President
Comm. Jonathan Hodges
Comm. Errol Kerr

Comm. Lilisa Mimms
Comm. Nakima Redmon
Comm. Flavio Rivera
Comm. Kenneth Simmons

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

Comm. Mimms 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
March 2, 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: I want to welcome everyone here this evening and thank everyone for coming. This is a regular workshop of the Board. We need to discuss the action items that we will have to deal with later on this month, but there is also going to be a presentation at some point in time from the Superintendent. Then there are additional resolutions that he will introduce that we will discuss in the Other Business category.

PRESENTATIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS

**Discussion on Internal Audit Report Findings on Early Childhood Providers
St. Joseph's RMC Child Care and Love Kids Care II for Fiscal Year 2014-2015**

Ms. Toni Scholing: Good evening. My name is Toni Scholing and I'm the Fiscal Monitor for the Department of Early Childhood. I'm here to present two audits. The first audit is for the St. Joseph's RMC Child Care Center. This center has four classrooms and 60 Paterson children. The report presents two findings. In the first finding, the provider underspent the approved budget by \$70,552.32. In the second finding, the auditors noted minor recording errors on the expenditure report. Are there any questions regarding this audit? The second audit is about Love Kids Care II. Love Kids Care II has two classrooms with 30 Paterson children. We have one finding. The provider underspent the approved budget by \$16,089.88. Are there any questions? That is my presentation. Thank you very much.

Comm. Irving: I had a very good conversation with Ms. Peron this morning and I'm very pleased and proud of the early childhood providers in our district. Several years ago Dr. Hodges and a few of the others Board members made a much bigger push to focus on the remedial early childhood requirements to make sure kids at least had a fundamental understanding of letters and words upon leaving preschool. I can attest to the fact that our providers are doing a great job on delivering that and working on that. It's a testament to your division and the work you all are doing. Thank you.

Ms. Scholing: Thank you. They're doing very well.

REPORT OF STATE DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT

Dr. Evans: Other than the report you just received and the budget discussion that is planned for tonight, I have no additional items. If it's alright with you, I'd just as soon get into the budget discussion now.

Comm. Irving: Just so you know, we're not going to vote on the recommendations you have until we get to 'Other Business.'

Dr. Evans: Sounds good. While I'm speaking, I'm going to ask Ms. Ayala if she would begin to move towards the microphone. On Monday night when we shared with you the two items that reflected programs, services or staff that we were considering reducing – and I think the item was labeled 'Potential Strategies for Reducing the Budget' – we've spent time and Ms. Ayala has spent all of her time, and so has Ms. Shafer, to make some final decisions around the items on that list and other items we may need to look at to close the gap. However, in doing that we remained firm on a few things that I want to mention preliminary to Ms. Ayala's presentation. Number one, we committed that we were not going to touch the classroom and we have not. We are not touching instructional staff in the form of teachers and instructional aides in schools unless a population is shifting. Then the staff will follow the kids wherever they go. As a function of budget reduction, the classrooms do remain untouched and we continue to hold firm on that. Secondly, there was an article in one of the local media publications that School 14 was on the list. It was on the list and we decided we weren't going there either. School 14 is not on the list for us to propose any kind of closure for the 2016-2017 school year. Third, as we looked at that list, Ms. Ayala very astutely determined that there were items on the list that actually weren't funded from local dollars and should not have been on there, so we did remove those items from the list. Some were paid by IDEA, the Federal Special Education Legislation. Some were paid by NCLB, Title I. Some were paid by early childhood. We had to remove those, which meant finding some other way to close the gaps that we were had already identified as

potential action for closing the larger gap. Instead, we continued to hold firm in looking at places like the district office and we did. We cut significantly more positions than we had already identified from the district office. I'm talking operationally as well as district level staff to be able to close that gap. As late as 3:00 this afternoon we were still reducing, and actually, later than that. If you ask me who at this point, since we haven't notified some staff that they are now on that list, I'd rather not give you the who today. I can give you that later. I would also indicate, and Daisy correct me if I'm wrong, the actions as it relates to the final budget and items that are going to be reduced is not one of the things we're asking the Board to vote on tonight. It's the incoming or what we expect as our appropriation. In fact, that's probably a cue for me to stop and let you take it from there.

Ms. Daisy Ayala: That is correct. Good evening, Commissioners. In front of you, you have a detail of all the revenue pieces as well as appropriation. The line appropriation is not detailed simply because we're going to do the final input into the DOE on Friday and after that's done we'll be more than happy to share a copy from the DOE for you. As you can see, in 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 we had a deficit gap of \$30 million plus. We have been able to use some of our fund balance to close that gap. However, when we closed in 2014-2015 in the fund balance what we had was \$6.9 million. It made it very challenging this year in order to close the gap because we didn't have that much money to go into fund balance. So in order to close the gap, we used most the items that we could from list A and B. We reduced stipends in overtime. We reduced central staff by approximately 30%. We were using fund balance \$10.6 million. Keep in mind that currently we only have \$6.9 million. However, Dr. Evans and I had a discussion this morning that we're going to put a dead hold on non-essential expenditures in order to support the subsequent budget year. Right now if you look at the DOE the only thing we have there is \$7.6 million that we can use from fund balance. Therefore, it's really important that we stay true to this mission and try to control the spending as much as we can this year. However, what he has made very clear is schools will not be touched. They're not part of any of this consideration. For reserve I have \$2.4 million and then there's a bank tax levy of \$10.606 million which the system allows us to use. Some of the cost drivers, just to let you know, are salaries, pension, health benefits, and the closing of schools. We have to do reallocations. We have new schools that are an additional cost to the district. Those are some of the cost drivers that we had in preparing this budget.

Comm. Irving: I'll open up the floor to discussion. I just have a request. In light of the hearing that's going to take place at Montclair State University, I definitely will be testifying and I encourage other Board members and community members to sign up to do so. Is there a way you can prepare for me a very simple spreadsheet that looks at the state aid we've gotten over the last three or four years? In addition to that, the respective cost drivers that have continued to increase while state aid has been flat. I think that when you see it things become even more clear. We know the trend, but the State Education Commissioner would be able to see the flat-funding. While the funding is flat...

Ms. Ayala: Everything else goes up.

Comm. Irving: That's my point. It's really the main drivers I'm looking for so that we're able to track that and I can share that with the State Legislature. That's just a formal request that I need. If I can have it by Tuesday of next week, then that would be great. With that said, I'll open the floor for discussion on the adoption of the tentative budget. We're going to vote on this at the end of the meeting in new business, but there's a big item that I'm sure someone is going to want to address right now. I'll do it.

Comm. Hodges: I just want to clarify what this is before I get to my other questions. There's some mention about closing schools in our conversation. I just need to know what that means. If that's part of this, we're going to have a very long discussion.

Comm. Irving: Let's clarify that. When we say closing schools...

Dr. Evans: I can clarify that. What we're proposing for next year is St. Mary's, which is a lease. We currently lease St. Mary's for an early childhood center. What we're proposing to do is get out of that lease and then ultimately take the pre-k youngsters that are there and route them to School 27 or School 5 and then ultimately at least a portion of the youngsters who are of middle school age reassigning them to Don Bosco. The move to Paterson Catholic increases our capacity to house middle school age students by 150-200 kids. So we have space and their siblings, in many cases, are already there. We've met with the parents already. Ms. Santa, Ms. Warren, and Ms. Shafer have met with the parents. We've already done our due diligence in terms of making that move. That's to get out of a lease. School 11 is the other. You recall the discussions that we had. The Board looked at and discussed the youngsters who were there, the ELL students who were newcomers to the country and speak no English. We'd relocate them to School 16, which leaves that building available. In some very preliminary conversations that came to my attention today there has been at least one request to lease any facility that we have in place. I don't have enough details to get into specifics, but right away we thought of School 11 if indeed someone wanted to lease that from us. Remember, St. Mary's is not a building that we own.

Comm. Hodges: There's been no Board determination that we're going to move the kids out of School 11, which troubles me. The Board has not voted on that in any reasonable manner, shape, or form. So for you to move forward, Dr. Evans, seems to subvert and undermine the Board's prerogatives in this area.

Dr. Evans: We have not moved forward.

Comm. Hodges: But you want us to vote it.

Dr. Evans: No, you won't be voting on that tonight. It's one of the items on the list that we've identified as budget reduction items, the overhead expenses to us for School 11, but we have not made a final decision. You're right, the Board needs to discuss it and obviously advise us as to what you would like to do. There are two factors here. One is the students because we're still making final decisions around who's going to populate both School 16 and Hani Awadallah. That's one factor. The other is the building itself that current houses the Newcomers. Both of those decisions are yet to be final.

Comm. Hodges: Dr. Evans, what also troubles me is the St. Paul's church, which is a substandard facility both in definition by the State Department of Education and in reality. That was not placed on this for consideration and that needs to be there as property that we should be thinking about selling, as opposed to School 11.

Comm. Irving: Or at least vacating.

Comm. Hodges: Yes.

Comm. Irving: Here's the elephant that is sitting on this dais that we're not addressing. I've had many conversations with several of you about School 11 and the All Boys School. I believe School 11 is a substandard property as a building. It's absolutely old

and I'm for moving those young people into that school. With that said, I understand that there was still additional room in the school for at least another 150 folks even if you populated School 16 with the respective community that surrounds it and even if you move the newcomers into School 11. This makes sense for us to then move the young men out of St. Paul's into the new school. That would then free up another space that even though we own we do not operate having additional savings. Or we can sublease that to any other entity that may want to do it. I think we're all in agreement that we're not selling any property that the district owns. I don't think you're saying that either.

Dr. Evans: No, I'm not.

Comm. Irving: Dr. Hodges has a point. If the Boys School can fit into School 16 I'm confident as a compromise to have the community around School 16, School 11 and the Boys School and have three distinct programs in the school.

Dr. Evans: Let me ask Dr. Crescione to confirm. I do remember two of the three options did allow for space and one did not. Let me ask her to confirm that.

Dr. Linda Crescione: Good evening. The other night I did have my literature with me and I do have it in the car. I can share with you the numbers. I know that with option 1 and option 2 there would be space. But with option 3 at this particular juncture I am not sure if there would be room for an extra 130 students because of that move. At the Young Men's Academy right now I believe there are about 50 students, so we may increase that by one additional grade level. So there may be room, but those options, as you know, have not been consolidated at this point. They are still there and it may mean that we could redistrict a little bit further to allow that opportunity to exist.

Comm. Irving: I'm not saying that's an option. I'm saying that needs to be done. I'm serious. Those young men are 50 of our neediest young men and they deserve to be in a facility that is top-notch.

Comm. Hodges: Yes.

Comm. Irving: The numbers that we have show that the schools that surround School 16 are not overpopulated. Essentially, we're shifting and we're moving folks to accommodate the walk and migration for folks who may be in the area of School 16. But the schools that surround it are not in excess or overflow. It's very different than we know happened in the sixth ward with School 25 and School 9, which is why the spillover into Hani Awadallah makes sense. At this stage, I'd like to make sure we prepare the budget to reflect the move of the Boys School into School 16. We already have the school model in two of our school buildings, preferably the high schools, and we've proven that we can make it work. But those young men deserve the opportunity to be in a 21st Century learning environment. If you want to convince parents that this is a program they want to send their kids to, I need the parents in the audience to understand the kids are going to have tablets, state-of-the-art information. This is a state-of-the-art school and I think our young Latino and African American boys deserve the right to have it.

Comm. Hodges: More than that, what the community needs to understand is the lowest performing students in the general population are African American males and Latino males right behind them. What we've created here currently is essentially a dumping ground and that's the way it's been viewed by people and sadly by various schools. They've not provided the opportunity for all kids. They've chosen the kids that they

thought deserve to go into that building and the ones that they've chosen they might not have wanted it in their own building in all too many cases. We're turning it into something substantially less than what we're trying to create. We wanted to give these kids an opportunity to flourish and unleash their educational potentials and put them in an environment where that potential would be enhanced and developed. We have not done that and I'm a little troubled that it seems to be an afterthought when, quite frankly, it should have been one of the things that we talked about first and foremost. Given all of the hardships, changes, and the turmoil that quite frankly has occurred since that school opened. I'm going to stop, but this is not a luxury. Those kids are in desperate educational need. That program is not there because we just want to create a program. Those kids are in desperate educational need and we need to find potential solutions, not just for those kids, but for all the kids throughout the district. That's why that thing was created. This is not a luxury or an afterthought. This is something that we should demand and have and they should be given top priority because so far they haven't been and they deserve it.

Comm. Irving: I agree with you wholeheartedly. Provided no one on the Board has any objections, my request is that the budget needs to be prepared with vacating that additional lease. From the operations of that space if we're not using it we're going to at least recoup not accessing another space that we know is substandard. I know that some folks in the community came the other evening and had certain issues with the consolidation and moving of schools. But I can tell you with my conversation with the Superintendent in particular that the schools we had decided to remove young people from are some of our oldest, most challenging, and subpar facilities and children shouldn't be in them. We have two brand new schools that are coming online and two very at-risk populations. Students who don't speak English come to this country needing an opportunity to learn a language they can move back on and most importantly our young men and the community that lives within that area. I remember, Dr. Crescione, we had the conversation about the potential to do that. Let's just figure it out. If option 3 doesn't have it, let's just use option 1 and 2. Dr. Hodges, we were supposed to have a hearing specifically on the maps in particular once we get through the budget process. Then those maps should reflect exactly what we're discussing here.

Comm. Hodges: I don't want facts to be created on the ground by this budget process. Clearly, this was not taken into consideration when this was constructed. So I don't want those facts to be created on the ground and then we get locked into something that we apparently have voted for.

Comm. Irving: That's fair.

Comm. Hodges: That's why I'm making it very clear this is not acceptable to me.

Dr. Crescione: Commissioners, with your permission I will go out to my car. I do have my folder and I can give you exact information regarding the appropriation and the full use of the building.

Comm. Irving: If you can just let us know very simply for School 11 how much space if we do the migration for the local community in option 1 and 2.

Dr. Crescione: Exactly. I will do that.

Comm. Irving: If you haven't noticed, there's an increase in the tax levy right here. We had a firm conversation the other night. Dr. Evans, I understand you have to propose it

because the people you work for have asked you to do so. I'm sitting here making it very clear that this needs to be removed and before we vote on it tonight, if the Board decides to adopt this, we will vote on it less the \$10.6 million increase in taxes to the citizens of this city. The people of this town can't afford to absorb an additional tax increase, especially with what's happening in the City Council. It's just not going to happen.

Comm. Hodges: Dead on arrival.

Comm. Irving: The reductions that you all have made in central office without touching the schools, while I'm disappointed about it, I'm happy to hear that at least we're looking internally. The union has gone on record several times about the perception that at times we added positions exorbitantly. This is our opportunity to take a real firm look at what we have at central office and how we operate. When we get to 'Other Business' when I propose the motion for the adoption of the revenue for the budget, I will do so less the \$10.6 million increase in taxes. I want to make that very clear to the other Board members. Are there any comments on that? I'm surprised nobody brought it up yet.

Comm. Redmon: This is a 25% increase on the taxpayers of Paterson. We just can't afford to have this at this time. This was not on the table when we saw this Monday night. This was not proposed to us at this table and it should not have been here tonight at all.

Comm. Irving: You know he had to put it on.

Comm. Hodges: Last year's proposed taxes were \$5 million. This year's proposed taxes are \$10,606,456, double. Mind you, last year we had a surplus. This year we have a \$45 million deficit. The deficit is even larger and they want us to go and take \$10 million, almost \$11 million, from this city, which is already crippled. We can't get our street sweepers to clean the streets because they don't have money to pay them. We can't do it. I really don't want applause. I'm not running for anything. This is not about applause. This is about the education of your children and for you to understand and remember if you are not in those seats, if you are not speaking up, if you are not engaged, this kind of thing will happen. They think that you will tolerate it.

Comm. Irving: Again, provided that we're all on the same page, I will make that adoption at the end of the meeting less the \$10.6 million increase in taxes. That's not going down.

Comm. Hodges: Are we're voting on this today?

Comm. Irving: We're being asked to vote on the revenue.

Comm. Hodges: That's the side I have the most problem with.

Comm. Irving: My biggest issue is the increase in taxes.

Comm. Kerr: Is that your only issue, Mr. President?

Comm. Irving: No. I have a whole lot of issues, but that's the biggest one that sticks out. Of all the lines, that \$10.6 million is not even conducive.

Comm. Kerr: Because we're in discussion, I just need to ask the Superintendent something. This was never mentioned before. With all the discussions that we have been having we were never told of an increase in taxation. Dr. Evans, when was this dropped on your lap?

Dr. Evans: If you recall in one of our conversations, and I don't remember which one, I did mention that we needed at least to examine that possibility. I mentioned that to the Board.

Comm. Kerr: So when you said at least we should examine it, you already had the information that we would be tagged with this increase.

Dr. Evans: I'm sorry, Mr. Kerr. Say it again.

Comm. Kerr: When I did mention to you and you said we should be talking about the possibility you were already told that it's likely that we would be tagged with this \$10 million tax increase.

Dr. Evans: When we look at our own records we lose the capacity to tax after so many years. The money that's proposed here in this document is money that we'd lose the capacity to tax in the future. I can't remember the specific reference, but it accumulates over time when you don't exercise the right to tax and after a certain number of years you lose that opportunity. I think banking is the reference in law.

Comm. Irving: I remember it being discussed last year. I understand the Department of Education has required you to put this on the agenda. But ultimately it's the people who live in this city and the folks who pay taxes who have to foot this bill, not the folks in Trenton. The people who are sitting in this audience can't afford this. They just can't.

Comm. Rivera: Good evening everyone. Like some of my colleagues stated here, we never had a discussion regarding an increase in the tax levy. Yes, the Superintendent blurted it out at the last meeting, but we never were shown any numbers. I just want to point that out. I know some of us said if we remove the proposed tax increase that we can vote on this. I personally cannot vote on this document that's in front of me because the way a budget works is for every dollar of revenue that comes in, you have a dollar of expenditure. They're asking us to just vote on the revenues that we have listed here and voting on that would be very irresponsible on my part and I'll tell you why. I need to see the actual cuts that are going to take place because every line item on the appropriations side determines the level of service that we provide our kids. What we have in front of us here is a budget that has a list of revenues inclusive of the proposed \$10 million increase, but then you just have one line that says 'appropriation.' If we decide as a Board to remove the \$10 million from the revenue we have to remove that same amount from the appropriation, which is the money that you're going to spend. It's like being blindfolded. We don't know what they're cutting. I need to be responsible. I don't mean to give the administration a hard time, but I need to know what is being cut to make sure that we're not reducing the level of services and that our teachers are not hurt again. I'm willing to work with this administration, but we were not ready for this tonight. I'm just going to tell you this. One page?

Comm. Irving: Does the BA have a comprehensive list that she can share with the Board?

Dr. Evans: The list of cuts is the list that you received on Monday, minus some items that it was determined that they were not in the appropriate funding categories. They

were funded through federal dollars and early childhood. Those were removed. Except for those, the list you already have is the list. What we can do is give you the modified version of the list that you have and then additional items at the district office. As late as 3:30 this afternoon we were still identifying district level positions. Because we haven't really talked to those people yet, I would not want to give you that, but everything else we can give you another copy of the list you have and flag those things that we couldn't use.

Comm. Rivera: I don't want to keep contradicting you. The list of cuts was fine, but we also didn't see what the ending result would be of the budget. You might have a budget this year that has a few vacancies in it and you say we're going to cut a few million. But you actually have to see what you spent last year. That's what's going to give you the real number. For example, after this meeting during finance I raised a question. I noticed we said we were going to have \$3 million in savings in our transportation budget, which I feel we could. I asked what the actual budget was going to be. We could probably save another \$1 million there because the most we ever spent in the 3 years before we went to Essex County – and I don't want to say 'we' because I didn't make that decision. The administration made that decision without our consent. We spent \$14 million one year and the most we ever spent was \$16 million. Now we go to Essex County and we're spending over \$20 million on transportation. That's why I need to see details in order to vote on something. I cannot vote on something without knowing how it's going to affect our kids. Thank you.

Comm. Mimms: I just believe it's unfair for us as a Board and to the community to be able to have an extension of a Board hearing without the community being provided with the document as well as this Board being provided with a detailed list. On Monday we were here and we had two documents, plan A and plan B. Now we're being presented tonight with a document and there's a subtext that says 'closing the gap.' It talks about items from both lists, stipends, central office staffing, and fund balance. It's a one-page excel sheet with about 15 items on it. It's very unfair for us to make any type of decisions because we don't have some of the items that we requested. I asked for a list of all consultants that we are utilizing in the district and to find out why we're choosing certain consultants, what's being cut, and how is it going to benefit our children. I heard it stated by Ms. Ayala that it's not going to affect the students, but if we're not giving professional development to our teachers it will eventually affect our students. So having a meeting tonight without being properly prepared is already setting us up for failure. I think we need to make sure that we have documents available. I know it took until 3:30 today, but it's now 8:30 and we still don't have that information. To effectively make any decisions or recommendations will be really hard unless we assume. We're not here to make assumptions. We're here to fight for our children and our community deserves the right to know what we're looking at as far as cuts, changes, and reallocations. Last year we worked really hard to build collaboration with the City Council so that we could build a working relationship when we were presented with a possible \$5 million tax increase. Now we have a document which almost scared me out of my seat that says we're looking to propose a \$10.6 million tax increase when the city is already proposing a \$6.1 million tax increase. That is absolutely ridiculous. The homeowners can't afford it. If we don't look at these numbers appropriately across the board we're not going to have people who live in this city to send kids to the school. We have to make sure that in order for us to effectively make decisions that we have the proper tools and information readily available and it's available to the community. It's hard for us to hear their recommendations and suggestions if they have no data. We have to make sure that data is available and a special meeting needs to be held on top of this meeting so that we can present that documentation to the community so when they come up to make public comments they

can make them with those recommendations based on the document that they have in hand. It's not fair to the community and to us as a Board. I propose that we have another special meeting with the document readily available for ourselves as the Board and the community so we can make decisions that will rightfully affect the community, our children, the parents, and the staff.

Comm. Irving: Comm. Mimms, I just want to be clear on what you're proposing because Comm. Rivera has alluded to the same thing. What you're saying is you want options A and B merged and you want a final document that lists the reductions as spelled out by the administration. Clearly Dr. Evans has identified that some things have been removed and for us to have a very transparent discussion for what's here, this document should be released to the Board so that if we have any questions pertaining to specifics on those reductions we can then vet them and make an intelligent decision thereafter.

Comm. Mimms: I don't want them merged. Closing the gap says they were merged. I want to see what they merged.

Comm. Irving: One comprehensive list that reflects that.

Comm. Mimms: Exactly.

Dr. Evans: I think that's a reasonable request. We'll take the list that we gave you on Monday, put them together, take off the items that we decided not to include, and then by the time we will have communicated with the additional district office staff that was identified this afternoon. Once we communicate with them then we can give you that list as well and have that for you ASAP. I would remind you also that there is also required by law one additional hearing that will occur later this month anyway. Cheryl, have we identified the date for that meeting? She's saying the 29th. If the Board wants to meet sooner than that we'll be happy to do that. But we'll combine those lists and give them to you in a different form than we gave them to you on Monday.

Comm. Cleaves: I agree with my fellow Commissioners up here regarding the lack of information that we were presented to make a just and sound vote on what's presented to us this evening. You give us the appropriations in totality. You give us subtexts, but then you don't provide the documentation to support the subtext for the appropriations. Then on top of that, if you remove the 25% tax levy then the appropriations are now incorrect and incomplete, which then causes us to still have a hole in our budget. A simple question for a logical mind is, how are we supposed to vote on an incomplete budget?

Comm. Irving: That's fair. Again, if we reduce the tax levy and say no to it, then that means that somewhere in this budget Ms. Ayala has to figure out where to come up with another \$10.6 million, which then inherently changes that list in the form that you have.

Comm. Castillo: I just agree with my fellow Commissioners. I know our residents can't afford this 25% increase. I can't afford this 25% increase. It's crazy. Dr. Evans did say we had to examine it on Monday and I think it was a quick reaction from all of us saying that it was something that we weren't going to be working with. We said that off the bat. If we're taking this tax levy out, then how can we vote when we don't know where this money is going to come from? We're being assured that it's not going to affect our schools, but how do we vote and know that's true?

Comm. Irving: I'm going to propose that if we can do a special meeting on Monday. I'm not sure what everybody's schedule is like. The other question I need to ask Cheryl is about process. As a district we have to introduce the budget to the county by Friday?

Dr. Evans: Friday. Again, it's only the revenue side.

Comm. Hodges: That's part of my problem, which is why I raised the issue in the first place. It does not say just the revenue side. It says budget. Budget is not revenue alone. It's revenue and expenditures. What I'm concerned about is that we are given a document which says 'tentative budget' that we're agreeing to. But here's how you really need to frame this. There are some here who think that balancing the budget is extremely important. The way you have to think of it is if we cut \$200 million out of our budget we could balance the budget. We can do it like that, but you are not going to be able to deliver the academic services that your children need. So let's cut it \$100 million. That's better than \$200 million. But you still are not going to be able to deliver the educational services that your children need. So if you cut it \$15 million it's closer, but you're still not there yet. Remember, we just had a PARCC exam which showed us that we have a long way to go, not to be on par, but to catch up. And you're going to come and take \$45 million away from that. We haven't even discussed what you need to do to catch up. You're just looking at cutting where you are now, where you were that produced you being so far behind every else in the state. So how do you catch up? The answer is you don't and neither do your children. That's number one. Number two, the State of New Jersey does not necessarily believe that this budget will do what it's supposed to do. If they thought that all you need to do is cut \$45 million to provide educational services, they can just give it to you and you'd be where you were. But they're not doing that. What they want you to do is to cut where you were and that cut is going to effectively dismantle your educational system. You need to understand that. They've told you that you have the worst facilities in the State of New Jersey, but they want you to sell off buildings. How are you going to do it? Remember, this is just this year. What happens next year? What are you going to cut? My concern tonight is not just a budget. It's a process and that process is the destruction of the Paterson School System. You've got to understand that. I don't want applause. I want you to think. The auditor said in 2018 you're going to face a \$186 million shortfall. What do you cut to get to that point? That's the \$200 million that you said would be no good then. If you sit back and you allow and accept this, what you're tacitly saying to the Department of Education is it's okay. They want us to do their dirty work, which is destroy Paterson's educational system and I won't do that and neither should you. You have got to do more than come here and just clap. If you say nothing, if you do nothing, Dr. Evans will be forced to push this forward. If every Board member up here says no, he'll still push it forward. We have to demand money that the law says we're supposed to have. This does not cover it.

Comm. Simmons: You and I spoke earlier today and we talked about voting on the budget. One of the things I said to you is I'm probably not going to vote on this because I don't have enough information. I don't have the details. I'm just echoing the rest of the Commissioners. If we're going to make a decision we have to have all of the information. We're looking at numbers, but we have yet to discuss the academic impact. What services are going to be cut? Are our children going to get the services that they need? It is important and it is imperative that the community stays engaged. When we received this information, if we're going to educate and empower this community, they should also have this information. Like Dr. Hodges said, it's not about applause. It's really about you getting engaged. I've sat in meetings with the Commissioner of Education and I've said to him this is what the people of Paterson want and his words to me were, "That's not what I'm hearing from Paterson." There are

nine of us up here and you need to understand we're just nine. We can lead the charge. We can fight for you. I can go into battle, but if there's no cavalry guess what's going to happen? We're going to continue to lose. Our children are going to continue to lose. So it's important that you stay engaged.

Comm. Rivera: I just want to say one last thing. The budget document is the most important document that you can have because it's going to determine the level of service that we're going to be providing to our kids. This document is due to the county on Friday and we're not ready. Sitting back here I feel very uncomfortable and embarrassed although I'm not putting this budget together. We're not ready as a district and it sends the wrong message. I'm going to ask the administration let's make a better effort and let's see what we can do to get this budget to the county in a timely manner and give us a proper document to vote on.

Comm. Hodges: With all due respect, Dr. Evans is in a very difficult position. It's not a question of us not being ready. It's a question of the law being followed. They want us to follow the law and all I respectfully say is, "State of New Jersey, you first. You follow the law." Comm. Rivera is absolutely right. The law says there has to be a budget in place, but the constitution of the state says you have to provide a thorough and efficient education and the constitution trumps law. If they won't follow the law, don't come here and blame me for saying this is wrong and I won't do it. You've broken the law. That's the problem that I have. Yes, the budget is important, but if you cut the budget down \$200 million, as I've already said, you can balance the budget and give it to the Commissioner of Education or whoever else you want, but you will not be able to educate one child in this district with that kind of money. So what's really important is the educational value that this is supposed to translate into. This is garbage right now. That's all I'm going to tell you.

Comm. Irving: Let me know what you all want to do.

Comm. Redmon: This is a two-part question to you. What are the implications if we don't propose this budget to the county by Friday?

Comm. Irving: I think the very obvious one is that Dr. Evans, until we sign the transition document from the state, still has the authority under finance to submit the budget. We can still have a hearing on Monday and retroactively adopt it with whatever recommendations the Board has. Remember, even if he submits it on Friday without the Board's approval we still have 30 days to change that budget to reflect the Board's decision. Even if we said we're not going to entertain this conversation tonight, he still can and probably should to be in compliance submit the budget on Friday but without the Board's support. I think if we wait until Monday to have a hearing to get the full picture for what this looks like then the Board can have a much more educated conversation about whether or not this is a budget that we can endorse and support.

Comm. Redmon: That was my recommendation, that we postpone the vote for tonight because we don't have all the information. It's very disheartening as a Board member that you come here and you don't have all the information that's presented to you up front. Then we have the audience that's out here that we represent hoping that we make an educated decision on the budget and we can't. That's a problem.

Comm. Mimms: The problem I have is that we extended the meeting on Monday for this purpose with the expectation that the community and we would be properly provided the information that was needed to be able to make robust recommendations and to receive feedback from the community so that we could move forward. That's a

problem. It's miscommunication and misinformation. We have to ensure that when we say we're going to do something as a district that we do exactly what we say. We're saying that the parents don't get involved. Now they're here. They've come. We asked them to show up and they showed up in large numbers and we've failed them again. We've failed them yet again by not providing them with the documentation and the information necessary to ensure that we provide our children with educational excellence. That's a problem. We need to postpone this meeting tonight. We apologize to the public, the teachers, the parents, and everyone that came out tonight on behalf of the district for not providing us with the information that was needed to ensure that our children are educated appropriately.

Comm. Irving: Let's hold off this discussion and the endorsement of what Dr. Evans will submit until Monday. The same request that we just had about being able to produce the final document that reflects the budget reductions should be prepared and sent to the Board over the weekend so that we can have an opportunity to digest it and then we can discuss it on Monday. Dr. Evans, if you need to submit it and to do your due diligence and duty, you can indeed do so. Just remember we also have a boatload of stuff we need to get to in this meeting and we also have a community that needs to talk tonight as well.

Comm. Kerr: I understand there is a need for clear documentation regarding what will be cut and so on. My problem is you look at those numbers and the state has proposed \$45 million to be taken off the top. On top of that \$45 million they're imposing a tax levy on the district of another \$10 million. Those numbers just don't add up. I don't care how rational we may read what the details are from that document. It's just not going to work in this district of Paterson. We are just not going to be able to deliver the kind of education that Comm. Hodges spoke about when we are being shortchanged so heavily and taxed so heavily. I do understand you want that discussion and we don't have the documentation here tonight. But I can tell you now that no documentation that will be presented will be enough to satisfy me for a yes vote when you're taking away \$45 million and on top of that you're taxing the people of Paterson another \$10 million.

Comm. Irving: I want to close this discussion because at this point it's moot. If we're going to discuss it on Monday, I just don't want to keep going with this.

Comm. Simmons: Last year we received a preliminary budget which was a pretty thick packet. How far away are we from receiving...

Dr. Evans: Ms. Ayala.

Ms. Ayala: The preliminary has to be submitted to the county on Friday. The County Superintendent and Business Administrator will be reviewing it and then they'll give me a call and say everything is okay and there are no warnings that they're concerned about. At that point we'll be able to share that with you. In any event, you'll have it by the March 29.

Comm. Simmons: You're going to share it with the County Superintendent on Friday? You said at that point you can share it with us.

Ms. Ayala: By that point, they lock down the system. We can look and we can review it. Once he reviews it and he opens it up we can go in and share it.

Comm. Simmons: How long approximately?

Ms. Ayala: They usually take about a week at the most.

Comm. Simmons: So we should have it well before the 29th.

Dr. Evans: Yes.

Ms. Ayala: Yes. As soon as it's ready I will share it with you. As soon as he calls me I will run copies and I will let you know. It's a big document and we reviewed it last year. That will continue, but we will review it earlier this year so you'll see basically by programs and function how the funds are allocated from one year to another.

Comm. Rivera: Since you're going to move forward anyway...

Comm. Irving: Excuse me, folks. This is not what we do. Not here. Not this body. We are firm believers about respect and respecting people who serve here and the people who take the time to be here. Let's remember that as a community as we move forward.

Comm. Rivera: I'm just going to ask the administration for one thing. Two days ago we had a long meeting about potential cuts. We never entertained the discussion of a \$10.6 million tax levy increase. I know you're probably told by the state to include that in the budget. You are going to submit a budget to the county without our approval. Could you at least look at the possibility of not including a \$10.6 million tax levy increase in that budget? I've spoken to a few of my colleagues and I don't think that's up for discussion. If we get fiscal back during this budget process that's the first thing we're going to take off and I'm going to make sure myself, along my colleagues, we're going to start cutting ourselves if you guys don't do it without affecting our kids.

Comm. Irving: Dr. Evans, I think the point has been driven home. Is the budget going to be prepared for the county less the \$10.6 million? That is the will and the...

Comm. Hodges: And the School 11 cuts or changes. They've already put it in. That should come out. The savings by cutting St. Paul's should be put in there instead.

Comm. Irving: Got it.

Dr. Evans: The information that we gave you on Monday, I want to be clear on how you want me to restructure that and give it back to you.

Comm. Irving: Go for it. That's a fair request.

Dr. Evans: The list was organized by program with staff and operational costs associated with each. If it was staff it had the cost for salaries and benefits. Do you want it laid out in that same way? Literally what I would be doing is taking those two lists that you have, combining them, and removing the four items that I mentioned at the beginning that we took off the list based on the conversations that we've had. Then anything else that had surfaced with conversations with you all that you want us to add beyond that we'll add them. I just want to make sure that we give you that information back in a form that you want.

Comm. Irving: I think everyone can agree that the format in which you gave us the information of the initial cuts made sense. It was simple, clear, and transparent. I think one comprehensive document, as Comm. Mimms has alluded to, that reflects the changes and migrating schools, student, and staff. The answer to that question I think

is yes, but everyone just wants it in one final draft or the most accurate version that we can have at this point in time.

Dr. Evans: Sure.

Comm. Irving: I want to thank you all for engaging in that very needed discussion and debate. Cheryl, if you can schedule a special meeting for 6:00 on Monday. Does 6:30 work?

Comm. Redmon: 6:00 is okay.

Comm. Irving: 6:00 here.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

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

Comm. Irving: I want to remind all the speakers that we have three-minute time limit. We're going to ask each speaker to adhere to the time you have. When you hear the bell we're going to ask you to respectfully wrap up as you move forward.

Mr. John McEntee: Good evening. First, let me start off by saying, and I hope my colleagues can agree, if we ran our classroom in this manner we would all be on a cap. With that being said, every single individual present this evening is here because we care about the children of Paterson. We are all very passionate about education and recognize how important this budget process is. That's why we're here. On Monday evening we all voiced our displeasure with New Jersey's failure to properly fund our district's budget. Parents, educators, and community stakeholders jam-packed your meeting so tight that parents and educators were watching from the windows and listening from the halls of 90 Delaware. I recognize that this problem was created by the state. However, they say that all politics are local. Our community and this union are watching very closely how this Board of Education will soon vote on any proposed budget. While the Superintendent has the final determination and has the power to override this Board's decision, we can only hope that you keep in mind that our youngsters are counting on you. It is our opinion that this Board of Education should vote against any budget that closes any public school, diminishes the athletic programs, and cuts any educator in our district. We need to stand up for education in this city. Let me remind you that somewhere in a science classroom in our city a student has the potential to find the cure for cancer, a student is training really hard to acquire an athletic scholarship, and an educator is burning the midnight oil preparing lessons for our students. Over the years our district has spent millions of dollars on outside contractors to provide so-called professional development. It is clear that these funds should have been much better spent to modernize the work sites that you now choose to close. I am not here to point fingers or to provide a long list of past mistakes, but one thing is clear. Our district is currently in crisis. It is going to take strong leadership to find a way out of this mess. It is incumbent upon the Superintendent and the Board of Education to do whatever it takes to create a budget that meets the needs of our children attending the Paterson Public Schools. They deserve it, this community deserves it, and our teachers deserve it. Thank you very much.

Mr. Charles Ferrer: Good evening. Charles Ferrer. I'm going to put this challenge out here to everyone that's in the audience. When we come back Monday, bring one

person with you. If that's easy for you to do, bring two or three. Let's pack this place for that meeting. I'm going to start out by reading from the funding formula law. I'm just going to read a little bit off page 4. It says: "Together with a renewed legislative focus on the commitment to providing sufficient means to maintain and support a high-quality system of free public schools in the State of New Jersey, a new funding formula supported by significantly increased state resources will ensure compliance with all statutory and constitutional mandates. Districts that were formerly designated as Abbott districts will be provided sufficient resources to continue those court identified programs, positions, and services that have proven effective while being provided the flexibility to shift resources and other things to other areas." I'm going to just leave it at that. Right here in this funding formula set forth by the state what they're doing to us is against the law. What they're trying to make you do, Dr. Evans, is against the law. Therefore, I wrote down a couple of things that I'm concerned with. What I wanted to say is, what is the message that we are sending to our students if we sit here and send this budget to the state, which we know is not enough to meet the needs of our children? It does not meet what's in the law that I just read. We're telling the children it's okay to break the law. That's what we're doing. We're telling them that it's okay to break the law that they should respect and uphold. More importantly, what you parents need to understand is that five years ago we had a budget of \$550 million. At that time that wasn't enough to do the job and now the state is asking us to approve a budget of \$440 million. Is that what it is? What's the new number? Since we can't get preliminary and we don't know what it is, what is the proposed budget? They're asking us to do more with less. What the state has basically done by reducing it from the \$550 million when it should have been going up is they've stolen the money from our children. That's what they've done. They've stolen the money from our children. Dr. Evans, don't put this through. You have the support. I told you I'd get it for you. It's here. Don't send it to him.

Ms. Waheedah Muhammad: Good evening. Dr. Hodges, I want to thank you for your begging us to come and doing what we need to do for our children. But I'm going to tell you I came here tonight expecting this place to be jam packed. If we keep letting Chris Christie see that we don't care about our children there is nothing Dr. Evans can do because that's what's going to happen, people. I can tell you if we don't pack this place on March 9 we might as well close it up and stop taking the front like we're so upset about what's happening. This needs to stop. We might be here in numbers that we are so proud of, but there should not be any room in this building with the 30,000 students that we have in this district. This is a travesty, people. If we don't see your face in that place on March 9, Dr. Evans, do what you have to do. It means that we could care less. Thank you and god bless.

Ms. Rainbow Williams: Hello. Hola. I come with many languages just to ask what changes the Board of Education is ready to make today. Good evening. My name is Rainbow. I am here standing strong with the PTO representing Rosa Parks School of Fine Arts as well as School 21. I would like to know from the Board why is it that you seem to always run out of money. Last year you were \$50 million in the hole. This year it's \$45 million. I am not a rocket scientist. You may never see me on Jeopardy. But it seems to me someone needs to learn how to do math. In my household income is not as large as \$50 million, but I do manage my bills. I suggest one or two things. You can borrow my monthly budget blueprint and use it or you can take some of that money and hire a financial adviser and get these numbers together. Over the years I've witnessed a lot of people who ran for a seat at that table up there. Once they are there voted in, the hot seat turns cold, but their careers are on fire. Now they're off to the next chair. All I'm saying is, don't Donald Trump us! If you are for the community, work with the bishops, the pastors, the reverends, and the parents. Those are the ones who speak for our community when the ones that don't have a voice can't speak, or don't know how

to speak, or nobody wants to hear them. If you were for the community today, then tomorrow you better be for the community. I just want to thank Ms. Morris and all the leaders of the PTO for bringing awareness to many as myself. We were blind. My daughter is a senior and this is only my second meeting. Do you know why? Because I was not aware! That's why we need to come together and open up some more communications. I'm going to end this with one of my mothers who have been an educator for over 35 years. Excellence in education! Our children need strong leadership in our schools. I don't understand how the tail wags and the head doesn't know. One last thing about this budget and tax increase - I would never become a homeowner if this happens, Dr. Evans. My mother who has worked as an educator for all these years to be the first one in our family to buy her own home cannot leave it to me because with this increase I cannot take care of it. So give me and my children a future as well as your children and grandchildren. Just say no.

Ms. Savannah Vargas: My name is Savannah Vargas and I am from School 7. Here I am again. It's because the youth is concerned. I've been to School 29 as well as School 7 for elementary and middle school and I am devastated to see how our school system has poorly evolved for the past two years. Knowing that our money has been defectively spent breaks my heart of me and my students. I am an eighth grader and will no longer be attending middle school and possibly moving out of Paterson. But I do not wish to leave under these conditions of eighth graders. This is our district. Why are you building new schools that you're going to destroy later on? Are you building the schools to clump other schools together? I just wanted to say that Chris Christie is the cause. Isn't he the reason we're in debt? We haven't been to every Board meeting but we are aware and will always be informed. Let that sink in. Our district should think before they act. One city! One voice! We stand united. Thank you.

Ms. Maria Sevillano: Good evening. My name is Maria Sevillano and I am here to address a problem that has been here long enough for us to have enough of it. As you may have figured out by now, School 7 doesn't back down without a fight. You first listened to us last year when we protested for the right to keep our teachers, rights that should not have to be fought for, but were given to us that we as human beings deserve. We are not here to prove you as bad people, but the decisions you've made have affected our future in insurmountable ways. First you decided to take away our teachers and to say that they were one of the best in the whole city of Paterson is an understatement. Now you're deciding to take away over 1,000 crossings guards. We are constantly told that we have a future here, but your actions are keeping us from successfully having one. Paterson is portrayed as a place in which no one can or will have a future. We want to prove them wrong, that the chances of us having a future are as equal as someone from Woodland Park, Clifton, Totowa, or across the country. However, we can't do this alone. We can be the spark of light but together we can become so much more. I want to be able to envision Paterson being a safe place with an abundance of opportunities. But right now the vision is a bit blurry. Instead of attacking you, we are all here to ask you will you help us and the future of Paterson. Will you actually do what you're saying you want to do? Now that I have the chance to speak to all of you and be sure that all of you are listening, I have a message for Chris Christie. Stop destroying Paterson Public Schools.

Ms. Fablina Zaman: Good evening. My name is Fablina Zaman and the reason I am here is because of everything that has been going on these past few days and possibly these past few years. 10 months ago I was standing right here fighting for what I believed in to get my teachers back. Unfortunately, we didn't get them back. But now here we are again with more people and more voices to show our story and how we are trying to get everything and do everything we can to make our future bright. Instead of

speaking about the budget issues, I'm here to bring another topic into the plate. I remember the first morning of me going to school. Everything we had last year with the teachers and everything we did was all so amazing. Everything that happened was so charitable and so memorable. But those teachers are not here anymore. Those teachers are gone. They have been laid off. All because of budget cuts, all because of something that could have been fixed but wasn't fixed. Why did it have to happen? I'm still not understanding it. It doesn't make sense to me. We all don't deserve this. We're already fighting for so many rights. We're already here struggling as a nation for women's rights, Black rights, and LGBT rights. Why do education rights have to be on our plate? Why do we have to fight for this? I could go on and on about how wonderful the old teachers were and how they have brought to Paterson and everything that would have become of Paterson with the bright future if these teachers were still here. But they were laid off because of these budget cuts. I could really go on and on about how much of an impact they made and the great things they did. One of our teachers led the National History Day to nationals. We went to DC and we actually had a chance of winning. That was the first that Paterson has got. We were the first. We're fighting for the youth. We don't even have to be standing here. I'm graduating. I don't have to be standing here fighting for it, but here I am because I'm worried about our children, unlike some of us. I am worried about our children and I hope that by standing here with all these people behind me that we can actually make a change. Thank you.

Ms. Rosie Grant: Good evening. The responsibility to provide a thorough and efficient system of education lies squarely with the State of New Jersey. Although the court has mandated full funding for Paterson and the other districts, we have been underfunded to the tune of \$242 million over the past six years. This number will increase with this budget and it will increase next year and so on unless we join together and demand that the State obey the law and fund the School Funding Reform Act. The SFRA is the means by which we meet the constitutional mandate. As has been said before, this state is failing to do that. Here we're seeing the consequences of underfunding. Our tests scores are improving, but they're not good. There's no reason why Paterson students cannot perform at or above the statewide average. We have a long way to go until we get to that point. This means we have to give them the resources they need. We need adequate facilities, labs, art rooms, music rooms, rigorous curriculum materials and supplies, highly qualified teachers in all subject areas, professional development for staff so that they can stay current and other enrichment opportunities for our kids. The facilities plan considered all that when we put it together and it promised that no schools would be closed until we had a replacement school for those students. I was pleased to hear you say that today, Dr. Evans, but there are still some concerns. This plan took eight committee meetings, 12 community forums, and participation from 1,200 community members. We were present at every one of these meetings. It's the biggest community engagement undertaking that I've seen this district do in many years. I do ask you not to undermine or ignore the plan that so much of us put so much effort into. What the community said was important. Preserve the programming and give us the facilities we need to meet the children's needs. St. Mary's was scheduled to be closed once we had a place for them to go. You're saying that we do have a place for them to go. I do ask you to preserve the rich programming. We have an exemplary preschool programming going on at St. Mary's and I would hate to see children lose that advantage because we shuffled them into different districts. So please preserve the programming. As we think about closing buildings the Young Men's Academy needs to come out of that church just as fast as we can get them out. That was not three minutes because I timed myself, but in deference to the other people who are here to speak I will reserve the rest of my comments for Monday. Thank you.

Ms. Linda Reid: Good evening. The proposed cuts are counterproductive. They are focused on saving money while having a negative effect on education. Many schools don't have art and music programs, especially at the elementary level. Cuts will lead to even greater reductions in subjects that are essential for a thorough and efficient education, but not covered on the standardized tests. Librarian positions were cut to balance last year's budget. Libraries without librarians have become technology dumping grounds. Students aren't able to borrow books. Reading levels are falling. We've seen this happen before. When the reading levels fall so will literacy. Combining the sports teams is not feasible. There aren't enough slots now for all the students who want to participate. Sports is an outlet for many of our kids and now that most recreational programs have been cut combining those sports teams is really going to be a hardship for some of these kids who can only see a sports scholarship as a path to college and career. They use that. We know that is not everything, but for some kids it's their only means. This School Board must challenge the State to follow the law and fund the formula. I do agree that closing schools is not what should be done. But I also have to agree with the facilities plan that we have proposed with the boys going into the new School 16. I've heard of the building that we own where the boys are now. They should not be there. It is unhealthy. I think it's a lawsuit waiting to happen. If I had a child in there you already know I would have a lawsuit. I would be contacting somebody's lawyer right about now. You really need to get those kids out of there as soon as possible before something happens to them. We're being told to make do with less money while extra money that is in the budget is going to charter schools. That's not right. They need to fund our public schools. I believe there's a note going around about signing up for the hearing. I know a lot of us will be here, but please make sure that folks know how to register. Thank you.

Mr. Corey Teague: Good evening Commissioners and to all the parents that are here. I just want to give you guys a little memory class since there are parents here. When Chris Christie decided to first run for Governor I don't know if any of you really remember but when he made his announcement that he was running for the first time he had an axe on his shoulder. He made it very clear that the first thing he was going to do was cut everything he could. What did we do? We stayed home. We didn't vote and he won. He ran again. We stayed home and he won again. You have to understand Chris Christie wants to do away with public education. Period! You have to understand that. We can come here and yell and scream at them. But that's not going to change the Governor's mind until we go down to Trenton and make the noise down there. Until we go down there and we really start screaming and yelling, what our representatives here should do is push back against what's trying to come down the pike. I am happy to see tonight that there was some pushback. But keep in mind there is another election coming up for the governorship next year. We can't stay home anymore. People keep saying it doesn't matter who you vote for. Yes, it does. Do you see what he's doing? He doesn't care about urban communities. He doesn't care about public education. The only way to cut something or to kill something is to continue to bleed it until there's nothing left. Just look at what they're doing. The state is trying to force the council to continue to raise the taxes. Now they're trying to force the School Board to continue to raise the taxes. They know sooner or later the entire city is going to implode. Then the state can come in, just like they did to Camden and those other cities, take over the city and do whatever they want. The Governor wants to come in and do away with the School Board and have it fixed where he can just make whatever decisions he wants to make. I'm encouraging you to continue to come out to the School Board meetings for one reason and one reason only. Your child's educational well-being lies in the balance. When you do not come out you place your children in harm's way. When you do not come out you send your child into harm's way each and every day when you fail to find out what's going on. I don't wait for anybody to

call me to tell me what's going on. If I'm sending my child somewhere I'm going to there to find out what it is, what they're doing, why they're doing it, where they're doing it, and how it's going to affect my child. I'm not letting anybody call me. I'm the parent. Those are my kids. I'm not waiting for somebody to call me. So we as parents have to step our game up. We can't just come here and scream at the Board. We as parents have to step our game up and take care of our children.

Ms. Lianess Maldonado: Hi. My name is Lianess and I go to School 7. Before I get the facts down, I have to say School 7 is back in this building. It's unbelievable that I have to come back again because we aren't getting treated right. I could be doing my homework. I could be doing a project that could take me to Washington DC that could get me a scholarship. I could be going wherever I want to, but I'm here worrying about the children. I'm here worrying about people that I don't even know. You say that we don't have money, but how is that possible? You already took away almost everything from us, our teachers and crossing guards. It doesn't add up. Some of you guys are getting paid \$2,000. If you took away some and shared it equally between everyone else then we could have the money for everyone to have a job and you wouldn't need to make budget cuts. A great example of how you're ruining our education is HARP Academy. They missed one and a half months of learning just because you wanted to move them to a new building and they have to share it with YES Academy. Their books were in the new building for the first month of school and they couldn't learn anything. Now they're in a new school. It's smaller than my old school. I see that my school is small. I feel bad for the high schoolers. Their new school is half the size of my building. That's not right. That's just plain old unfair. You made classrooms for them to learn and do what they need to do. But HARP Academy doesn't have laptops. You have to go all around Paterson to get laptops. You have to come to my school to get some laptops so they can finally learn what they should be learning already. Then I heard that you guys are planning to get rid of School 29. That doesn't really add up. How are you going to get rid of two schools to combine them together? There's already an issue with that. I see a problem just getting rid of School 29. Where are they going to go? Are they going to my school? If you add them to my school and we don't have that much room we're going to be squished up with School 29. Some classrooms are almost already full with 30 kids. If you're adding kids to my school there is no room. If you do that, special education is going to have to be forced to get out of my school. Where are they going to go? Where are they going to get their education? I don't know where they're going to. It's not going to be fair for them. If you keep doing this stuff it's not going to help the problem. You're telling us everything is going to be okay. It's not. It's not going to fix anything. You need to do something now and do it. You're saying all this stuff. Actually do it for us. Care about us. These are two examples of what you're doing to Paterson Public Schools. You're closing programs. You're trying to get rid of Paterson Public Schools and make us go to charter schools where we have to pay just to get an education that we should get free. That isn't right. If you share the money that we're getting from the budget then we won't have this problem. Make Paterson a better place to learn. Make everything good. Stop wasting the money. Where is it going? Just tell us where it's going and do what you're saying.

Mr. Jean Silva: My name is Jean Silva and I come from School 7. I was recently informed that the Board of Education has been cutting clubs and activities. Many people have been saying that Paterson students can't do anything. Some people say that Paterson kids end up on the streets. It's heartbreaking because they don't really have a chance to see us and what we can accomplish. They just assume. I may not be a straight-A student, but I really care about my education and so do my fellow classmates. Many people from Paterson can't pursue their dreams because they just get the idea that just because we're from Paterson we're horrible kids. What if you have

kids from Paterson? You wouldn't like the conditions that you gave us. Wouldn't you want us to succeed? Wouldn't you want us to be greater than what we already are? Last year you took away half of our teachers and some of the students won't get the education they need. Mr. Kravovich and Mr. Panther were just some of the teachers that were disposed. Teachers don't even get paid a lot of money, but you guys just buy articles that are a waste of time for us. IFL isn't helping us. Can I ask one more question? Who got you to where you are right now? Teachers, right? Yet you cut our teachers off and we don't get the education that we need.

Ms. Jerrica Spence: Hello all again. I came here to talk about something else, but listening to what you guys were talking about my mind shifted someplace else. As a parent of a student that goes to Don Bosco Tech, I can't in a sound state of mind or soul recommend closing any schools and bringing the students there. About two months ago they had a meeting that they were closing down the school. The school is practically falling apart. I had a couple of incidents where pieces of the lights fell on my daughter's head. My daughter came home. She sat on a bench and it almost ripped her leg out. The school is falling apart. If they're closing the school, I say that's good. Close the school. Don't close other schools and bring more kids into the dismay of Don Bosco. That's it. I was asked to ask you guys if there was a number that you call to get priority on the list to speak. If so, can we have it?

Comm. Irving: I'll try to look for that information now. Before everybody leaves we will get it.

Ms. Margarita Gutierrez: Good evening. I have two children that I send off to school every day and it's very disturbing that in your care these kids are not getting what they deserve and that's their education. Dr. Evans, who's benefitting out of this? Is it you? It's not the kids or the teachers. That's it.

Ms. Sailus Cabral: Good evening, Board members. I stand here before you tonight asking Dr. Evans to please go back and tell them just no. You're not going to make any budget cuts because we can't afford them. Tell them in fact we cannot cut anything. We need more for our children. Our buildings are unsafe. I've come here numerous times. What's going to happen? I was promised that School 19 was going to get fixed. I see that it's no longer going to happen. It bothers me because of a simple fact. I'm consistent. I come here on numerous occasions every single meeting and I sat across from Ms. Shafer. I've said this is what we need. How can I help? What can I do? What can we as parents do to raise the money for the new playground, gates, crossing guards, and everything we need? What can we do? Do you know what the answer was? I was shut down. Don't worry. It's in the works. It's going to happen. It's not going to happen. That's why parents don't come here. You shut us down and then we look incompetent when we're not incompetent. We aren't. How many times have I come here before you? To that fact, I need to bring to your attention again that you're going to make cuts, correct? As it stands, School 19 currently shares a nurse. She's not there when a child needs the care. I'm here to present to you yesterday my son, Ethan Perez, bled continually. They couldn't stop his nosebleed. There was blood coming out of his mouth and his nose just pouring out. They had to call the ambulance for my son. Where was the nurse when he needed it? My son has been sent home on numerous occasions. A kid bumped into him with a pencil. He was sent home with lead in his hand infected by the time he came home. No first aid at all for my son. This happens to numerous children. We don't have what we need now and you're taking more away? And we're supposed to say okay? You're supposed to go back and say no. We need more. Our buildings aren't safe. You're going to change children from

one building to another. They're not safe. They all need work. Most of them do. I ask you to please go back and say no. We need more. Don't stand for it.

Ms. Greta Mills: Hello, Greta Mills, Paterson resident. I've been here on numerous occasions, but I want to take us back to when we had that budget meeting last year and they did the budget cuts. Dr. Evans, you said that it's only going to be one teacher, if anything, out of the building. How many of you sitting on the Board remember? I remember you speaking out about it and you said one. It turned out to be four and five teachers out of a building. So I'm not going to take your word that there are not going to be any school closings or teachers cut. I stood before you and I told you then we can't have all these kids crowded in one room. Here we are again with budget cuts. You know it's the law. Everybody here knows it's the law. We need a lawyer. I don't know what we need to do. We need to figure it out. We need a lawyer because Christie has always been on Paterson's back and he's not going to get off our back until we decide to do something. I'm telling you parents I'm so glad that you came out. I'm telling teachers and parents it's enough. It is sad that we're sitting here and by law we do not have a thorough and efficient education. We have the same situation at School 26 where we only have one nurse serving two schools. How is that possible? We have one nurse serving two schools. She has to get to School 1 if something happens to children. She needs to be at School 26 if something happens to the children. That's not fair. That's not being fair to the children or the staff. Then you have the conditions in my classroom with the heating, water, and everything else. My room stays at 70 degrees. Other places in the room it's a sauna. It doesn't make any sense. Heating needs to be fixed. Other buildings need to be fixed. Get the money that this district deserves and fix it the way it's supposed to be. Our children and our staff deserve it. We've earned it. It is our right and it is by law that you do it. It doesn't make sense that we don't have the technology that's needed in the classrooms. It doesn't make sense that we don't have online things that all the kids can be doing. Teachers shouldn't even have to sit there and grade papers anymore because we are in 2016 and it's technology out there that the children and the teachers can use so they don't have to sit there and grade papers all day and all night. We need smaller classrooms and we need teachers back in the classroom. We don't need a whole bunch of people sitting down at 90 Delaware. No disrespect, but every time you go there there's an adult here, an adult here, an assistant, and not one of them is there doing something with a group of children. We need them in the classroom with small children in there, with three or four children and an adult so we get these kids ready for the PARCC. I am not against testing because we've been testing for the rest of our lives. But I do know we need to have small groups if we want to reach the children and have them prepared the way they need to be. Thank you.

Ms. Marcella Simadiris: Peace and blessings. I know a lot of people have been talking about the cuts. I want to take some time to talk about the money and how we're spending it currently. Recently I had an assignment through my master's program about policy in practice. I decided to look at RAC and its approach within our schools. It entailed me looking closely at our school improvement plan and I also looked at the grant proposal that ignited the whole Regional Achievement Center infrastructure. The grant proposal was written back in 2012 by the then Commissioner of Education, Christopher Cerf, who's currently the Superintendent of Newark Public Schools. Within it one piece stood out the most to me. It's a little piece under community development. I don't know why it's listed under community development on page five of the proposal. It says the RAC may also work with the LEA, or the Paterson Public Schools, to remove and reassign a school principal in the event that principal is unable to lead the turnaround effort or to provide flexibility in the areas of scheduling, budget, staffing, and curriculum. I was always wondering it just feels like these RAC officials within our

building run it. They hold my administrators hostage. No lie. I tell the story to everyone. I'm not exaggerating. There have been two occasions where children have been roaming the halls looking for assistance and no administrator can be found because they're locked up in a room downstairs, Room 103. They have this room all to themselves lavished with computers. It's huge. It has beautiful lounge chairs and it's all for these RAC officials. They hold our administrators hostage. On two separate occasions children could not receive assistance because they have to meet with the RAC officials all the time. Then when I looked at the school improvement plan the only ones that were involved in the planning were administrators, mentors, and school-based supervisors. When you look at the funding, all the funding goes towards RAC mentor salaries and benefits and the school-based supervisor. I'm not sure if it's accurate or if that was just something that was said within that proposal, but it looks like the ones in charge who have power to have input in reassigning principals actually are at the table funneling the money to fund their salaries and their benefits. If you could all please take a look at how RAC functions within our district. Personally, they oppress me. They oppress me as a teacher. They have control of how we schedule everything. I told you we don't have equity in our schedules. If you look at our student schedules and compare it to the kids in the suburbs, they don't have the same opportunities because they control everything.

Mr. Rafael Fontana: Good evening, Board members. I'm amazed and proud to see other young kids that came out and spoke tonight. We need a lot more of that. It's no wonder we are number 33 in the world when it comes to math and science. The dismantling of the public schools in the City of Paterson is nothing new. We used to have in the grammar schools the best wood shops and metal shops in the nation. It's used to be right here in the City of Paterson. Everyone that lived around us in Wayne and Totowa used to live in Paterson. We are being targeted and the only crime that the citizens of Paterson have done is being poor. That's the only crime that they have committed. My message to the bully Governor is he doesn't know what a bully is. He should come down here. We know how to deal with bullies. I dealt with bullies when I was in school. Now I'm a man and I'd like to see the Governor here and try to bully us. We need the funding that we're entitled to. Like I said this past Monday, most of the budget goes to administrators and consultants that have no care about education and don't care about the children in this city. All they're worried about is their pensions and how much they're putting in their pockets. The time has come in our nation to stop corruption. Corruption needs to stop. Worry about our citizens and our children who are the future of this country. Enough is enough with all the mismanagement. I can tell you 20 years ago when the new Charles Riley School was built after the fire that happened there as soon as the school was finished the company that built that school went out of business. Why did they go out of business? Because they took so many shortcuts that they had to hire a different company to fix the intentional mistakes that they did, shortcuts to put more money in their pockets jeopardizing the safety of the teachers and the students. The same thing keeps happening over and over again. To conclude, we don't need more tax cuts. The Mayor is doing the same thing. The Mayor belongs with the bully Governor. Maybe he's the bully Mayor of this town. Good night.

Ms. Michelle Polo-Thorpe: Good evening everyone. My name is Michelle Polo. I've been teaching in Paterson for 15 years. Actually, I'm really proud because the students that were coming up and speaking earlier today were students of mine last year when I was a teacher at School 7. I had no idea they were coming today. They sent me emails just saying that they were coming and they wanted me to come and support. So I decided to come and support and it's bittersweet for me because this will be officially my last year teaching in this city. But watching them speak, not only last year because I heard through the grapevine that people thought that I wrote the speeches for them

because they were so well-done and people thought that I coached them. I didn't. Once a week every week we would do current events and I would tell them they could look through the paper and choose what they wanted to talk about. Every time they chose Paterson news over national news and they became informed. The fact that now that I'm not even in their school they are still reading the paper and still informed means I did my job and I did it well. I taught them how to be a member of their community and I taught them how to stay informed. The fact that they will probably do this for the rest of their life and one of them probably will end up being the next Mayor of Paterson makes me very proud. Unfortunately, as a professional I've had enough and I will no longer be here after this year. After years of budget cuts, wasteful spending, growing class sizes, as well as constantly writing data reports because for some reason this district is so focused on numbers and not the people it has become totally unbearable to teach in this city. It breaks my heart because I was born and raised in this city and it's because of my teachers that I am who I am. I never planned to leave, but I really have to. It is unbearable. I spend more time writing reports than I do actually grading papers and making rigorous lesson plans. I can't do it. Now to hear proposals of more budget cuts breaks my heart. I teach sixth grade this year in a different school and many of them walk their little brothers and sisters to school and back. If you bus them to the other side of town it will create an unnecessary burden on families. Attendance will suffer as well because if some of them don't catch the bus on time how are they going to get to school if it's on the east side of Paterson and they live on the west side of Paterson? I am not here for me. I'm leaving. But I will continue to keep my eye on this city and how you run your schools. I will continue to voice my opinion. Paterson children and families are more than just a number. They mean more than just dollars and cents. I know that outsiders think that Paterson is a crime-filled city with nothing to offer. But as a teacher in this multi-cultural city I can proudly say that this city is full of some of the most hard-working people that I have ever met. Those people deserve a fair shot. Victor Cruz, Marcelle Shipp, Tim Thomas, and Mike Adams are a few professional athletes that come from Paterson, New Jersey. If you cut the athletic programs in our city many of our kids will never get the opportunity that they got. The constant budget cuts and tax hikes are not only destroying our schools, they are destroying our community. I hope that Donnie Evans heard us loud and clear and relays our message to Chris Christie. Do not destroy our schools. Do not destroy our city. If you're going to cut anything in the budget, it should be all these fancy bonuses that certain people get.

Ms. Dawn McGowan: Good evening ladies and gentlemen and to the Board of Education. We are here again. This time we're talking to Dr. Evans and the Board tonight. First of all, I want to tell you that we're going to have a PTO bus trip on Wednesday, March 9. We're going to Montclair State University for a conference on behalf of this budget. We have a word we always use – we don't back and we don't bow. We love to lick the nail on the head and the nail on the head is the \$45 million we want to 'x' out. 'X' means we don't want to hear about it. We don't want you to lower it. We want to get rid of it. We need to 'x' them out. When you lay the teachers off, are you sending the parents to come and teach the school? Are you sending me as a parent to come stand outside and cross the children? You need to buckle up. Our school is in danger. Summer is coming. We have overcrowding. You're shutting down some of the schools. Right now some of the teachers have 50 children to a class. During the summer they don't have proper AC. Even in this heat they don't have proper air conditioning. We're calling on the Superintendent. You're the one who is to work for us. We don't want to see any of our teachers laid off. We don't want to see any of the schools closed. We need to see AC in the schools. We need proper heaters in the schools. We want to see our children come to school. I'm living at 113 North Main. I know what it is to see some of those boys on the street selling drugs. If the children

don't have a proper education when they leave high school they're going to shoot one another down. That's what's going to happen to our children if they don't have a proper education. You have an education already. The children need their education, their teachers, and their principals. We're going to fight for this community. Rise up. We're coming after you.

Ms. Elizabeth Elias: Hello everybody. My name is Elizabeth and I'm representing Rosa Parks High School. I'm representing School 21. I have a proud honor roll student and have been since kindergarten. She's a sophomore and she's getting letters from colleges already by December. I did that with the teachers. I don't want to sound harsh, but I ask that everybody - parents, teachers, councilmen, the mayor, the sheriff or whoever it is - we need to come together as a unit. I remember when I was in School 6 I was a graduate and I always bring T.J. up. My principal was Dr. Fulmore and the city was run by the city. We have to find out how is it that we can get our city back. Everybody counts with taxes. I don't care if you don't work. I don't care if you're just staying at home getting disability. Everybody in some way contributes to the city. As a city we need to come together to fight for our children. As everybody keeps saying, we can go and on attacking Dr. Evans. Right now Dr. Evans doesn't even count. We count. We need to make the different changes. My daughter has to wake up every day and be in School at 7:30. I had to do three jobs. It may not be any of your business, but those three jobs pay taxes. I have my sisters and friends that pay taxes and those are paying your jobs, everybody up there. I'm not going to say that everybody is the same. I'm not going to say that everybody is evil or bad. I don't want to come against you, but I've been in this system doing the same thing and it's sad to say that I'm afraid that I see my son in the news like his cousin Genesis shot up because education is pushing him away farther and father and he's not interested in being in school. They don't have any way of reading. It's not interesting. You're not even giving the teachers a chance. These teachers are stressed out. Now you want to overcrowd the kids again like every keeps saying. I don't care if it's five kids that you want to put. It makes no sense. Logically every idea that you have shouldn't even be made. It should be zero. It should have been up. By now, Dr. Evans, you should have been asked for our help. I don't know how you can sleep at night. I can't sleep. My daughter is right here. She should have been at home. I should have been at work. We should come up with ideas together, not against us. I'm not saying that you're against us, but it feels like it's a setup. I remember Silk City was one of the biggest cities. We're the third biggest city in New Jersey. When you look us up in a map all you see is violence and all the bad things. Victor Cruz is from this city. He's a millionaire. Mike Adams. Now you have Fetty Wap. I'm the mother that I am and my child is the child that she is because I had good teachers. If you don't use the proper tools like I told you before in this war, we will never win it. By next year we will never do it. So if you can't take it, pay me and I'll do your job. I'll go to school. Pay me.

Ms. Kassandra Rodriguez: Good evening. I attend Rosa Parks School of Fine and Performing Arts. I was told that some parts of my school were going to be removed, like the fine arts. It gets me emotional because it's not fair.

Ms. Elias: This is what I have to deal with. These are the things that are going on. When I went out to the basketball team I had to tell them that they had to unite, which was the way it was before with Kennedy and Eastside. Her friends are worried about things like that. That means that a lot of athletes next year will have to come together and it makes no sense. This is what I have to go through at home, Dr. Evans. I have two other ones that are coming behind.

Ms. Rodriguez: I don't think it's fair and we don't deserve it. We look forward going to school. Rosa Parks is a 100% graduating school. It's different compared to all the other schools because we do what we enjoy. I look forward to going to school at 7:30 in the morning. I don't think it's fair. Our shows that you enjoy going to, we make something out of nothing. We have a budget ourselves. I have a teacher that goes out of her pocket and buys things that we need to make our sets, the lighting, and fixing things. It's not fair. You have to do more than just sit up there. You have to get it together.

Mr. Manny Martinez: Good evening. I'm going to be very brief. I don't want to belabor the points that a lot of people have made up here today. I was watching the meeting on Monday and I have to say that I'm very happy to see the number of people who are out here today. It feels very good to see that our Paterson families are waking up and taking note of what's really going on. The only way that this is going to change is if we sustain this momentum. Coming to one or two meetings and clapping is wonderful, but we need to sustain this momentum and keep it going. Furthermore, we need to direct our energies to where they really need to be directed. You have folks up here on this dais who are fighting. I know a lot of times we get frustrated and we come up here and put the blame on them. These are not the people who you should be directing your anger and energy towards. We need to take this fight down to Trenton. Our assembly people and state senators can do the work for us. Assemblyman Benjie Wimberly has said this fight really needs to take place in Trenton. Coming up here and doing all this is wonderful, but there are limitations on what these folks can do for you. But if we flood the streets of Trenton, if we flood their phone lines, if we make it impossible for them to ignore us anymore, they will take note and they will have to do the right thing by us. We have to pay attention. How we fight this fight is the fight and it has to take place in Trenton. These folks will go through the fire for you and our State Superintendent is in a precarious position because he works for the Governor and the Commissioner of Education. He's limited in what he can and will do because he's looking out for himself. That's not a knock. It's understandable. He's looking out for himself and he's done a very admirable job. I can say he works with our Commissioners and he does the best that he can do. He works well with our Commissioners. We need to take this fight down to Trenton. I implore you all on March 9 come out to the assembly committee at Montclair State University. Come there. We have buses that will take you there. Please get on these buses. Go to these meetings. This is where the difference will be made. This is where this fight will be won or lost, not here. This is good, but it's in Trenton where we need to go. So I implore you all, get on those buses, go to Trenton, make the noise, take the fight to our Governor. He's the person that we have to direct these energies at. That's even if we can find him in Trenton because right now he's busy gallivanting around the country with another sideshow clown, but that's beside the point. Take this down to Trenton and make your voices be heard. Thank you all. Good to see you.

Mr. Jared Richards: My name is Jared Richards. I am a student at School 28. I'm a fifth grader. My topic today is about the budget cuts. As a student I am greatly appalled at the fact that there are going to be cuts. Every child deserves a great education no matter their circumstance. Instead of cutting teachers and closing schools try to find money elsewhere, like from somebody like Chris Christie. Cutting schools is just not the way because we want our children to be something when they are older instead of being on the streets. We need to make a harder push to give our children the best education possible. In conclusion, by cutting teachers you are impeding the education for the children. I stand before you, Board members, and I ask you, is money more important than a child's education? It is your call to make.

Ms. Susan Deile: Good evening. My name is Susan Deile. I'm a retired educator, k-8. I taught for 40 years. You probably want to know why I'm here. Even though I'm retired, my heart and mind are still with children and students. I'd like to represent their behalf to you tonight. I would like to see every child get a high-quality appropriate education. I put the word 'appropriate' in there. I'm not going to tell you where I'm from, but in my district when every child had to be college and career ready we had special needs children in high school who were in diapers. You know how challenged they were. They were in a program that was specifically designed to their needs. They had a living room area, a kitchen area, and a bedroom area. They were trying to be taught to function in that area. They also were in a work study program, made money, and that money was used to take them across the street so they could learn to behave going out to the luncheonette area. Guess what? They're now taking algebra and history. Wait a minute. That doesn't meet their needs. I'm proposing to you that part of the problem is not only coming from the state but from the federal government. I'm going to ask each one of you because you have great ideas to write to our President, whom I love and his wife even more. They're pretty much removed from the classroom. Unfortunately, the Department of Education, the federal government, is very much removed from the classroom. The State Department of Education is very much removed from the classroom. What's happening is they're creating situations that are siphoning off much needed money, as everybody has pointed out, that should be going to the students in the classroom. They're creating regulations and paperwork that's taking the time of our administrators and our teachers. They're taking our teachers from teaching in the classroom to do paperwork. I'm asking you to write to everybody. Write to President Obama. Express what your problems are. You know what? They have to hear from us. Write to Governor Christie. But when you write to Governor Christie please send a letter to your local newspaper because I don't think it's going to get anywhere but a round paper basket. Please work with everybody you can to make education the best we can for our students. Thank you.

Dr. Joseph Atallo: Good evening members of the Board of Education, members of the educational community, and parents. My name is Dr. Joseph Atallo, former Paterson School Board member, Paterson resident, and taxpayer. The first thing I want to say is Paterson does not have second-class students. We cannot tolerate having second-class schools. I was quite shocked at the beginning of this meeting watching the disagreement on the budget. If the administration is presenting something to the Board, the Board members have to get it well in advance so they can review it and understand what's going on. For the nine years I served on this Board I would not tolerate – and Comm. Hodges and Comm. Kerr would agree with me – getting things at the last moment and be expected to support it, particularly things like a \$10.5 million property tax increase. That's not acceptable when the city is raising the taxes 6.1%. So we need to spend smarter, not necessarily spend more. The kids need more. There are schools where the children don't have textbooks. They're working off ditto papers. There aren't certified teachers. Most of the year, the classrooms are covered by substitutes. That's not a thorough and efficient education. Then we have to look at 90 Delaware Avenue, the 800-pound gorilla in the room. There was a good friend of mine many of you knew, Dr. Frank Napier. We used to have lunch all the time after he retired. I worked for Frank. He had hired me as his business administrator for the schools. I worked with two good friends, Bill Kline and Dr. Napier, two mentors of mine. Frank is no longer with us, but he would roll over in his grave today. When the state took over 25 years ago they said the administration is top-heavy. Look at 90 Delaware. It's not just top-heavy. It's grossly top-heavy. It's not a personal attack on anybody. A lot of the people I know are nice people. A lot of them here I don't even know who they are. I don't know their names. It's just top-heavy. If they don't want to do it, I'll come in for a \$1 and bring in my team of doctoral students from the university where I teach and

we'll go through the place like a hot knife through butter. We are a Board of Education not a board of consultants, not a board of central office administrators. The money needs to be spent in the classrooms on teachers, supplies, students, and computers. That's where the money needs to be. Administration made a comment on Monday night when I was at the meeting about non-essential consultants. If they're non-essential, why the heck are they on the payroll? Why are we going to be laying off educators? Then I see people have their wives, husbands, sisters. The guy from Colorado brings his sister. This is crazy. Then I Google the sister and she didn't have a very interesting resume. What are we doing here? We need to focus on educating the kids and getting the money into the schools. I applaud the School Board members for speaking up at the meetings and not being a rubber stamp board. As Errol and Jonathan would back me up, I think there was a time we had rubber stamp Board members who would just vote for things. That's not acceptable. You're a very intelligent educated group of people and you're Paterson people. You have to stand up for Paterson kids. We don't have second-class children and we're not going to tolerate having second-class schools. I have many points, but I'm limited in time and I want to be respectful to the speakers after me. My final point is on closing schools. I have to agree with the Board members. You cannot close schools. If they're run-down we need to refurbish them. Dr. Evans, you've been here seven years. What is the plan on refurbishing these schools? A lot of them are old, but we can't just let them run into disrepair. As far as 33-35 Church Street, don't put that in the budget as a \$5 million potential sale. The buildings are unsalable. They're environmentally contaminated. They should never have been there in the first place. There's no certificate of occupancy. We need to get out of these leases. We have what's called triple net leases. For those who don't know what that means, it means you pay the rent, the property taxes, and you pay all maintenance and improvements on the building. All the landlord does is collect the check the first of the month. That's not cost-effective and not in the best interest of Paterson taxpayers. In my own personal opinion, buildings like the one we're leasing on Colt Street, with all due respect, office buildings are not school buildings. We need to get buildings for our children that have auditoriums, libraries, gymnasiums, lunchrooms, parking for our staff. You can't put it on the busiest corner in the city and then put two conflicting schools in the same building. The other point is this boy's school. It's a nice idea, but if you're going to do a boy's school let's do a girl's school as well. Number two, you have to plan these schools better. You can't just start them and then they sort of crumble. It's a great idea in theory, but we're spending money. The state is going to come in and say we started a program. Where is the planning? It's not where it should be. Thank you. The Alternative Middle School has got to go too. Nine kids, \$1.6 million?

Ms. Carla Harris: Carla Harris, Patersonian. I've been to more meetings this week and the more I go to the more disgusted I am. There's one common denominator with all these meetings. I keep hearing state, state, state. You want to combine our boys and girls sports teams. They want them to win state championships. How about we give them state-of-the-art equipment? How about we give them state-of-the-art fields? How about we give them state-of-the-art facilities? For god's sake, the concession stand is a wooden box that's run by a generator. Are you serious? They go to these other cities and see all of these giant schools with concession stands with gates coming up. Then they come back home and look what they see. Look at where they play. I respect you Board members, but it's not on you. You ask for parents to come out. They came out, not once but twice. One thing people like is consistency. Keep on asking them to come out. We're fighting a war. I'm ready to fight now. I've had all I can take. I can't even sit at home anymore and look at it on TV because I want to say something and I can't get the opportunity to say it. This school is run by the state and the state will not take their own state to court. There is nowhere that says the parents can't sue the state for

inadequate and separated education. It's not equal and it's separated. Wayne gets this money. Clifton gets this money. Paterson is the only one that's not getting this money. The State of New Jersey isn't going to sue themselves. There is nothing that says that we as parents and as a community in Paterson cannot sue the state so that we can get the education that our kids rightfully deserve. They took music. We're not going to breed any more Fetty Wap? They took art. We're not going to breed any more art? They're going to take away the sports teams. There won't be any more Victor Cruz? Paterson breeds good stuff. As bad as the conditions are that we have, we still keep on producing athletes and scholar students. One of our schools just won a big thing. We can't take this anymore. This is unacceptable. Guess what? I do not have any children in the Paterson School System. They have all graduated. I have a daughter getting her masters in Rutgers. I have a son that plays football. He went on a scholarship. Guess what? I have a three-year-old granddaughter that's coming up under this nonsense and this mess. It's a disgrace what the state has done to this city. It's a disgrace on every level of the word, from the School Board to the City Council. The state is not giving us anything. We have to go get it ourselves. We're going to take this fight right on to Trenton.

Mr. Bilal Hakeem: Good evening. It's really disheartening to hear the teacher mention about this being her last year teaching in the district. It brought tears to my eyes sitting back there. Believe me. I wrote down what I wanted to say because sometimes we have the tendency from the tradition we come from to speak in tongue. I don't want to get off and start speaking in tongue tonight. I want to keep the proper etiquette here. The first thing I want to say to the parents is that you would be surprised of the power that you possess. You possess a lot of power. A few years ago there was a calculated move to destroy a growing parent movement in this city that was spearheaded by Ms. Anna Taliaferro. She was singled out and hung up like a prized slave on the plantation at the silence of many who have become deaf to this day. I don't have my hat off, but I salute the Director of Community Engagement, Kemper McDowell, for rallying the troops. Are there any parent coordinators here tonight? Wonderful! I salute the Director of Community Engagement, Kemper McDowell, for getting the message out. We must continue this because you have an awesome responsibility, parent coordinators, to be the voice and organize parents. Every parent that's here has to understand that you are the ambassador to carry that message out and see to it that people get to these Board meetings. The responsibility is also on all of you as elected officials. We voted for you to be our representatives. You have a responsibility. The same way people go out campaigning to be elected, you have to have the same passion and vigor. I appreciate seeing a lot of you engaging. You must keep that up. One of the reasons why parents come here and they channel their energy at you is because they want to fight but they don't have the proper information. You have that information. You can't sit here and use terms like QSAC and things of that nature. The parents don't even know what you're talking about. Don't speak over their head. Break it down. The children are out of school every year when Dr. King's birthday comes around. I would like to know why it is that none of Dr. King's books are being a part of the curriculum. He wrote several books. I think our children need to know about local history, the Paterson history. This is a historical city and they need to know more about this town. The last thing I want to say to the mother that mentioned about the state not suing itself. That's correct. All you have to do is get two or three people and file a class action lawsuit. If you don't know how to do it, go down to the Education Law Center. They'll help you out. Let's go. I thank you all for taking your positions regarding this budget because you can't move on things that you're unaware of. I concur with Comm. Kerr and others who have the same sentiment. We are underfunded anyway. I wouldn't go for it anyway. I thank you, Comm. Hodges, for your years of advocacy and calling on parents to be involved. We have to be involved constantly. I'm a father and

parent. I have children in the schools and I'm telling you I put the fear of god in them. When I say the fear of god, I'm not talking about a primitive fear. As the dictionary says, to have a healthy regard, to reason before you act. When I go to the school, I'm getting some respect.

Ms. Regana Bracey: Good evening, Regana Bracey, Mr. G's Kids. I'm a parent of children in this district in SPED. I'm an advocate for thousands of parents in the district who I have the ability to rile out. They're not here today because what am I asking you questions on. We can verbalize a whole lot of things. But until it's written it's not fact. I was here a month ago at the Board. Monday I asked for the preliminary budget. There are a lot of parents in the district that care. Customer service sucks. Communication sucks. Parents are treated like second-class citizens when they walk in the doors of the schools just to ask questions about their children. But we're still here today because we care about our children's future. It's their future first. I heard a lot of parents and people. A lot of parents left and a lot of teachers left when they should really stay to the end. What I did yesterday when I left your meeting on Monday was I contacted the Education Law Center because I knew the parents were going to need representation to stand by you. I look at the cuts and I don't even know what the final number is because I always deal with facts. As I was listening to the audience today I did the math and I looked at it from an economical perspective. Based on our census and our population we have 130,000 residents in this city. If we don't want our schools to close and we want quality education for our children we have to roll up our sleeves. I'm a mother that's in the schools, not just for my kids, but for other people's kids. I go to due process. My name is on the attendance sheets. About 10 years ago Newark did a workshop on the school budget formula. It was me and another gentleman from Paterson only there. Our government has faced a severe recession. Many people have lost their jobs over the years and still haven't found another one - educated people. I say that to say we have 130,000 people in this city. Our budget is short \$25 million. If everybody gave \$193.72 we make that \$25 million. Do the math. We buy Jordans. If we want our kids to be able to buy their own Jordans, why aren't we investing in their future? Why are we making this an argument? I heard kids here today that should have never been to this meeting because of the trauma that it will impose on them. They don't understand it and we have to fight this fight for them. Like I told the parents and I have it to fill out, I have a number here for the Education Law Center. They're waiting for your call. Tell them you're a Paterson parent. You have budget concerns. Pass this sheet out to everybody who you know has kids in this city. We're going to flood their lines so that they can represent the parents. Whatever happens in this fight, until it's written we don't know what they're going to cut. We're not going to wait until it's written. We can stand with them. We can stand against them. But we're going to make some demands. It's not going to be just your choice anymore how our children are being educated. I get more than three minutes because my tax dollars pay for that.

Comm. Irving: Ma'am, everybody else got three minutes. Thank you very much.

Ms. Bracey: I'm not everybody else. My name is Regana Bracey and that's why the parents don't come out.

Mr. Luis Velez: Good evening Board members, Superintendent, administration. I'm taking off my jacket for a reason. I'm here as a parent who has kids in the district. I came from the Bronx, New York in the late 1980's to Paterson, New Jersey. I raised my kids in this district at School 21, School 10, and Eastside High School. My daughter is a nurse in Florida at this moment. She graduated from a university. My son is a forensic detective in the Puerto Rico Police Department. I'm proud that they went through the

Paterson School District. But I can recall in the late 1990's we started a problem with mismanagement of funds with Superintendent Duroy. Do you remember that? I don't know which Commissioners just got up from the table, but they need to listen. They need to know where we're coming from with the mismanagement and the state taking over. Some of those people don't know, but I know. Why do I say this? The Board is in charge of doing a search for a Superintendent. They come through the Board. I remember the big issue we had here with Dr. Clancy. I'm going based on that. The Board had to do the interviews and all of that stuff. Say yes or no. I remember that process.

Comm. Hodges: Not anymore.

Mr. Velez: I'm talking about that process. In that process they were looking for someone who could move the district forward and care about the benefit of the students, parents, facilities, and the budget and work for the people that really care in the City of Paterson and it's education. We didn't ask for a barber and a hair dresser to cut. We need to move forward to Trenton and send this message. When I call your staff they respond, but we want a response from Trenton and we want a response now. Thank you.

Ms. Stella Tripp: Good evening. I'm back again. I went home Monday night. I told my three boys that I'm raising that they're trying to shut down everything that they are in, including sports activities. You can't blame all you guys. But guess what? You guys are here for a reason. You guys are supposed to advocate for our children. This is not working. I wasn't here at the beginning of the meeting so I don't know what else got cut. Like I said Monday, I spoke upon Dr. Evans' bonuses. Then I got a whiff of fresh air when I went back home that night and I just happened to look up a couple people and Ms. Shafer also gets bonuses. Look, I'm a parent. I pay taxes. I don't need extra burdens because I'm trying to make sure my children have, not Jordans, but some decent sneakers on their feet. If you guys sit here and want to tax the City of Paterson because you can get your funds together and realize what you're doing is hurting our children, then you take the \$45 million and push it on your pockets. Then we'll sit back and watch you suffer. Our children are going to suffer and you don't understand. But when the children have to go from school to school and it takes them 45 minutes to pick them up from School 5 or take them all the way to School 21 just to get an education, that's a problem. They're going to spend most of their time on a school bus. Then they're not going to know who the teachers are because the teachers that you're assigning are substitutes that sit in the classroom for 45 days or more that are giving them dittos for 45 days. They're not going to bond with anyone. They barely see a principal walking down the hallway. It's not fair. Your goal is to further the education of students and help them go to college. Yet, if you go to Passaic County Community College they'll tell you most of our students that just graduated from high school are at the lowest level there can be right now at the college. This means they should be college level because they graduated high school. They should not be at seventh and eighth grade. They should be higher than that. We as parents take that burden. It starts at home, but you guys have a responsibility too. That's all I'm asking for, for you guys to own up to what you did. Let us know what's going on and don't keep it in the dark because our children are going to get hurt. Not us. Our children!

Ms. Valerie Freeman: Good evening, everyone. In 2011, I underwent chemotherapy and radiation for breast cancer. Monday at 90 Delaware I know I heard that the budget would be available to the Board members and also to the parents. Only to come here today to be told that it's not here. You give nine Board members a one-page budget to try to vote on tonight. I suffered from chemo brain then, but I don't suffer from that now.

Dr. Evans, when the children do some things in school that they're not supposed to there are consequences and repercussions. I say to you with your BA, what consequences and repercussions is she going to have to deal with for not delivering on the directive that you gave her to have the budget ready? That's my question to you. I think it's totally unfair. I think it's a slap in the face to the Board members and definitely to the parents. By no means should you or your BA think that any one of us parents are dumb. I personally don't think she has it ready. My suggestion to you after working in the school district for 25 years and seeing the chain and how it goes when you post the job but you already have the person you want for the job. You go through the motions because you have to, but you already have the person you want to fill the job ready to take the job. I'm upset because I came to look at a budget. I know how to read a budget. I wanted to see it. I wanted them to vote and know what they were going to vote on and what cuts were going to be made. What happened at 90 Delaware was absolutely ridiculous. Then to only come here and now you say we have to vote on Monday. Absolutely ridiculous! She gets paid very well and there's absolutely no reason they don't have the full budget to look through. How are you going to give it to them on Friday and want them to vote on it on Monday? That's crazy. You evaluate the teachers. You're hard on the teachers. Be hard on your people. She had a job to do and she didn't come through. My suggestion to you, Dr. Evans, is go outside of the district and get the most qualified business administrator. Don't let them come up the ladder. I don't care how long they've been in the district. Don't let them come up the ladder. Don't put it out there, but already have the person that you want to put in. It's not fair to you as her boss. Guess who it comes on? It comes on you. I'm coming to you because you're her boss and there has to be some consequences and repercussions. When I was a secretary if I did something wrong they wrote my behind up. Thank god I never got a write-up because I did my job thoroughly. There has to be consequences and repercussions. Now we'll be here again Monday so that you can look it over and possibly vote on it and pass it. Am I correct? Tell me what's going to happen.

Comm. Irving: It will be introduced to the Board and the Board will make a decision on whether or not they want to support it or not.

Ms. Freeman: When will the parents and the public be able to see it? Will I be able to get one on those tables on Monday?

Comm. Irving: Absolutely. And there will be a public portion.

Ms. Freeman: Chris Irving, I'm telling you right now, if it's not there I'll be back at this podium and I'm going to address you.

Comm. Irving: No problem.

Mr. Tafari Anderson: Good evening. I don't know where to start, but I'm going to say congratulations to you guys for having this conversation. My name is Tafari Anderson. I'm a Board member in Clifton, New Jersey. I'm the Passaic County Board President. I serve on the state level on the Board of Directors as an Urban Boards Representative representing districts like Paterson. I want to touch on two quick things before I get into what I'm here to say. First, I shouldn't have to interrupt your meeting and I apologize for that. But I did address the young lady in the back and asked her to speak. Twice I tried to make it here on time. I ran late. I work in the district as the technology director and I'm preparing for testing so I got here late. I wasn't able to sign in. I'm not here to tell you how to run your meeting, but this is a violation. I should not be restricted from speaking. I should not have to ask to sign a piece of paper to speak. That's one thing.

Secondly, I don't live in Paterson. That's clear. What a lot of people don't know is that I have a son that lives here in Paterson and attends this school. I have brought to the attention of a few guys his science class. For two years he wasn't able to do his work because the right equipment is not there. I'm not going to go into it and I'm not here for that. I want to say it's because of the work that you guys have put in that has made this conversation a reality. Local control is a huge responsibility and it starts with the time that has been put in. On back-to-school night I'm leaving the school and I heard a bunch of teachers talking to each other saying, "How many did you have?" One said three and other one says two. I said, "Just out of curiosity, what are you referring to?" They were referring to the parents. Two and three parents showed up. I asked them, "Out of curiosity, how many students are in your class?" 110 and only two or three parents showed up. That's an issue for the parents to look at and address. In reference to the budget cuts, closing your facilities and doing nothing with them is a major mistake. You will end up paying a lot more to reopen those facilities when the time comes. You may not even afford to repair them. I've chaired facilities for four years and I know the responsibility that is included in that. You will end up demolishing those properties if and when the time comes. As far as the RAC process is concerned, one of your teachers asked about that. In a nutshell, the RAC has three responsibilities. When a school is failing the RAC can go into that school, take over the school, fire every single staff, bring their own staff in, and go as far as replacing the principal. Worst-case scenario is they can close that school down and turn it into a charter school. The process of accountability doesn't lay on this Board. The process lays on your assembly folks, senators, and congressional folks. You must not allow politics to run rampant in this community anymore. It's running rampant in every single urban community and it's the same problem in every urban community. ELL, PARCC, and DLM testing is a priority and cutting technology is going to hurt your students even more. Special education was the main purpose I came up here. I've helped a lot of your parents and kids. I'm a huge special education advocate. I'm an advocate of special education. I have special education children of my own. You have kids that are getting left on buses. You're totally in violation of LRE. I'm asking you to consider not cutting special education.

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

Comm. Irving: I want to entertain a conversation with you guys real quick. We have three resolutions that were submitted to us for a vote. I'm wondering, since we're going to discuss the budget on Monday anyway, if we can forgo the general business discussion for Monday, do the budget, then general business, and take care of these resolutions and go home. Everybody has had a long night. I think we've had a great discussion, but we've been here for almost four and half hours. I just think we've all mentally had it. After we get through Items 1 through 3, we will suspend the agenda until Monday. Do I need a formal motion to do that? The workshop is not a formal meeting. We'll have the budget discussion on Monday and then we'll do general business to have that conversation as well.

Comm. Hodges: You're not going to go through with the general business tonight?

Comm. Irving: No. We'll do it on Monday.

Comm. Hodges: I don't know how long you think this is going to be.

Comm. Irving: I don't know. If folks have a lot of questions it will be long. I don't know.

Comm. Hodges: I would prefer to have that meeting on Monday be on the budget.

Comm. Irving: I'm game for whatever the heck anybody wants to do. I also recognize that if we do, we'll be here for at least another hour. Somebody step up and say what the hell you want to do.

Comm. Hodges: I'm just saying for myself I don't have a large report in curriculum. I don't know what you have in facilities.

Comm. Irving: I don't have much in operations myself.

Comm. Cleaves: Personnel did not meet.

Comm. Hodges: I would prefer to go through this and have that whole thing focused.

Comm. Irving: I hear you. If that's the case, let's just be mindful and try to move through as best as possible. Is that fair?

RESOLUTIONS FOR A VOTE AT THE WORKSHOP MEETING:

Resolution No. 1

BE IT RESOLVED, that the list of bills and claims dated February 25, 2016, beginning with vendor number 86 and ending with vendor number 799535, in the amount of \$9,303,811.56, and check register beginning with check number 197265 and ending with check number 198128 which also includes State of New Jersey Health Benefits in the amount of \$41,219,473.44 that was approved for the month of February 2016; 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. Mimms 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. 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
Teresa Afonso	48 th Annual NJ Pupil Transportation Conference & Equipment Show	March 10-11, 2016	\$395.00 (registration)
Supervisor of Transportation	Atlantic City, NJ		
Lisa Vainieri-Marshall	48 th Annual NJ Pupil Transportation Conference & Equipment Show	March 10-11, 2016	\$395.00 (registration)
Interim Director of Student Assignment Services	Atlantic City, NJ		
Oshin Castillo	NJSBA New Board Member Orientation	March 11, 2016	\$46.20 (transportation)
Board Member	Princeton, NJ		
Nakima Redmon	NJSBA New Board Member Orientation	March 11, 2016	\$46.15 (transportation)
Board Member	Princeton, NJ		
Adriane Esquilin	Education Pioneers Emerging Human Capital Leaders Initiative	March 13-16, 2016	\$214.00 (transportation)
Chief Human Capital Officer	Alexandria, VA		
Jonathan Hodges	NJSBA Legislative Committee Meeting	March 19, 2016	\$55.63 (transportation)
Board Member	Trenton, NJ		
Lenny Moore	Infinite Campus Interchange NYC 2016	March 22-23, 2016	\$533.66 (registration & transportation)
Supervisor of Information Management Systems	New York, NY		
Anita West	Infinite Campus Interchange, NYC 2016	March 22-23, 2016	\$399.00 (registration)
Interim Director of Information Management Systems	New York, NY		
Gregory L. Cooper	Administration Leadership Training Instructional Methods and Techniques Conference	March 22-25, 2016	\$1039.90 (registration, transportation, lodging)
Supervisor of Athletics/EHS	Atlantic City, NJ		
Caterina Cefalo	NJALL 2016 Annual Conference	April 8, 2016	\$37.66 (transportation)
Basic Skills Teacher/Adult School	Lincroft, NJ		
Lucia Fiorillo	NJALL 2016 Annual Conference	April 8, 2016	\$37.66 (transportation)
Teacher/Adult School	Lincroft, NJ		
Randolph Dorcent	NJ Association for Gifted Children (NJAGC)	April 15, 2016	\$204.00 (registration)

Teacher/School 28	Somerset, NJ		
Kathryn Dormann	NJ Association for Gifted Children (NJAGC)	April 15, 2016	\$204.00 (registration)
Teacher/School 28	Somerset, NJ		
Jessica Hinds	NJ Association for Gifted Children (NJAGC)	April 15, 2016	\$204.00 (registration)
Teacher/School 28	Somerset, NJ		
Linette Lee	NJ Association for Gifted Children (NJAGC)	April 15, 2016	\$204.00 (registration)
Teacher/School 28	Somerset, NJ		
Nicole Slota	NJ Association for Gifted Children (NJAGC)	April 15, 2016	\$204.00 (registration)
Teacher/School 28	Somerset, NJ		
Daisy Ayala	NJ Association of School Business Officials 54 th Annual Conference	June 8-10, 2016	\$523.74 (registration, transportation, lodging)
Business Administrator	Atlantic City, NJ		

TOTAL CONFERENCES: 17
TOTAL AMOUNT: \$4,743.60

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

Comm. Castillo: I abstain on my name and yes for the rest.

Comm. Cleaves: Yes.

Comm. Hodges: I wish to abstain on my name and yes for everything else. (Abstain YMCA and Jumpstart)

Comm. Kerr: I abstain on anything with my name if it's there and yes otherwise.

Comm. Mimms: Yes.

Comm. Redmon: I abstain on my name, but for the rest it's yes.

Comm. Simmons: Yes.

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

The motion carried.

Resolution No. 3

Whereas, The State of New Jersey under NJAC 6A:8-3.1, requires district boards of education to ensure that the district curriculum is designed and delivered to demonstrate knowledge and skills specified by the National Core Curriculum Content Standards, and

Whereas, the Paterson Public Schools District seeks to “meet and exceed” the standard instructional practices within the classroom by sponsoring various co-curricular activities that promote an understanding of global culture, study of world languages, and geography through “learn by living it” experiences that cannot be readily replicated within the Class of 2016, and

Whereas, the Globe Trotters Club supports the ideals of a multicultural society and an appreciation for travel as a means of furthering an understanding of global perspective; originated by the late Anjenett Ray of the Paterson Public School District and continued by schools in the District, students and teachers have sponsored trips to London, England (multiple trips), Paris, France (2004), Rome, Italy (2006), Madrid, Spain (2011), Rome, Italy (2012), and

Whereas, the Class of 2016 of International High School-Garrett Morgan Academy is seeking to travel to Reykjavik, Iceland for six (6) days on March 21-26, 2016 the mode of transportation will be an approved airline, this field experience will be opened to students of the Class of 2016. The population of students will consist of no more than 10 students male and female, ages 16-18 that is reflective of the various racial/ethnic groups in International High School-GMA, and

Whereas, there will be one adult chaperone for every six (6) students. The students will be assigned four (4) to a room. Chaperones will accompany and supervise students during breakfast, lunch, dinner and through the duration of all field tours. Chaperones will rotate supervision of students during overnight hours through the duration of the field experience, and

Whereas, each student will pay a total of \$3,375.00 which includes transportation, 5 nights stay, and two meals. There will be no additional expense to the district, as students and their parents/guardians will incur the cost of this field trip experience and offset costs by various means of fundraising activities that are within the parameters of the District/guidelines, and

Whereas, this co-curricular experience supports the Bright Futures Strategic Plan 2009-2014 Priority 1 – Effective Academic Programs – Goal 1 – Increase Student Achievement – Extended Learning Opportunities, Priority II – Safe, Caring and Orderly Schools – Goal 1 – Create Schools with Health School Cultures and Climates, and

Be It Further Resolved that the Paterson Public Schools District Board of Education approves the field trip experience to Reykjavik, Iceland from March 21-26, 2016 for 10 students of International High School-GMA, Class of 2016.

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

Comm. Hodges: I did not receive an invitation so I have grave concerns about this particular trip.

On roll call all members voted in the affirmative, except 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. Hodges: Instruction and Program did not have a chance to review the items that came down that very same day. The meeting was focused primarily on two different areas. Number one, we were trying to get a handle on what it would take to educate children, particularly in early childhood, and defining what the real problem was in the early childhood area because of our questionable performance. We looked at some possible issues regarding what it's going to cost to measure the mechanics, which is also why I'm so alarmed about the academic piece of this, because apparently this current funding need is undefined. That's an area of concern to me. The other area we were concerned about was trying to put together a form that would satisfy the needs of fiscal in terms of their oversight that they wanted to exercise over our contracts moving forward. I'll stop right there and I'll provide further details with the official report.

Operations

Comm. Irving: The Operations committee met last night. Commissioners present were Comm. Mimms and myself. At the meeting we discussed the Operations meeting structure itself. We had presented for us the staff members representing Resolutions O4, O5, and O7. There was a request to change the language on Resolutions O5 and O7 for the next Board meeting. The request was made to have the appropriate staff members for Items O1 through O3 attend the meeting. Somehow those staff members were not informed and the Board cannot vet those conversations. So I'm going to ask you to reschedule operations and have the staff members for Items O1 through O3 attend the meeting. Moving forward for operations in particular those staff members know they should attend.

Personnel

Comm. Redmon: Mr. President, Personnel did not meet.

Governance

Comm. Irving: And Governance has not met yet, either. So we'll have a report on that by the next Board meeting.

Fiscal Management

Comm. Irving: The Fiscal Management committee did meet. It was last week. We went through and discussed the bills list. In addition to that, we discussed Items F-1 through F-13. We discussed the process by which the new action items we have that the fiscal committee will reviewing fiscal occurrences after they have been vetted by the respective subcommittees themselves. I thought that was very helpful and informative. I think most folks who chair subcommittees think there was a little ambiguity for what the fiscal committee would be reviewing. Are there any questions?

Comm. Kerr: Sometime this week, March 1, I got an email from the office. This email was in regard to a contract by Lerch, Vinci, and Higgins, our auditing firm. According to the email, Comm. Rivera asked that the contract be pulled. This is a contract that was properly executed and established. I'm very disappointed that Comm. Rivera is not

here tonight. This is a Board of nine individuals. He has no business to direct the administration to pull any contract that was properly executed. That makes absolutely no sense to me. When you do that you're exposing this district to a lawsuit.

Comm. Irving: I'm just trying to clarify for you.

Comm. Kerr: Let me finish here. I'm going to read what this says. It says the Board has requested the district to solicit a new audit service provider. When did this Board make that decision?

Comm. Irving: Are you ready for the answer?

Comm. Kerr: Yes.

Comm. Irving: At the reorganization meeting that you weren't at.

Comm. Kerr: What?

Comm. Irving: At the reorganization meeting that you were not here Comm. Rivera made the request to understand when the terms of the contract had expired. We found out the contract expired next year and the Board instructed the Business Administrator to go out to bid for the purposes...

Comm. Kerr: Next year.

Comm. Irving: That is correct.

Comm. Kerr: When is next year, 2017?

Comm. Irving: We're in the final year of the contract. From what we were told you have to procure this year for next year.

Comm. Kerr: Don't mislead me.

Comm. Irving: I'm not trying to mislead you. Don't accuse me of misleading you. I'm just telling you what the case is.

Comm. Kerr: I'm getting frustrated with this. You're asking...

Comm. Irving: I just gave you the answer.

Comm. Kerr: Let me talk. Just give me a break.

Comm. Irving: But you asked a question and I gave you an answer.

Comm. Kerr: We're asking legal now, not in 2017, to give counsel in order to pull it. That's the problem. It's not about next year. It's about action now. What you could do is let the contract expire and you have to send out an RFP.

Comm. Irving: Can I give you another response? The reason why Comm. Rivera asked legal to weigh in on the opinion is because there was a discrepancy as to when the contract expired. That's what initiated the email.

Comm. Kerr: So why would it be necessary to pull the contract?

Comm. Irving: Because Comm. Rivera was told that the contract expired this year. Then he was told it expired next year. He wanted a firm answer for when the contract expired.

Comm. Kerr: So he did not know that the contract expired next year. Why did he ask that it be pulled?

Comm. Irving: He was told it expired this year.

Comm. Kerr: You don't have to pull the contract. The contract would not have to be pulled. Let it run its course.

Comm. Irving: Can you please come up here and examine. Obviously what I'm saying is not believable. Maybe if it comes from you.

Ms. Ayala: We are allowing the current auditors to run its course according to the contract. This is the last year in the contract that they will be auditing. What we're putting out is an RFQ to see what's out there to audit the budget that we're looking at right now, which is 2016-2017.

Comm. Kerr: Did Lerch, Vinci, and Higgins inform you that they would not...?

Ms. Ayala: They'll put in a bid. We've done this in the past. We're not violating any contract. We're staying within the contract. Their last year to audit is the current year. That's their last.

Comm. Kerr: We don't have to look for anybody. All we have to do is send out the RFP. Why was the recommendation made that we look for a new auditing company?

Ms. Ayala: We're not looking for a new auditing company without going through the correct process, which is an RFQ. That will come in, go through the process, go through purchasing, and they will open the package like every other process. We're not deviating from any process.

Comm. Kerr: Thank you. Mr. President, the Board did not ask for this.

Comm. Irving: The Board did.

Comm. Kerr: The Board did not ask for this.

Comm. Irving: The Board instructed the Superintendent and the Business Administrator to move forward to procure for the auditing services. You were not at the meeting. The Board agreed to it. We asked him to move forward with it. I'm sorry you weren't there, but we did.

Comm. Kerr: I missed just one meeting?

Comm. Irving: Yes.

Comm. Kerr: And you know which meeting I missed, sir? It was the reorg meeting. It was not discussed in the reorg. There was not time in the reorg meeting for that to be discussed.

Comm. Hodges: Unfortunately, this is our workshop meeting, but I'm going to say this anyway. There is some concern about the number of Board members that currently have a chance to review all of the contracts in the school district. That number is at a minimum, as has been brought to my attention. I hadn't been paying attention to that because I was so riveted on the budget. It was brought to my attention that there are not a large number of people on the Board that are being given an opportunity to review all of the contracts. It's in a very few hands. So what may result is if there are some areas or misunderstandings it could lead one to be liable for wrong impressions and quite frankly calls of criminality. I just want to bring that to your attention as you look at the format that you've created. There are some people that I'm sure you're aware of who have a penchant for finding concerns where they may not be or may link things that should not be linked. I'm asking you to take a look at that structure that you have and consider broadening that so you can minimize any concerns in that area. There is that discussion out there.

Comm. Irving: Duly noted. Are there any other questions on finance?

Comm. Simmons: With regard to the RFQ for the auditing, is it standard practice to put that RFQ out the year before?

Comm. Irving: That's correct.

Comm. Simmons: Before their contract is done? We'd be putting that RFQ out before they actually get a chance to do the audit for this year.

Comm. Irving: The answer, from what I understand, is yes. It's the same way if you procure for security services and maintenance services. You procure in the same year that the services are being rendered because once the fiscal year turns over you have to be prepared to start the new service. The answer is yes. It makes plenty of sense. You can do it July 1. You just won't have an auditor.

Comm. Simmons: This year's audit wouldn't be done until June anyway.

Comm. Irving: That's true.

Comm. Simmons: So doing it July 1 wouldn't matter.

Comm. Irving: The Board instructed the Business Administrator to proceed and that's exactly what she did. It falls under finance. Anything further I'll ask you to speak to Comm. Rivera about, but he has done everything by the book relative to making this process happen. He brought up the discussion prior to the group changing hands. This Board discussed it. This Board agreed that we should at least procure and look at different options for auditors. He followed suit with it.

Comm. Castillo: Just to add on to that, I know Comm. Rivera has gone through the process. We asked for all the information before just to make sure there were no violations. We also have seen that this district tends to wait until the last minute to do everything. We were trying just to procure and be ready in advance so when it comes time to do the audit it's not another thing on our plate that we're looking for but we have something there already.

Comm. Simmons: The firm that we have now will be doing the audit in June. Procuring in July, whoever we choose at that point, that audit wouldn't take place until the

following June or July. It's not technically last minute. You'd actually have another year.

Ms. Ayala: When the auditors come in in October they do the DTRS. Whoever is doing June 2017 has to come in in October to do that.

Comm. Simmons: So we're still talking about...

Ms. Ayala: I didn't want you to think they're going to come in in June and start their audit for June of 2017. They are, but in October 2016 they have to come in to do the DTRS.

Comm. Hodges: The DTRS is...

Ms. Ayala: For the transportation.

Comm. Irving: Anything else on finance?

Comm. Kerr: Is this the new approach to contracts that we established or send out RFPs a year in advance?

Comm. Irving: Good question. I don't think it's new. Does it hurt the Board to procure now or later? I don't feel any particular way about it.

Comm. Kerr: We must decide. We can't pick and choose.

Comm. Irving: That authority rests in the finance committee. The finance chair, which is Comm. Rivera, is spearheading that component. If you have a question about the process, take it up with him. That is his committee and his authority and jurisdiction to take care of.

Comm. Kerr: I'm taking it up with you as the President of the Board.

Comm. Irving: Sure, and I have assigned him as chairperson.

Comm. Kerr: You convey my information and let him know that I need information.

Comm. Irving: Sure. I defer to him. Is there anything else on finance? I'm glad everybody's happy. Let's move forward.

Subcommittee Reports

Technology Committee

Comm. Simmons: We don't meet until next week.

Parent/Community

Comm. Mimms: We didn't meet yesterday. We were supposed to meet on Monday. We'll have to reschedule it because of the special meeting.

OTHER BUSINESS

Comm. Irving: I have a note from the Superintendent. I was just informed, and legal can confirm, that by law we have to vote on the adoption of the budget even if it's no tonight. Is that true?

	2015-16	2016-17	# Increase/ (Decrease)
General Fund			
Local Tax Levy	\$ 38,793,036	\$ 45,342,112	\$ 10,600,458
Tuition	\$ 400,000	\$ 500,000	\$ 100,000
Miscellaneous Income	\$ 3,184,108	\$ 3,175,160	\$ (8,948)
Adult Education Testing Center Fees	\$ 42,000	\$ 42,000	\$ -
State Aid	\$ 402,196,027	\$ 403,935,340	\$ 1,739,313
Federal Aid-Medicare Reimbursement	\$ 833,327	\$ 1,043,032	\$ 209,705
Withdrawal from Capital Reserves	\$ 4,818,000	\$ 2,400,000	\$ (2,418,000)
Reserved for Encumbrances	\$ 435,028	\$ -	\$ (435,028)
Appropriated Fund Balance	\$ 27,168,294	\$ 10,600,000	\$ (16,568,294)
Total General Fund	\$ 478,032,740	\$ 471,257,944	\$ (6,774,796)
Special Revenue Fund	\$ 89,457,689	\$ 88,110,773	\$ (1,346,916)

Resolution No. 4

Debt Service
BE IT RESOLVED that the tentative budget submitted by the State District Superintendent of Schools be affirmed and approved by the Board of Education for the 2016-17 School Year using the 2016-17 state aid allocations and the School Business Administrator be authorized to submit the tentative budget reflecting the following revenues to the Executive County Superintendent of Schools for approval in accordance with the statutory deadline.

Local Tax Levy	\$ 38,793,036	\$ 45,342,112	\$ 10,600,458
Debt Service State Aid	\$ 402,196,027	\$ 403,935,340	\$ 1,739,313
Debt Service	\$ 7,299,699	\$ 1,305,300	\$ (5,994,399)
Total School District Revenues	\$ 468,790,128	\$ 560,674,017	\$ (8,116,111)

And to advertise said tentative budget in the (insert name of paper) in accordance with the form suggested by the State Department of Education and according to law; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a public hearing be held at the Board of Education Administration Building, 90 Delaware Avenue, Paterson, New Jersey on March 29, 2016 at (7:00 pm) for the purpose of conducting a public hearing on the budget for the 2016-17 School Year.

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

Comm. Hodges: The concern I have is I don't know what language we're voting on because the language doesn't exist. The changes have not been made. It may be well and good that we're supposed to vote on something, but I can't vote on just a guesstimate of what the actual numbers are.

Comm. Irving: We're all going to vote it down, Dr. Hodges.

Comm. Hodges: Okay.

Comm. Irving: For that reason in particular we're voting it down. I am at least.

Ms. Pollak: You're voting down what's in the action.

Comm. Irving: That's correct.

Comm. Hodges: The budget we asked for has not materialized. That's the problem. I don't want the Superintendent to submit this as opposed to the changes that we

requested, which he agreed to do. I haven't seen that to make sure that's correct. I don't want this particular piece of paper to constitute a budget when we know he has already agreed to change this. That's my dilemma. I'm going to hold him to his agreement to not submit this document and I will still have to vote down, but his resulting budget submission should not be this document.

Dr. Evans: Can I ask Daisy to come and let her explain exactly what has to be submitted, which from my understanding is not necessarily that. Daisy can explain it better than I can.

Ms. Ayala: In front of you are three board actions. One is for the revenue. One is for travel. I don't remember what the other one was. Can you help me out?

Comm. Irving: The ones I have in front of me are travel and related expenses. The last one is the movement of funds.

Ms. Ayala: Fund balance.

Comm. Irving: That's correct.

Ms. Ayala: That's what we're asking you to approve, not the budget. That's not the Board resolution for the budget.

Comm. Hodges: I'm all confused.

Comm. Simmons: I'm confused.

Comm. Irving: Travel and related expenses.

Ms. Ayala: That's what's required. The revenue piece and the fund balance appropriation.

Comm. Redmon: Mr. President, that's the tentative budget that's proposed in front of us.

Comm. Irving: Right. I got it. I got all three. Here we go. I have one item that is the fund. Daisy, I have a document here for \$10.6 million. Am I correct?

Ms. Ayala: Yes.

Comm. Irving: Then I have the adoption of tentative budget. That's two. Then the third item is the travel and related expenses reimbursement. I have three documents here. Let me just make very clear where we are. Is the \$10.6 million the authorization for the tax levy?

Ms. Ayala: Yes.

Comm. Irving: That's definitely being voted down. Then we have the adoption of the tentative budget. Am I correct?

Ms. Ayala: Yes.

Comm. Irving: Lastly, there's the travel and related expenses reimbursement.

Ms. Ayala: Travel not to exceed.

Comm. Hodges: The Superintendent mentioned something about us exhausting our eligibility to raise taxes if we didn't vote some unspecified amount in taxes. Is there an amount that has to be raised in taxes for that eligibility?

Dr. Evans: No. For purposes of tonight it's getting on record a yes or a no. It doesn't mean it's the end of the conversation. It puts it to bed for now.

Comm. Hodges: But there's no amount that has to be specified.

Dr. Evans: You're asking about the cap. There is an amount that after...

Ms. Ayala: There is 6.2% in cap that if we don't utilize will just fall off our books.

Comm. Hodges: I just want to maintain the ability. You said we lose all ability. If that's the case, I want to put a dollar there as taxes which would satisfy that requirement. I can't vote on that.

Comm. Irving: I wouldn't even get into that game. I would say no altogether to the \$10.6 million and not even go on record that we even touched that.

Comm. Hodges: Tomorrow morning Dr. Evans could get a phone call saying to put \$10 million in there and he will do it.

Dr. Evans: Daisy can answer a question for me. By when does there have to be a vote on that particular issue that would avoid or preclude the district's access to that 6.2? There's a point beyond which it cannot be accessed. It goes away. The district cannot access that level of increase after a certain date.

Ms. Ayala: If we close the budget and we don't utilize it, next year it's gone.

Comm. Hodges: The city doesn't have the money.

Comm. Irving: If we vote down the \$10.6 million action item, I think that is more than enough directive to instruct you to prepare the next budget without that \$10.6 million. This item should at least affirm the Board's position on that. In addition to that, I don't know what folks are going to want to do for the tentative budget, but without the details that we need specifically it makes voting on this in the affirmative difficult. Daisy, the last action, which is the travel and related expenses reimbursement, what is this exactly?

Ms. Ayala: It's just to put a cap on travel for next year.

Comm. Irving: I think you mentioned this in finance the other night. That's to just put a cap on travel districtwide for the next year. The number that you came up with we have not exceeded over the last two or three years.

Ms. Ayala: That is correct.

Comm. Hodges: You haven't figured in Reykjavik, which we're still discussing.

Comm. Cleaves: Are we voting on all three of these actions together?

Comm. Irving: Individually. I'm poised to support this travel reimbursement piece, but not the other two. There's a motion on the floor right now to vote on just the adoption of the tentative budget. Am I correct? That's what we're going to skip discussing. Is there any further conversation in reference of the adoption of the tentative budget? That's the one I'm speaking to right now.

Comm. Simmons: Voting on the budget adoption, even if it's voted down, that still gives the Superintendent directive to move forward.

Comm. Irving: And just appeal the Board and submit the budget with the understanding that the budget will be submitted by Friday but that \$10.6 million in local tax levy will not be included in that. The Board, I assume, will vote that down in addition in a few seconds.

Comm. Mimms: I just think it's absolutely absurd that we're being forced to even vote it down without having proper information to even gauge some type of vote. I just think it's absolutely absurd that we're put in a position to vote on something that we don't have all the information for, regardless whether the vote is no. Whatever the vote may be, it's hard to vote anything when you don't have the details. I'm just very dissatisfied with the process this year as it relates to having the proper documentation for review so that we can give input and feedback. Going forward I would hope that we would have that information so that we can vote appropriately and then begin to do recommendations as to some things that will benefit our children.

Comm. Irving: I can't disagree with you. Are there any other questions? Folks, vote to your heart's content.

Comm. Hodges: Which one?

Comm. Castillo: The tentative budget.

On roll call all members voted no, except Comm. Simmons and Comm. Irving who abstained. The motion did not carry.

Resolution No. 5

WHEREAS the State District Superintendent of School has developed a budget for the 2016-17 school year that recognized the use and need to use bank cap tax levy to meet the overall operational needs of the Paterson Public Schools, and

WHEREAS the district has fully exhausted all eligible statutory spending authority and must increase the base budget in the amount of \$10,606,456.

RESOLVED that the Paterson Board of Education affirms the action of the State District Superintendent of Schools to include in the proposed 2016-17 annual school budget the adjustment for banked cap in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-10.3(b). The district has fully exhausted all eligible statutory spending authority and must increase the base budget in the amount of \$10,606,456 for the purposes of addressing a shortfall in revenues to support the operation of the school district inclusive of meeting its obligations for instructional, student and instructional support, contractual, transportation, maintenance, security, facilities, and administrative functions. The district intends to complete said purposes by June 30, 2017 with the full understanding that these funds cannot be deferred or incrementally completed over a longer period of time.

It was moved by Comm. Simmons, seconded by Comm. Castillo that Resolution No. 5 be adopted.

Comm. Kerr: It's burdensome and it's just not going to work in Paterson. We have had enough.

Comm. Irving: Duly noted.

On roll call all members voted no, except Comm. Simmons who abstained. The motion did not carry.

Resolution No. 6

WHEREAS: the Paterson Board of Education recognizes school staff and Board members will incur travel expenses related to and within the scope of their current responsibilities and for travel that promotes the delivery of instruction or furthers the efficient operation of the school district; and

WHEREAS: N.J.A.C. 6A:23B-1.1 et seq. requires Board members to receive approval of these expenses by a majority of the full voting membership of the Board and staff members to receive prior approval of these expenses by the State District Superintendent of Schools and a majority of the full voting membership of the Board; and

WHEREAS: a Board of Education may establish, for regular district business travel only, an annual school year threshold of \$150 per staff member where prior Board approval shall not be required unless this annual threshold for a staff member is exceeded in a given school year (July 1 through June 30); and

WHEREAS: travel and related expenses not in compliance with N.J.A.C. 6A:23B-1.1 et seq., but deemed by the Board of Education to be necessary and unavoidable as noted on the approved Board of Education Out of District Travel and Reimbursement Forms; now

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED: the Board of Education affirms the recommendation of the State District Superintendent of Schools and approves all travel not in compliance with N.J.A.C. 6A:23B-1.1 et seq. as being necessary and unavoidable as noted on the approved Board of Education Out of District Travel and Reimbursement Forms; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Board of Education affirms the recommendation of the State District Superintendent of Schools and approves travel and related expense reimbursements in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:23B-1.2(b), to a maximum expenditure of \$293,820 for all staff and board members.

It was moved by Comm. Kerr, seconded by Comm. Castillo that Resolution No. 6 be adopted.

Comm. Mimms: Even in regards to this, I know that we've looked at whatever we've spent in the past, but without having the documentation to compare I'm not going to be able to vote on this one effectively. There's a dollar amount, but if we don't do cost comparisons year by year to identify and with the fluctuations of cost of living adjustments and all types of things with the increases that go with airline travel and

hotels, without having that information it's going to be hard to even give a solid vote on this one as well.

Comm. Irving: Fair enough.

Dr. Evans: I understand and concur with Comm. Mimms' comment. But I think there is a need moving forward to distinguish those items that are discussed in committee. This one was discussed in the finance committee and I was advised that the finance committee didn't have a problem with it, actually they were supportive of it, versus those things for which a more complete vetting with the entire Board is necessary. We're going to need more guidance in terms of which applies in which category and which doesn't.

Comm. Irving: Sure. Comm. Mimms, for your own edification, this was discussed by the Business Administrator. She went over with us in finance that she would be presenting a resolution based on a three-year expenditure projection, which is why it sits here before you.

Comm. Kerr: If it was discussed as you have said in fiscal, then I think it should be reported out to the wider Board so we follow the lead of the fiscal committee. This is just new to us right now. Had we gotten that information then it would be much easier for us to deal with this matter right now.

Comm. Irving: I think that's a fair request.

Comm. Hodges: Let me just make it very clear that simply because the fiscal committee decides it thinks something is good it doesn't necessarily mean that the Board has to follow suit. That's number one. Number two, what is important to understand is that if you're going to do this kind of thing there should be supporting information. This was on our desk tonight so we have had no discussions about that. There was not any opportunity to really talk about what this means. Comm. Mimms has already discussed some of the concerns and I'm not going to go over them again, but that's a problem. I have no problem going along with the recommendation because I'm going to assume that a lot of questions were asked. I won't necessarily assume that all the time, but I can't vote for this without some of the background information or at least a graph that says this is where we've been. I have no idea. As guidance moving forward we don't necessarily have to follow the recommendations of any committee - fiscal, curriculum, or any of them. Their role is really to try to get exhaustive detail that they can bring back to the Board and they should have had that kind of conversation. We have not been exposed to any of that data and that's why I have to vote no on this.

Comm. Irving: Are there any other questions?

On roll call all members voted as follows:

Comm. Castillo: Yes.

Comm. Cleaves: Abstain.

Comm. Hodges: No.

Comm. Kerr: Abstain.

Comm. Mimms: No.

Comm. Redmon: Abstain.

Comm. Simmons: No.

Comm. Irving: Yes.

The motion did not carry.

Comm. Irving: Anything else before we begin to adjourn? I also want to go over Monday one more time.

Comm. Hodges: Number one, you asked for comments on the letter that you wrote. I forgot all about it until this afternoon. In fact, I was late because I rewrote the items up freeform. Those are the comments that I put in there.

Comm. Irving: Is this what's here?

Comm. Hodges: Yes.

Comm. Irving: I'll take a look at this and merge this with the other recommendations that the Board members have given me. On Monday I'll give you an updated version that reflects the respective comments and suggestions.

Comm. Hodges: I will tell you it has a tiny bit more of an edge than...

Comm. Irving: If it's coming from you, I bet it would.

Comm. Hodges: Number two, we sent you a copy of a resolution that was proposed by Darcy Simoneski in Highland Park regarding graduation testing and the results. The concern was that they're moving PARCC into the graduation requirements sphere. That resolution raises some significant questions about that. You also have some data about our graduation rates and those things have to be reviewed in tandem because it will better inform your discussion about the resolution. I would like to put that forward for a discussion and a vote by the Board in support of that resolution moving forward.

Comm. Irving: Did you guys put the resolution before curriculum yet? Is it a resolution that should be vetted by curriculum?

Comm. Hodges: I'd put it out to the entire Board for this. Our curriculum meeting won't be until next week.

Comm. Irving: Let's just bring it up at the next meeting then. Not on Monday, but at the actual public meeting at the end of the month. Then it will be on camera as well.

Comm. Hodges: Any questions please feel free to contact me about that.

Comm. Irving: Cheryl, can you just make sure before that gets on the agenda that all the Board members get another hard and digital copy of the recommended resolutions from Dr. Hodges?

Comm. Hodges: Highland Park.

Comm. Irving: Do you have a copy of it? Before we all leave make sure the Board members get a copy of it.

Comm. Simmons: Since we voted no on the budget, what is Monday's meeting?

Comm. Irving: I think Monday's meeting should be to hear from the Superintendent to explain the budget reductions. He still has to submit a budget. I think it's still important for us to know what the hell he submitted. I think it makes sense for us to still meet on Monday to figure out exactly what he submitted and what reductions have been included in the submission, and if the Board has recommendations and changes to those submissions those recommendations can go at that time because we'll have the rest of the entire month until the budget hearing on the 29th to make any respective changes thereafter. Does that make sense?

Comm. Simmons: It makes sense, but it really wasn't for me. I really needed the public to understand.

Comm. Irving: One announcement I do want to make is for those who want to speak at the public hearing next week at Montclair State University, it starts at 9:30 a.m. If you want to call to sign-up beforehand the number is 609-847-3105. The public hearing is taking place in University Hall on the 7th floor conference center.

Mr. Ferrer: The morning session is closed as far as speaking. You may be able to register for the afternoon session. The morning session is booked.

Comm. Irving: Thank you for the clarification.

Mr. Ferrer: If you can't get in there, I think on the 21st it's down in Trenton and there's another site, but you have to go on the link and sign up by the 9th at the latest.

Comm. Irving: Okay. Thank you, sir. Is there anything else?

It was moved by Comm. Cleaves, 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 10:30 p.m.