

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

February 29, 2016 – 5:59 p.m.
Administrative Offices

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. Cleaves read the Open Public Meetings Act:

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

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

**Special Meeting
February 29, 2016 at 5:30 p.m.
Administrative Offices
90 Delaware Avenue
Paterson, New Jersey**

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

**MOTION TO GO INTO CLOSED SESSION TO CONDUCT A HEARING ON
A HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION AND BULLYING APPEAL**

It was moved by Comm. Kerr, seconded by Comm. Cleaves that the Board goes into closed session to conduct a hearing on a harassment, intimidation and bullying appeal. On roll call all members voted in the affirmative. The motion carried.

The Board went into closed session at 6:05 p.m.

The Board reconvened the meeting at 6:50 p.m.

*Comm. Redmon enters the meeting at 6:50 p.m.

Comm. Irving: I'm going to entertain a motion in a second to go into public comments. We still need time to discuss these reductions and have a discussion in this group. I want to do an hour of public comments, an hour of discussion, and then I will go back to public comment until we finish the night.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

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

Comm. Irving: I just want to remind all our speakers we have a three-minute time limit. Because there are a lot of people here you may not hear the bell. If you don't, Cheryl will signal to me and I will just let you know when three minutes has elapsed and I'll ask you to finish up at that point in time.

Assemblyman Benjie Wimberly: Good evening. Thank you, Comm. Irving. As you can see by the great turnout of the people of the City of Paterson, which is really a small proportion representing 30,000 students that we have here in our city, this is an emergency that we cannot let slide by like it slid by last year. We cannot afford to have cuts of staff and unfilled positions. Any proposals of closing schools or buildings need to be carefully reviewed because of the implications it can have financially down the road. The fight that you have here I will tell you clearly this is a fight that you have to take to Trenton. I represent here, but this is a Trenton issue. There is a man named Chris Christie that's the Governor of the State of New Jersey that needs to hear loud and clear that the City of Paterson cares about their children and their future. As I've said to you and Dr. Evans on many occasions, obviously there's going to be an attempt to make us increase the tax levy for education. That is not fair. As you see, the City of Paterson tomorrow is suspending all activities outside of police, fire, and essential DPW. We are in the process of receiving a 61% property tax increase. Since Chris Christie has been the Governor we've had over a 40% property tax increase. We pay our fair share of taxes and nobody can question that. When you talk about the City of Paterson and the state takeover this is taxation without proper representation. Please, I implore you as School Board members and community members to come out to the first hearing for the state budget which will be on Wednesday, March 9 at Montclair State University. We did not forget the City of Paterson. We will still have a public hearing here in the City of Paterson for public education, which is headed by Senator Ron Rice. I implore you to get the word out. I need each and every School Board member to come out that day, voice your concerns, and represent the 30,000 and 150,000 people in the City of Paterson as they should be. There is nowhere in the State of New Jersey, no other city, and no other municipality that has faced these types of cuts. You look at the money that is being given to each city when you talk about aid for education. It does not add up. Look at the numbers. You look at Passaic and different places. Look at Jersey City. There's nothing comparable to Paterson. We should be up in arms. We should be going crazy because there's nobody else that will allow this to happen. We need to get down there and if we have to shut the state house down let's come down there and shut it down.

Mr. Ernest Rucker: I guess you can feel the heat in this room, can't you? They want to make sure the Paterson School District is funded. Along with that, there's another

issue. We've hired in this district 20 to 30 new employees. We're not being fiscally responsible. Yet, we're talking about a \$45 million deficit. Commissioners, we need you to understand this is not a springboard to City Council. This is our children. I've been involved with this district since Frank Napier became Superintendent. I'm so happy to see people coming out to let you know they're tired of it. The State of New Jersey is doing to us what they think they can do to us as long as we're quiet. Well, we're not quiet any longer. Councilman Jackson asked me to make a little comment for him. He's willing to rent a bus so we can go to Trenton. Let me say to everyone in this audience you just can't come here when there's a crisis. We need to watch our Board of Education and make sure that things are being done that are necessary. I no longer have children in the Paterson district, but all of them are my children. We want an education for our children. We don't want to help you get back money and be funded and have the educational outcomes that we've had for too many years. Our children are leaving high school and cannot function in college. That's a problem. If you're doing it to the children, then we need to find out what's going on in this district. 20 to 30 new hires, a \$45 million deficit - there's a problem, but we're going to Trenton and when we finish in Trenton we're coming back here.

Mr. John McEntee: Good evening. My name is John McEntee, Jr. I'm President of the Paterson Education Association. Our union brothers and sisters are proud to stand united with the entire Paterson community. PEA's alliance with the Paterson community has never been stronger. The PEA and the community both recognize the importance of strong public schools that can provide a bright future for all of our children. It is no secret that the State of New Jersey continues to fail in its responsibility to properly fund the Paterson School District. According to the Ed Law Center, the Paterson district has been underfunded by \$173.8 million over the past six years. In the past five years, there has been a 4.4% reduction in state aid to the Paterson School District. Last year the State of New Jersey failed when they laid off 300 of our employees. The ripple effects of these cuts have hurt all of our children in the school district. As I visit with staff, I am saddened to see a tremendous lack of resources, technology, and many long-term substitutes. Class sizes have exploded in many schools. Just last week, I visited a school that reported as many as 34 in a classroom with one teacher. If our district loses any more educators I am frightened to see what these same classes will look like next year. As a teacher and a parent, I can promise you that these circumstances are not acceptable. Yet for some reason, a select few in Trenton have no problem neglecting our children in Paterson. Our students are being shortchanged in every department imaginable. In special education we do not have enough staffing to fully execute student IEPs. Our emergent readers do not have librarians. The art and music classes are not being offered at every school. As one teacher explained to me, "This year I see more substitute educators in the staff lounge than ever before." Let me be clear, the PEA and the community are strongly opposed to any budget that continues to hurt our children. In fact, the state must be aware that parents, educators, and concerned citizens will no longer tolerate the failure to provide adequate funding to our schools to ensure that every child has the opportunity to succeed. Dr. Evans, it is incumbent upon you as the State District Superintendent to send our message back to the Governor and to the Commissioner loud and clear. School closings, program cuts, and layoffs are not acceptable by this community or this union. Finally, I have a message to the community members that are standing up tonight. Our fight does not end here at 90 Delaware Avenue. In the coming months, we will need to double down on our position to fight these cuts. Our union is proud to stand up for our children and we will do so indefinitely. Thank you.

Ms. Mercedes Davidson: Good evening, Board members, Mr. Superintendent, ladies and gentlemen, parents, and community. This is both an exciting and challenging time.

The Paterson Board has been given more control over the district. This includes financial control. Thus, it is incumbent upon you to act in the best interest of the community, the schools, and its students. With an impending shortfall that is overwhelming we are all aware that either new sources of income or cuts must be sought. However, as the elected officials that you are, you have a responsibility to your constituents. During your closed session you will examine the budget and discuss solutions to any shortfalls. I understand the weight of this task all too well. What I ask is that when you consider how to solve this crisis that your priority be the students of this district. Any cuts to an already lean school system would be catastrophic. Teachers already work with extreme short supplies. Students are not offered programs that enhance their learning experience. Libraries are scant in our district. How much more can our students withstand without their education becoming substandard? Please consider your own motto, "Students First," as well as your goal of being a leader in urban education. If you continue to make cuts to essential programs, supplies, and staff you jeopardize your own goals and mission. Quite frankly, we teachers are here to defend our students' right to a quality education. Cutting staff and programs is not an option. You must find another way. Examine your budget. Trim the fat without exposing our students to cuts that will hurt them. They need their teachers, all of them. They need their programs, all of them. They need their schools, all of them. I urge you that if there is anything in that budget that compromises student learning in any way, you do not vote for the budget. I urge you to go back to the drawing boards and find cuts that make sense.

Ms. Rainbow Williams: Good evening. I have a question for you high-end administrators and for you staff members who don't live here. Where do your children attend? Where do you live? Does your city live under heavy rights and crime as we do? Does your home have children that eat very little or are cold during the winter? If thinking that the little resources that you have given us are enough, turn the tides of the decades and racism over the policing of minority communities and the lack of basic services. Then you have no right to lead or teach our children. However, if that isn't enough, you now want to cut \$45 million from the school budget and believe that we will be okay with it. Well, well, well. I am here to say that you can take back your views to your city and give us the right to decide within our own.

Ms. Naomi Gamorra: Good evening. I have appeared before this Board since September because there are no teachers in my School 21. I spoke to the Superintendent. How can you call yourself a school? How can we call ourselves a school system when there are no language arts and math teachers in the entire seventh grade for entire marking period? That is a travesty. That is unfair to the children. It is not preparing them for college and career. Right now, there are no math or language arts in the sixth grade. You have a middle school that is imploding. That affects the fifth grade. That affects the fourth grade. That affects the third grade. You have now demolished an entire school. For what - because you have how many administrators and supervisors! Like I said at the last Board meeting, if you got rid of the 96 supervisors by my calculation you would save \$9 million just like that. I do not even know what to say anymore because I've said it since September. This is not fair to these children and it makes me very sad. I don't even believe it.

Ms. Donna Cleary: Good evening. My name is Donna. I'm at School 9. I'm part of the PTO Executive Board. I point this speech to those of you who willfully let educational racism happen. You allowed a system where very few students in our district are considered college-ready based off their SAT scores. You allowed a system to treat Paterson students as second-class citizens in the state. You allowed a system where children drop out of college due to their diplomas getting watered down to save

administration jobs. You allowed a system where substitutes teach class long-term, class sizes are doubled, and students are not taught to be equals among their peers in the next town over. Now, beyond everything you have done, you want to cut our children's future even more. I hope that all of you live long and happy lives knowing that the children of Paterson once again got the raw end of the deal. This \$45 million cut will be the end of us. We beg you, support the children, support the parents, and support the Paterson Public Schools.

Ms. Valerie Freeman: Good evening. Valerie Freeman. I came here tonight because I think this is absolutely ridiculous. \$45 million is absolutely crazy. My sixth grade daughter is sitting in a language arts class with no language arts teacher. Thank god she's in a high percentile while taking those tests. But what about the other children who are not where she is with a personal aide who should be with a student one-on-one? Absolutely ridiculous! I have many friends sitting on this Board, but it's not about friendship. I'm a mother and parent first. I'm saying this because I know many of you are parents yourselves. If your children are in this district you should be absolutely livid. For the first time in about 90 years there was no Eastside Marching 100 at the Thanksgiving game. You've taken music out of the grammar schools so they don't know how to play an instrument when they get to high school. You want to cut more music programs. You want to cut more sport programs. With the crime and all that's going on in this city these kids need something else to look forward to. I'm holding my friends to put the fire to Dr. Evans. Tell him what cannot be cut on that budget. Let him know what can't be. It's imperative to our children because the young men are dying senselessly. Thank god for the football, basketball, and soccer programs that they have. Then you want to cut more sport programs? What do you want to do? I'm trying not to curse, but I'm made. What do you want them to do? On the outskirts of this city the stuff that's happening in Paterson is not going on. Do you know why? Because they're not allowing it! I know I was brought up by my grandparents and my mother and they shut Board of Education meetings down because of bull like this. For the first time I'm glad to see other parents here because that's what you need. The parents can shut the whole Board of Education down. Without these parents and their children sitting in those seats you won't be here, Dr. Evans. Please don't take it personal because, guess what? You were sent here to do a job, but your children and grandkids are not here. Act like your children and grandkids are here. All I'm saying to my friends is if you have some control back, look at it very carefully. I love you, but I will come for you and I will come hard.

Mr. Bobby Fazon: Good evening, everyone. Bobby Fazon. I'm here as a parent and as a member of the PTO.

Comm. Irving: Folks, I'm going to ask as each person comes to the microphone that we be cognizant of the fact that they're trying to speak. We want to make sure everybody is heard.

Mr. Fazon: Like I said, I'm here as a parent and a member of the Executive PTO. We cannot continue to allow our children to be robbed of a quality education. Our children are suffering. There's an old saying that says if you don't stand for something you'll fall for anything. We've been falling for this crap for too long. It's time that we stand together like we are tonight and fight. We cannot continue to allow our children to be robbed. We're here today to say that this needs to stop. We need to fund the education. We need to make sure our students are getting the services that they need. Thank you.

Ms. Susan Carletta: Hi, how are you? My name is Susan Carletta. I'm a special education teacher at Eastside High School, School of Technology. We don't need to cut this budget \$45 million. There are so many teachers needed. There are so many vacancies with daily substitutes. The children need the education they deserve. I just really think that when you're going through this budget that you should look carefully at it and see where they cuts are made. There are a lot of vacancies in all the schools and it's important that we all stand together, the community and the teachers as well. Thank you.

Ms. Elizabeth Elias: Hi, everybody. I'm here for the kids. I'm not here for anybody else but the kids. I'm here for some of the teachers, too. No matter what color, where you come from, what you do the only thing that you take is your education. If we go across the world there's a history teacher talking about over here. This is going to go around the world. Dr. Evans, if we go to war and you were in charge I wonder what tools you're going to use. First of all, education is the main thing that you do. You learn to read. When you read you need good teachers, good books, teachers that get paid, schools that look good, and breathe well. There are schools that are being shut down. Christie needs to know if he were to be in one of these buildings, would he be able to breathe? That's what you don't know. It's not only that. People talk about the lunches. I didn't want to get into that. I am a parent for my children, but I'm advocate for all the children. I don't care where you come from. In Paterson I've been to a lot of funerals and there aren't enough activities that these young men can get after school. I don't even want to go to the schools because there's nothing. When I was going to school we had a whole bunch of programs. We had history and a whole bunch of stuff that we would do. Every parent takes an oath that their children get taught and I never thought that this would happen in our city. It's sad that you didn't know there's a law called Jim Crow that the state doesn't allow our children to get funded. We're the worst city getting funded with everything. I hope that in the next meeting in Montclair we all go there. There are 52 schools so for each kid there's a parent. If it's the last thing that you do from here to March 9, I hope that everybody calls out of their job and shows that we can change it. We vote and our taxes count. There won't be any after-school programs tomorrow and that's because of Joey Torres. It's not only the state. Everybody is involved. Thank you.

Mr. Todd Pipkin: Good evening. This evening I come to you threefold. I come to you as a teacher, as a Paterson resident, and as a product of Paterson Public Schools. I come here with a great deal of concerns. The first concern, after the layoff I've seen firsthand the impact it's had on my school directly as I share a classroom that's now going through the process of having its third teacher serve in that capacity. The state has recommended that the ideal size for grades 6-12 for an urban school be 24 students. I have colleagues coming to me with numbers as high as 40. Now you have class sizes that are over 50% beyond capacity and yet the teachers are required and expected to then get the results from the SGO's and test scores. I don't want to see divisiveness between the community and the teachers. We need to all be on board. They say we've done our part. So for you, let me put my teacher hat on. This is our part. As a result of Chapter 78, you have some colleagues now that pay \$11,000 dollars in benefits. You take a median average of \$3,000 per colleague with at least 3,600 members, that's over \$10 million dollars. So if you tell me we're not making a contribution to the cause monetarily, there it is. So as the money is being looked at, I would like to see how that money was reallocated. Lastly, as I look at how we were, and I know this goes beyond Dr. Evans' pay grade, this comes from the Commissioner and the Governor, the PARCC test was thrust upon us. Ironically, as HSPA scores increased, the whole format now changes, the whole testing thing. I think that's systematically designed. As I looked at this data, 20% of the districts refused to take

the test. But for the middle class and upper middle class, it was over 70%. That tells you something. That tells you that testing is not an indicator of success. It took away a lot of money. It took away a lot of instructional time, and as we move progressively forward with the Board now being at the forefront, we look to you because Dr. Evans is limited in terms of what he can do because he answers to them. I voted for you sitting here. You now have the capacity to talk to the Commissioner directly and demand. Lastly, one thing I'll say as I look at my neighbors, relatives, and coworkers, this is one thing I know for sure. Together, united, we can't be defeated.

Ms. Willa Mae Taylor: I know I did. I'm excited. I'm mad. I heard someone say, "I'm mad as hell." That's just what I am at this point. I'm sorry. I got religion. I've got a whole heap of religion and faith, but I don't have faith in this state legislation that they put on us. As long as I was on the Board, they kept taking money away. They have not stopped. But they've also sent us more children from diverse backgrounds, without the language, without the ability to speak their own language, without the ability to understand how to work in a classroom or be with a social group. We have people that have come here with a lot of special needs and they send them right here to us in Paterson. We have so many groups from the world that we're being inundated with having to pay for every service that they have to have. The teachers can't even begin to work with this kind of population. You'll see a lot of teachers out here. Teachers, you better get your parents on your side because you can't do anything without the parents of the children. You cannot. The Board is an elected Board. We don't even have to have an elected Board. The Governor is going to make sure we don't have that anymore. I'm trying to tell you that this money that you're asking for, we need every dime of it, Dr. Evans. We need every dime because when you put your program together, you knew you needed someone to help the classroom teacher with the child with the languages. You needed a person. I didn't even talk about the gifted and talented and all the other crafts and the learning that we have. We've done away with them and now we're asking us to do away with some more. Those people that you have in that so-called body who you're getting rid of, you don't have enough money to get rid of them and then you're going to dip into the teachers. You're going to have to keep some of them in order to keep some of your programs going. You've already gotten rid of a lot of the programs that we had. We're almost skin and bones. I've lost some weight, but I don't want to lose any more. I don't want this district to lose it because we don't want to fight the legislature in Trenton and fight the Governor's veto. We've got to stop doing that. We've had I don't know how many times the money cut from this district. We have most of the people from the world that we have teach and also provide a voucher for out of district for all kinds of children and all kinds of people we're still paying for. We've been paying for them since I've been around and I've been here over 70 years. So I'm telling you we've got to stop. We have to have real good fight now. You can't sit here and say yes even though we have charter schools. Charter schools are not my answer. Public schools are my answer.

Ms. Nikki Baker: Good afternoon. My name is Nikki Baker. I'm an IA. I've been an IA for 13 years in the system. I was first a parent volunteer in a classroom. I was a substitute for a year. I started here when I moved from down south in Paterson. My kids started here. My kids both have special needs. They were first instructed here with special education programs. Things are being cut. I now work in a special education class. The demands on the kids, as many other teachers and parents have already said, are unbelievable. We don't have enough staff to cover their IEP's. We don't have enough staff to adequately educate our regular education kids, much more our special education kids. We talk about non-negotiables all the time in this district. We as staff members are always put on what we have to do for this person and this person in the classrooms, but we're not given our tools. We're not given all the things we need.

Many times we're lacking in support. As far as IA's and PA's, we were going to be cut just a few years back because we're not important, although we're part of the teaching staff. We're part of the secretaries, dental assistants, security guards, and the other educational staff that are required to be a part of after school programs, sports programs, arts, music, and whatever else has been cut. Slowly but surely we're falling apart. What does it look like for Paterson? A graveyard for our kids! It's really sad. I've gone to lots of funerals. Some funerals I couldn't even attend because our kids are so young. The parents are young that are dying. These kids are struggling. These kids are dealing with things out here that are real. We almost are like in our ivory towers forgetting that. This is a real community with real people and real issues. It hurts all of our hearts when we see budget cuts. We're not just talking about our jobs. We're talking about all of our kids. Please consider that when we go off to fight in Trenton and when you fight for this budget. Thank you.

Ms. Linda Reid: Good evening, Linda Reid from the Parent Education Organizing Council. I just want to take a few things for you to consider as you start this budget discussion on what you will and will not cut, hopefully. Students suffer when they don't have adequate resources. Librarians are considered a valuable resource. There are many campaigns around getting children to read on grade level by third grade. Therefore, it is crucial that each school have a 21st Century library with a librarian, which is a necessary resource. Music and arts is another necessity that is needed for our students to be well-rounded in their education. You already know the benefits of what music and art will and can do for the improvement of the students, particularly around improving test scores. So you have to ask yourself the question will less music and arts in the classroom really help students soar academically. If we have the adequate resources needed for our children, there would not be about 700 seniors in jeopardy of not graduating according to the PARCC assessments. If schools did not operate on the zero tolerance policy, we could keep kids in school where they can learn. You, the Board, adopted a new Code of Conduct on June 18, 2014, which has not been fully implemented throughout the district. Zero tolerance, any way you look at it, is school push-out which fuels the school-to-prison pipeline. I know there has been some talk of possibly closing schools and combining school sport teams. Please think about this carefully before you create something that will be worse than what you have now. My final comments to you, Commissioners, each one of you chose to campaign for that seat. You were elected by the people to be the voice of this school district. What you say and do will have great impact on them. You took an oath to impartially and justly perform all the duties of the office according to the best of your abilities. That means you are responsible for providing a thorough and efficient education to make our children competitive in the marketplace and to be good citizens. I know you want to blame the state for underfunding this district for so many years, and by right, you should. But you are equally to blame if you don't continue to go after the state to fully fund the formula and give Paterson school children what they are entitled to receive.

Ms. Doris Pagan: Good evening Commissioner and Superintendent. I'm Doris Pagan from the Paterson Education Fund. I'm representing the Paterson Education Fund in our community and we would like you to remember a few things when you are deliberating on the budget. We have already had cuts which took away valuable teachers, librarians, art and music teachers, and much more. It is sad to me that there are many libraries in the schools just sitting there with no one to take care of them and give children books to read. If we want our children reading on grade level, we need to give them the resources to be able to do so. It's not just about giving the students the books. It's about knowing what books are at their grade level and helping them to get better every day, which is what the librarians do and so much more. They help them with the research, among many other skills. Research is a skill they will need in college,

working on their papers and other things. If we want our children to be prepared to go to college or to be career-ready, we need to make sure we have the systems and people in place to help provide that. This past year we had many classes without teachers and substitute teachers that did not teach the class, so the class fell behind and lost precious instructional time. Why let teachers go that are needed? I know a lot of them left also. No more cuts to teachers. There has to be another way, so please consider this. We need to give our children all they need to be well-rounded young adults. Cutting music and art teachers do not help our children become well-rounded. If we want our children to succeed in life and be our future, yes, Paterson's future commissioners, councilmen, mayors, and more, then we need to put them with what they need to become those well-rounded young adults who can think outside of the box. I would like to piggyback off what Linda said regarding the closing of the schools. If we do this, we are giving charter schools the opportunity to come and take over. That also reduces our funding even more. We have not been fully funded for quite some time and that is an understatement. Now look at the results. We need to fight the state and I ask of you to continue to demand from the state to fully fund the district. It is not enough to state at these meetings that we have not been fully funded. More needs to be done, especially at a time like today, where we don't know what else will be cut and can be cut. Please be the Commissioners you signed on to be, Commissioners dedicated to getting the best education for our children. Thank you.

Comm. Irving: I just want to thank everyone for the comments. We're making a lot of progress. I think we'll be able to get through the first list in an hour.

Mr. Corey Teague: Good evening, Commissioners. Let's just get down to the point. Governor Christie wants to do away with public education. Let's make that very clear. Don't be deceived about that. Governor Christie does not want public education. He wants to privatize it. He wants to shut it down. What's the easiest way to destroy something? Continue to drain it until there's nothing left. So at some point, we're going to have to get mad enough to say that we're not going to send our kids to school until we know that our kids are being afforded a thorough and efficient education. We're going to have to get strong enough and we're going to have to get a backbone and say that we're going to let our children stand outside the school and not enter the building, just like they did in Newark and just like they did in other cities across the country where the kids did not go in the school until the district heard our complaints. Because quite honestly, we can come to the mic for years and years and years, but until we start tapping their pockets and until we start making radical moves, nothing is going to happen. So tonight, I am letting you all know that I'm going to be organizing a boycott of myself. I'm going to be getting some students together, just like they did in Newark, and we're going to be planning on boycotting the system until they get the message that they cannot continue to underfund us and we're not just going to lay down anymore and allow that to happen. We can yell and we can scream, but until that morning comes when the school doors open and the kids refuse to walk in the building and they want to know why children in 52 schools have refused to go to class and we tell them we want to be fully funded before our kids can go in those classrooms, because until they're fully funded, they're not getting the education they deserve anyway. So why are you sending them? It doesn't make sense to send them there for nothing. Until our school district gets funded properly those buildings are nothing but daycares. Until our schools get funded properly all you're doing is throwing your children away for eight hours a day and then coming back to pick them up. That is not good for our children. Until they want to fund us properly, it's time for us to plan a boycott with the students, staff, and teachers until they get the message that we're not going to keep putting up with this any longer. That's what we're going to have to do. We can't leave it up to the Board anymore. The

Board did not have these children. These are our babies. We can't sit back anymore and beg for help. We have to demand it.

Reverend John D. Givens: Once again, oh god, we find ourselves perplexed. Once again, oh god, we call upon your holy and righteous name. Not for form or fashion, but we call upon you because you are our god and we are your people. Father, we have assembled here tonight to solve the problem of our educational system. Oh god, we found out a life has just been shot. Father, we ask for mercy. We ask for understanding. We ask for guidance. Guide our steps and direct our path. Then, o god, we ask you to have mercy upon that family. Father, we don't know all the facts, but if there's life you can do all things. We pray for that child and we pray for that family. This we ask in Jesus' name, amen. To our Board President, the Commissioners, and Dr. Evans, my name is John Givens. I'm the President of the Paterson United Council. Our motto is "In Paterson Education Matters." The spiritual leaders of this community no longer can sit idle. With 20-something years of state takeover of our educational system we are still going backwards. It was 61 years ago where Brown vs. Board of Education for quality education and here we stand in Paterson, the third largest city in the state, 2016 and all the kids cannot read. That's a shame. We went to court 61 years ago for quality education and we are still fighting it, Commissioners and Mr. Superintendent. That's a shame. The pastors of this community have some serious concerns. We have some concerns. The school is not opening on time. Half of the year there's not sufficient teachers in the school 61 years later. 61 years later our children still cannot write. We are in a global community and our community cannot compete to go to college or challenge to take on the technical opportunity that lies ahead of them. We have some problems. The layoffs over the years have caused the School Board to use substitute teachers. Our certified teachers are going to other counties. We have some concerns there. We have some concern that all of the children in the school district, wherever they come from, should be educated. We do not have all the fine-tuned information with regards to special schools and why have special schools for one group and the whole school district is not being educated. The faith-based community will support this Board. We will support you, Dr. Evans, but we're asking you to reject this budget because the budget is unfounded and we can no longer go with this closing of schools. I have to go now, but my colleague is coming behind me shortly. Reject this budget. We vote for you and we ask you not to accept this budget under any circumstances until we get back together to have an educational system that we fought for in Brown vs. Board of Education.

Ms. Dawn McGowan: First of all, before I say anything, I want to show this to the Board of Education. I would like you first to take a good look at this picture. You say that you put children first. So I need you to take a look and I would like you to look at these children's faces. I am a mother of three. I have one at Rosa Parks, one at School 4, and I have one in Rutgers University. The school system is sick, very sick. You're cutting \$45 million dollars, cutting teachers, education program, and closing off schools. It just can't work. Right now my three children are in school and I'm looking for the Board of Education to do a better work. I can't have a son in high school that can't sign his name. It's hard to know that some of them don't know how to sign their name and they're in high school when they should be signing their name from elementary school. It's hard to say, but it's true. The school system is sick. You're cutting off the teachers, the parents, and in the meantime the children are suffering. I'm calling on this Board. Dr. Evans, get up and do your work. Dr. Evans, wake up and do your work. The same people that vote for you, we all can fire you. Any one of you, when voting time when you do a good work, you don't have to ask if you're coming back up. All of you that are sitting here, if you don't do a good work, nobody is voting for you. We're looking for the best in Paterson. I'm asking the Board of Education to leave the teachers alone. Stop

sending the substitutes in the school. September morning, the first year of school, he puts a substitute to teach my son. We don't want it in the schools in Paterson. Use the teachers. You are running out the teachers that already have the education. Some of them you don't know who's coming in. You're paying them. We need to look at what we're doing. Take a good look, because we want the best for our children. Wake up, Dr. Evans. We hired you, we can fire you.

Reverend Givens: Mr. Chairman, we will go to court. We want you and the parents to know that the pastors of Paterson will take the Governor to court. We are prepared to go to court.

Comm. Irving: We encourage you to do so.

Pastor Clayton: Good evening. I am a proud product of the Paterson Public Schools. I just want to share with you tonight. The State of New Jersey through our current Governor, Chris Christie, has consistently underfunded our school district. This plot and plan of underfunding is a horrible plot and plan to destroy our children and then prevent them from arriving to their fullest potential in leading our local community and our world. The Paterson NAACP joins all the concerned people of our city and community, and we urge and demand this Board to act in behalf of our children and our constituents to do what is best for our children and what's best for our city. Any cuts to the current budget would further hinder the opportunity of learning to occur for our children. The selling of buildings could possibly allow for outside sources and the political cronies of the Governor to come into our city and open additional charter schools which do not adequately educate our children. They make other people rich and they undercut our school system. We're against that. We urge you to seek ways to ensure that none of our buildings will be closed or sold. We urge you to ensure that there is no downsizing of our athletic programs, other extracurricular activities, and no cuts in our staff. We urge you as current citizens to please make sure and demand that the Governor does his job and fund our schools properly. Thank you.

Mr. Rafael Fontana: Good evening everyone and members of the Board. This is my first time being at this podium. My name is Rafael Fontana. I'm 52 years old. I graduated from School 9 in 1979. I attended Kennedy High School and back in the 1980's there was a program, something called Twilight Tech for the students that were not awarded to go full time to Tech. After you were done with your regular schooling in Kennedy or Eastside, a bus would take you into Tech and be there until 8:00 at night. I am an electrical engineer and I run a consulting company. The problem that I see with every administration in every state that I've gone to throughout this land is that administration eats up most of the budget. We have too many chiefs and not enough Indians. We need more teachers, not administrators. I learned from experience that just because you have a college degree it doesn't make you smart. I've met a lot of engineers that call themselves engineers, but they were not engineers. Our bully Governor – because that's what he is, a bully – was bullied when he was younger and I guess now he wants to bully everyone else. We, the citizens of Paterson, we are a diverse community. My parents came from the Dominican Republic and we didn't have any advantage like some of the other communities. But we persevered because we are Patersonians and we care about our communities and we will not stand when someone comes from the outside and tells us that we are not working. We are working. We are hard workers. Everyone in the city is a hard worker. Yes, we have crime. We have crime all over the place. But take a look at Chicago. We're going in the same direction as Chicago. We need to stand and say no more. To conclude, I beg you please, if you're going to make cuts, start on the top, not at the bottom.

Ms. Victoria Oquendo: Good evening. I wanted to start off with a quote by Nelson Mandela that says, "There's no keener revelation of a society's soul than the way it treats its children." With that being said, I heard a lot this evening. I wish I could turn this podium and speak to my parents. I heard a lot this evening about 'they,' but I've heard very little about 'we.' I read four articles, and all four of those articles said we would not be here if it were for parent involvement. That's why we're at this point, because we don't show up. These budget cuts cannot take place when parents are present. There are three center powers in a city – your elected council, your school board, and your planning board. A lot of extracurricular activities are determined by citizen involvement. So if we're lacking those services, it means one thing and one thing only, minimum citizen involvement. I saw more passion over the Super Bowl than I did today trying to get parents out. Some of the parents looked like they were in a zombie state. I had one mother explain to me about her depression and she just can't. She's tired. I understand that, because I too long ago had not woken up from being an uninvolved parent. I, too, had been bogged down by a system trying to get basic necessities like food, clothing, and shelter, which leaves me too tired to show up for my child. Parenting is spiritual, it's social, it's their emotional, it's their psychological and their physical needs. If we fall short on one of the five, we're not parenting, we're maintaining children. These are our kids. You work for me. I haven't been awake. I have not been present, but I'm here now. What you are proposing to do to our children will not stand. While we were here a child was shot in the street. Yesterday was a beautiful day in the city of Paterson. It was the first time I realized we have a large, youthful community. I saw underage drinking. I saw marijuana smoking out in the open and these are our young people. We talk about them, but they come from our wombs. These are our children and it starts from home. A child only educated at school is still an uneducated child.

Mr. Mike Henry: For those of you that don't know me, I'm Kevin Michael Henry, Commissioner elect. The State of New Jersey doesn't recognize me, so I don't recognize the State of New Jersey. Donnie Evans, render your resignation now. Get the hell out of Paterson. Commissioners, Mr. President, I owe you an apology. I wholeheartedly apologize to you. Superintendent, get out. You and your A-man corner, leave Paterson now. Commissioners, you all have the right again for fiscal approval. Restore that \$45 million or \$50 million, whatever it is. Restore it. All of you in three years can be removed. You asked to be in charge. He is what he is. I told you what he was. Tiger stripes don't change. There's a handkerchief here. You don't want me to call him another word? There's a handkerchief here. Leave Paterson. You and your A-man corner, go back to Trenton. Restore that \$45 million. Thank you, Mr. President.

Ms. Bernadette Bryant: Good evening. My name is Bernadette Bryant. I've been a teacher in the Paterson Public Schools for 24 years. Every year I come to work with a positive attitude and high expectations for my students. I believe in the motto "Children First" because every day I provide my students with whatever resources or materials I have that I've purchased for my students. I don't just talk about it. I do it. I'm accountable to Paterson Public Schools. There's a 20 plus age document, a rubric, which holds me accountable for my teaching. But I'm still here fighting for my students. I'm not afraid. He's my boss. He's sitting right in front of me. I fight for the children of Paterson because they matter. The same way everybody sitting on this Board, administrators, as well as Board members, we are here already and we do need to do a better job with our parents. We need to get them involved because they can shut it down. But we need to stand up for our children because we are their voice, all of us together. When we talk about the lack of funding, we have teachers in our building who are doing two and three jobs just to make sure that our kids get an effective education. How is that fair to us? How is that fair to them? We talked about the special education.

I'm glad to hear the minister say there's some legal action. I don't know if I'll have a job tomorrow, but guess what? There has to be some legal issues that are being broken because our children are not getting what they deserve. I love my kids and I will do anything for my kids. I'm a mother of five and I'm not talking about my own children. I'm talking about the children of this city. I don't live in Paterson, but what's right is right and what's fair is fair. All of our children need to get an education and we can't move forward unless they do. What kind of society will we live in if our children are not properly educated?

Ms. Jerrica Spence: Hello everyone. My name is Jerrica Spence. I have two kids in the Paterson Public Schools. Rosa Parks is alright, but I want to talk about Don Bosco. I didn't even know Paterson Public Schools had \$45 million to cut. My son's classes, language arts and math – which are the only subjects they teach in that school – he doesn't have any books. He doesn't come home with homework because there's no book to do the homework out of. They can't even use the fax machine anymore because they don't want to pay for paper. They want you to email. No dittos come home. I don't even want to talk about school lunch. My son complains about what they eat every day and he loves to eat. Look at his mother. He loves to eat. I just want to say please reconsider. Don't cut any more money. Also, they're moving. I didn't even know. He came home to me one day and say, "Mom, did you go to the meeting?" What meeting? He said, "They had a meeting because the school is moving." They don't even send home notices to the parents. They're lacking paper. You have to start cutting down trees and making paper for the school so I can be aware of what's going on. Please don't cut any more money. Please.

Mr. Robert Scott: Good evening, everyone. I know many people here, but I come here for a purpose. I come here as a former EMT from the City of Paterson. I come to you as a person who swore an oath to serve and protect. I come to you as PTO President of School 1. I come to you as a father from the community. Every day in my line of work I see tragedies out there on the streets. We heard news of just another one now. Paterson Public Schools is the first line of defense against the streets. Period! That's it. The cause is worth the fight. It's worth going to Trenton. As a man I'm coming here. I talk to you, I beg you to take up this fight to protect our children from the streets and from stuff that they're not able to be protected from. If you choose to ignore this fight we let down our community, our kids, and our future. Our children are our future.

Ms. Stella Tripp: Good evening, Board members. I have not been here all year. I know you know my face. This is terrible. When I say this is terrible, this is terrible. It's going to come to a point where we as parents decide not to send our children to school. Then guess what? It's going to trickle down and we're going to start sending our kids to Wayne and Teaneck. We're going to get them out of this city because evidently you are not doing your jobs. We're tired. \$45 million! Take it from your salaries. Dr. Evans, if you got a raise in 2012 of \$15,223, I guarantee 2016 was lovely to you this year. When you have children here starving, not enough parents are here. But the ones that are here are here. You're talking about closing schools? We need to know what schools are going to be closed and when they're going to be closed. Parents need to take action. We need to know. I understand you have your jobs to do, but if you don't want to fight for our children then I understand that you need to get up out of your seat and you let somebody else sit there. This right here is ridiculous. When the next term comes around, ladies and gentlemen, you better fight for those seats. I said it more than one time. This does not make any sense. Maybe the young faces have children in the Paterson Public Schools, but not all of them. Why should you care? Because your kids probably don't come here in the first place! This is just a job. Do you know how I found out about this meeting? Dr. Hodges. If this man doesn't speak up for our city, I

don't hear it. If he doesn't post anything on Facebook, I don't know anything about it. This is who we need to appoint. We need somebody else that's going to want and do for our children and it's not you.

Ms. Waheedah Muhammad: Good evening. I know that we've said a lot here this evening and I don't know how many of you out there realize that it's not about what you say. It's what you do. We talk a lot. Dr. Evans, I have the utmost respect for you because I really believe in my heart that you care about our children. But I do know that Chris Christie cares nothing about our children and he's the one that we need to be focusing on because it's Chris Christie that gives you your marching orders. But it's the community, Commissioners, that give you your marching orders and you have to march up tonight and say this is will not go. No matter what, no matter who, we have to realize that unless we say it it's not going to be said. You have to realize that we're here not just for tonight. Parents, you have to take ownership of the fact that they look out every time there's a Board meeting and there is more staff than there are parents. It's sad. It really is. We have to take ownership of that. I put six children through this system and in the 12 years that they were there I was at every Board meeting because I knew that's where things happen. If we're not there to make sure that our children's needs are being met, then it's on us. We have to take some ownership for that. If we're not fired up now, if \$45 million doesn't fire you up, then we might as well go home and stop the BS. If \$45 million doesn't say something to us, then this city might as well fold. We don't have \$45 million anywhere in this town. But we have children that are worth more than that to us. Chris Christie needs to understand that. We are shouting at the Board and at the Superintendent. I want to see just how many of us are going to be there when we go face Chris Christie. We're going to be taking names and calling numbers. Thank you and god bless.

Mr. Charles Ferrer: Good evening, everyone. Thank you for allowing me to have this opportunity. I know I was called earlier, but I didn't want to come in until every parent that was outside was allowed to come in. This fight is not about me. It's about what I said at the last meeting. Parents, I'm so glad you're here. I feel so good. This has been long overdue. You are the ones that can take this fight to the Governor. We need the petitions signed. We need you prepared. Now since you're here, when you come back, bring everybody. Bring your relatives. Like some of you said, you haven't been here but you're here now. I'm glad you're here. It's about your children. That's what it's about. It's about nothing else. I'm concerned that we're talking about cutting and doing a lot of things, but nobody can provide anyone on this side of the podium anything to look at to review and know exactly what you're talking about. When I hear of you talking about closing schools, the schools are paid for. Let's get out of these leases. I understand we've just entered into a new building at HARP. I understand they have to have umbrellas up because the roof leaks. That's a problem. Hopefully the owner of the building will take care of it because it's my understanding we didn't do a triple net lease so it's on him. Get it fixed. I just want to bring up something. I found this senate bill #498. A synopsis of the bill requires each school district to annual submit interscholastic athletic opportunity reports to the Commissioner of Education. This is on the docket right now. We're talking about merging our sports program into one program. They want a report on what you're doing in the elementary schools. This is coming out right now. Theresa Ruiz is putting this out there because she's trying to say that we don't want to just wait for our children. We have baseball and basketball. But I was at a school in Long Island and the middle school had two gyms, a football field, a track, a swim team, and a wrestling team. By the time they get to high school they are ready. What are we doing? We have Paterson that wants to rent our field to Bergen so that our kids can't practice soccer. The time has gone. Dr. Evans, the parents are here. They're not going anywhere. Chris Christie, it's getting ready to come. We know what

he's about. I told you the lawsuit is going to happen. Parents, we're behind you 100%. Stay here. Continue to come. Let's get the paperwork done. Let's get this into court. Let's let the state know when we send the petitions that we're not playing. Like the lady said, I'm awake now. We're all awake. Chris Christie's worst nightmare is about to happen. When he finds out this I guarantee he drops 10 pounds.

Ms. Lavonne Jones McEachern: Good evening. My name is Lavonne Jones McEachern. I am a member of the PTO Executive Leadership Board here at 90. I'm a volunteer among the PTO at the local school. I stand before you representing the PTO. First, I'd like to say to the Board we do appreciate you. Tonight is a highly charged meeting. Everybody's here. Everybody's got things that they want to say. Hopefully everybody is thick-skinned and letting this roll off your back. The fact still remains that we have to put our children first. That's why we're here. Hopefully, you as Commissioners of Education, we as parents, volunteers, and community workers being interested in our children's education is what matters. That is what we're putting first. We're all saying we're waking up, but we have to be on the same side. It can't be we are divided. We cannot be divided because right now our children are the ones that suffer. We've lost our focus. Everybody is into their political interest or whatever, but the interest here is the children. We need to come up with common ground. How are we going to do this? The Board has to join with the parents, the teachers, and the administrators, but it's all one. We cannot lose focus on the children. That's our priority here. We are all saying what we're going to do, what we should have done, or what have you. Right now, it's from today forward. We need to strategize, come up with ideas, plan, form, or get with the PTO executive boards to come in and work along with the Board of Education. We cannot let our kids go lacking. Our kids have to be able to read. We wonder why they are on the corner. We give them no other alternative. If they can't read they can't get a job and they can't fill out an application. We've lost the focus. Then we look around and say what's happening and what are we going to do. We are all in dire straits, but we have to have buy-in corporately to come together. It can't be us, we, them, or they. It has to be all of us together. Children are the focus. Get our children learning and get our children exposed to different things. We need to do what we need to do. We can't kill the same people because I know they're talking about raising the taxes 6% because that was on the news tonight. We need to do whatever it is we need to do in the sense of coming up with ideas that will bring in money. I know back in the day we had fundraising projects or whatever it takes. But the children are our focus. The children cannot be slighted. It's on us. We say the children are the generation of tomorrow, but if we don't do anything to protect that generation, to nurture that generation, to levitate that general and lift them up, there will be no generation. There will be us all sitting here saying, "Woulda, coulda, shoulda." It's on us because we are the responsible ones. We are sitting here and we need to band together. We need to let Governor Christie know what it is we need. Then if there's something that we need to buy into to give to our kids, we have to do that. In no way can it be that we accept just anything. Accept our children not having teachers. Accept our children having overcrowded classrooms. We cannot accept that. We have to do what we need to do moving forward from tonight on. We do appreciate you no matter what you think.

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

DISCUSSION ON THE 2016-2017 SCHOOL YEAR BUDGET

Comm. Irving: Dr. Evans, at this point in time, I'm going to ask you to review the documents you have prepared for the Board and to review with the community the reductions and your strategy. Then we'll open the floor up for discussion for the Board members.

Dr. Evans: We have goals tonight that translate loosely into the review that you have requested. What I'd like to do first is call on Daisy Ayala to come forward and redefine for the Board the gap we've talked about in the past as we approached development of the budget for 2016-2017, considering increases in insurance and other expenses. The gap between what it will cost us to operate the district assuming absolutely no changes in service moving forward versus available funds from all sources from the state, federal government, local taxes, and so on. What is the gap? As Daisy has worked with us and we've looked at it from various vantage points then I think the gap is pretty clear and has remained pretty constant. We thought it might be increasing at some point, but the Board needs to hear exactly where we are with the gap. I had asked Daisy to also reiterate the fact that while no decision has been made with regards to taxing, that's a discussion that the Board needs to have. Indeed, part of the rationale for this meeting is to do what's already been done, to hear from the public. The public has weighed in in large measure and before the budget is complete I'm sure you'll hear from many more. But it's also for the Board to advise us.

Comm. Irving: That tax conversation will be a very brief conversation, I'm sure. It's one that needs to happen, but it will be expedited quite quickly, Dr. Evans.

Dr. Evans: It needs to happen.

Comm. Irving: Sure. I think the conversation will come up, but I think a decision will be made quite quickly by this group.

Dr. Evans: After Ms. Ayala, I wanted to comment about the information you've inquired about that translates in our options. We've looked at a lot of different options with regards to where to actually reduce the budget and I've asked Ms. Shafer to go through the itemized list and apprise everyone of what's on it. I want to emphasize and I've said consistently that the schools are the last place that I will look. We've looked at this building. We've identified reductions in this building. We've looked across the district, but the last place I want to go is to the schools, particularly in the classrooms, because we did cut seriously there last year. In fact, it says it is a last resort in the item that Ms. Shafer is going to review. We would look at the schools, but minimally. Our intent is to not go there in terms of classroom instructional staff. Then I'll make some closing comments after that. We really want to hear from the Board.

Ms. Daisy Ayala: Good evening, Commissioners.

Dr. Evans: Information was shared with the Board previously.

Ms. Ayala: Right now, 48% of our budget is salaries, 18% is health benefits, unemployment, pension, and things of that nature, 7% is charter schools, 9% is out-of-district, 6% is facilities, 4% is transportation, 1% is security, technology, and others, 1% is liability and workmen's comp. Preschool obligation is what we need to contribute according to state regulation, 1%. Improvement of instruction is 2%. Other is 1%. School support is 1%. With that being said, the total of the budget is \$483 million. We have an income of \$445 million, leaving a gap of \$38 million. Originally, it was \$45 million. Dr. Evans had distributed Plan A. So far, I've allocated \$6.7 million which has brought the \$45 million down to \$38 million. There are still other things to look at.

There's also Plan B, which he has shared with you. That would be for your recommendation. That's pretty much where we are right now.

Dr. Evans: Next, we have brainstormed a number of options and the list you have represents those options. We've labeled them in the first publication 'potential' strategies and they still are potential strategies. I'm going to ask Ms. Shafer to review that information. There are actually two documents.

Ms. Shafer: Let me reiterate that these are potential budget cuts. As we look at some of our leases we could close St. Mary's and get out of that lease and move the pre-k students to School 27 and School 5. The next lease is the Boris Kroll lease. We have one more year on that lease and we have had some issues and concerns with that building. If it's possible to get out of that lease we would then move Great Falls Academy to the Prospect Park location. As we move into other closures we would eliminate the Alternative Middle School. We would close School 11, which is the Newcomers School, and move those students to School 16. If we were to close some or all of those schools, there's an overhead of \$1.5 million. We're also looking to decrease services as potential cuts, our maintenance contract, to reduce that by \$2 million, to eliminate courtesy busing at \$2 million, a transportation savings of \$3 million, to streamline our substitutes and save \$2 million, and save \$500,000 on overtime. The next section is to eliminate all of our consultants. The next section for potential cuts is to cut positions in central office, five supervisors, two senior specialists, one coordinator, five secretaries, 12 human resource positions, a dental coordinator, and a confidential secretary. We have a list of vacancies in central office that we would cut – supervisor, executive director, another supervisor, principal coach, senior specialist, manager, and teacher coordinator. Those are all from central office. We have potential school cut vacancies. Again, we're trying to stay away from the schools, but we have some school cut vacancies. We have some moves, retirements, and resignations. We're moving three security guards from 90 Delaware to schools. We have a principal on assignment retirement and we have two central office administrators to move into schools to fill vacancies. Under the area of 'other' a potential possibility, one athletic program at the high school, combine job descriptions in central office, acquire indirect costs from grants, eliminate professional development at \$1.2 million, and eliminate stipends at \$4 million. Lastly, on the 'A' list is to eliminate the legal department. Another potential list is the 'B' list. That would be to close School 14 and Urban Leadership. We could decrease some other services, \$500,000 on our security contract, eliminate five more consultants and that would be the end of all consultants. Then we have some school vacancies right now. We have three technology teachers, a district security officer, a secretary, and instructional assistant. In some of our small schools we have a vice principal and their enrollment is under 350. We would eliminate the vice principal positions. There's a possibility of selling some of our property that we have that is vacant at \$5 million. Lastly, and something that we're trying to stay away from, is cut positions at the schools.

Dr. Evans: Again, I would conclude by saying that this is a potential list.

Comm. Cleaves: Excuse me, audience. We listened to you speak to us. Now let us give you the information that you came here tonight to hear so we can have the discussion on it.

Dr. Evans: This information represents potential lists. There are lists that we will be looking at to identify items that we will reduce and we're still looking. We're open to suggestions. Some of you made suggestions tonight. This is a potential list that we're looking at. By the end of the week when we're required to have a complete budget,

actually on Wednesday we should have a pretty decent draft after reflecting on what the audience has said tonight and what the Board says to us tonight.

Comm. Cleaves: This is just a draft.

Dr. Evans: These are potential items from which we would choose.

Comm. Cleaves: And you'll take into consideration that you heard from the parents and the teachers this evening.

Dr. Evans: Correct.

Comm. Cleaves: And you'll take the considerations that you get from the Board members this evening and you will have a more comprehensive budget for everyone to review on Wednesday, including the audience.

Dr. Evans: Correct. Let me remind everyone of the timeline. On Wednesday, a first draft is to appear and we are to send that information to Trenton by Friday. Remember, later on this month the Board is to conduct a budget hearing again to review the final draft of the budget. At that point, we would make any final adjustments and submit it to the Department of Education by March 31. That's the timeline on which we're working.

Comm. Irving: Excuse me, folks. We're not doing this. This is not a shout-out fest. Dr. Evans is going to present what he needs to present. We allowed the audience and the community an opportunity to reflect back. I mean this whole notion of respect for everyone who is in this room. Dr. Evans, please continue.

Dr. Evans: I've actually concluded.

Comm. Irving: Questions from Board members?

Comm. Simmons: First, let me say earlier I heard a parent say what are we going to do and I heard Councilman Jackson offer to sponsor a bus. If the community is serious about going to fight, I'm going to match his offer to sponsor buses to go to Trenton. We can't continue to fight this battle by ourselves. In one of the proposals there was a suggestion to move Great Falls to Prospect Park and close the middle school. Where would Great Falls Academy go and what is the cost going to be to move Great Falls to Prospect Park?

Ms. Shafer: The Boris Kroll building is the one that we would try to get out of the lease. It's still a year lease on it. We're not sure if we're going to be able to get out of it, but if we are, we would move Great Falls to Prospect Park and eliminate the Alternative Middle School.

Comm. Simmons: Eliminate it altogether.

Ms. Shafer: Yes.

Comm. Simmons: Do we know what the cost is going to be if we're going to move to Prospect Park?

Ms. Shafer: There would be a savings on the Boris Kroll lease. Boris Kroll would be empty.

Comm. Simmons: But what is the cost for the Prospect Park building?

Ms. Shafer: We already have a lease in Prospect Park.

Dr. Evans: There are students there now.

Comm. Simmons: That's the \$402,000. On the courtesy busing, what is the impact going to be on School Choice?

Dr. Evans: That's a good question. I'll ask Ms. Shafer to add to what I'm about to say. Courtesy busing falls into two categories. Number one, the state requires that we transport students who reside two miles or more for elementary students and I think it's two and a half for high school. We locally made the decision a few years ago to do one and a half for elementary and two for high school because of some of the streets that our students would have to navigate if we adhered rigidly to the state model. The option then is to go back to the state model and do what the state requires us to do versus what we on our own decided to do, which was to reduce that. That's one form of courtesy busing. The other is Choice, which I think is your question. For example, we have some youngsters in a bilingual program at School 8. They gather at their home schools and are bused over. That's another form of courtesy busing. So when we consider those two, I believe the figure that we've identified includes both of those considerations, which is the figure that's \$2 million.

Comm. Irving: But there will be an appeal process. Am I correct?

Dr. Evans: Yes.

Comm. Irving: Can you just talk briefly about what that is?

Ms. Shafer: We have an appeal process that we have a committee working on to put together. Parents would have an opportunity to go through that appeal process.

Comm. Simmons: I know that there was talk of consolidating the athletic program. It's something that I am in favor of if it's done correctly. But I want to know what that looks like.

Dr. Evans: We don't know what it looks like at this point. It means districtwide. For example, instead of having two football teams we would have one football team either at Eastside or Kennedy and maybe have one basketball team at the other school. Those are possibilities of what it would look like. We would want to put together an informed group to help make that decision.

Comm. Simmons: Based on what I'm hearing, it's actually cutting the program, not consolidating it. If we're going to consolidate it, we have to take into account that year one is going to cost more money to outfit, particularly football because it's more expensive. You have uniforms and equipment. In year one that consolidation actually costs a lot more money. You don't begin to save money until year two or three.

Comm. Hodges: Just to piggyback on that, you won't have these things to cut next year. So you're not going to save anything because those positions are going to be gone. That's number one. I am not going to vote on the closing of any schools. I'm not going to do it. I was talking to the Education Law Center today. I spoke to Senator Rice, who is the co-chair of the Joint Commission on Public Schools, on Saturday and we were extremely concerned. Our basis for getting schools built in the City of

Paterson is primarily because we have overcrowding and poor facilities. If you turn around and voluntarily surrender schools, you cannot ask the SDA to come here and build new schools for you. You can't do it. I went crying to the Education Law Center today and they said they can't see a way that they're going to do that. We still have 13 schools that are over 100 years old. Any discussion about closing schools and giving up real estate is out of the question. You can't get any real estate. They're not giving us any more land. That's number one. Number two, you have a building, the church where the boys' school is. The boys' school has been treated like a dumping ground for an important category of students. That is real estate that you can get rid of because it's a substandard facility at this particular point in time, and we own it. So get rid of that, move the boys' school into School 16, turn it into a magnet program, and try to get those kids proud about coming to school. They live here. That has to be done. This list here, Dr. Evans, is this all of the consultants and professional contracts that we have here?

Dr. Evans: That's not all the professional contracts. Professional contracts include a number of things. Security, for example, is a professional contract. Maintenance is a professional contract. Individual consultants hired to perform specific duties - I believe that is the complete list. We asked Ms. Ayala to put together a list of all the individual consultants.

Comm. Hodges: Who does the work for the Leadership Conference? Are they listed on here?

Comm. Irving: That's a grant.

Dr. Evans: I'm not sure which one you're talking about. We have two Leadership grants that we benefit from. One is William Paterson. William Paterson was successful in getting \$1.2 million for providing leadership and training for our district. The other \$1.2 million was a joint venture between ourselves, the school district, and Seton Hall. It provides a phenomenal amount of leadership training.

Comm. Hodges: Okay. That's a grant.

Dr. Evans: It's a federal grant. They're both federal grants.

Comm. Hodges: This is the total list of consultants and professional contracts.

Dr. Evans: It may not include the federal grants.

Comm. Hodges: I want grants. That's money. We want more of those. I mean more expenditure in terms of professional contracts that we have going out.

Ms. Ayala: The professional contracts are not listed because you have the independent auditors. That's a requirement. We have some professional contracts for technology as well. That is required. We don't have the facility contract in there for professional services, as well as the security. If you want the professional contract list as well, I can get that.

Comm. Hodges: This Board needs to review everything so they have a thorough understanding of what's at stake because whatever we cut is going to have an impact on everything else. Our choices are going to impact everything else. We need to be very clear as to what our problems are and so does this community. When we go down and challenge this \$72 million loss of money we need to have a thorough understanding

of what we're trying to challenge and what the real issues are in front of us. I'll stop for the time being.

Comm. Irving: I want to come back in a second because I want to echo a few of the things you just mentioned.

Comm. Kerr: My question has always been that we have not as long as I've known it pushed back at the state level regarding what they propose us doing. I believe that is a big part of our problem today. Now they are forcing a \$45 million cut on this district and it's sad to say that some folks sitting around this table right now believe that there's capacity in the district to absorb a \$45 million cut. That's a sad thing. Dr. Evans, I must let you know, like Comm. Hodges, I cannot support closing of any of our buildings. I've said it in the last meeting that we had here. It's not a new revelation. I've said it before. This list of consultants I know is not complete and I believe for us to make a reasonable, honest decision we should get the entire list of everything and let us make the recommendations. I don't believe it's fair for us to be looking at these couple of names here and deciding from this when we know that there's a trailer behind there that we have not yet opened the door to. Regarding the school cut positions, I noticed here we have technology positions slated here. We are in the 21st century and we are woefully inadequate in terms of the technological education we provide our children. I believe that we need to look at that once more. I just don't see us cutting the technology area there. I'm troubled by the collapsing into one of the athletic programs between Eastside and Kennedy. Let me explain what troubles me about this. Athletics is not just to win a game. It's about total development of the human person. That child by playing sports learns how to win and how to lose with grace and understanding. There are some kids who are not that good. They are just on the margin. They are nobody that you would pick for the team, but they want to play sports. If you collapse the programs you will remove from them the opportunity to play sports and that will stunt their growth and development. That is a concern. It would be my recommendation to this Board that we look at that very carefully because it has the potential to damage our children. I will leave it here, Dr. Evans. I see you have here a \$5 million price tag for a building. Today would be normally the first of May, but it's not. They're two buildings? It says it's on here as a savings, but we've had this building up before in budgets and it has never even sold. I'm sure we will have to find a way to get this \$5 million because you're not going to get the building sold by next month to get that \$5 million to plug this hole in the budget. We have a thing that I notice in this budget. You are using \$10 million from fund balance to service this budget, right? I believe you're using some money from early childhood carryover. We are proposing these cuts and sales to build it. Are there any charters coming down the stream for next year?

Dr. Evans: I think there is one new one coming on.

Comm. Kerr: There is one coming on? What's the price tag?

Ms. Ayala: I don't have it, but it's somewhere between \$500,000 and \$600,000.

Comm. Kerr: Thank you, Daisy. What she just said, after we make these draconian cuts to our budget this year next year we will not have the \$10 million to plug next year's budget. Besides that, we won't have buildings to sell. Besides that, you are going to heap on top of that \$6 million for a charter school. The cuts that we're doing this year will be a joke to what will be happening to us next year.

Ms. Ayala: That new school is about 54 students. It's \$500,000.

Comm. Kerr: Okay. My heart is so overwhelmed and pleased at the response of the parents here tonight. It shows that our community is not going to roll over and take this one. We have our kids in this district and the state is supposed to provide a thorough and efficient education. In 1985 we had the Abbott vs. Burke decision and I'm sure we all sitting here know what the decision was all about. It was because districts like Paterson were disadvantaged. We were cheated and the decision was made in order to create some kind of leveling of the field so that we could have some sense of equity in the education that is provided to our kids. But what we find between then and now is we still have that gap because our education was not being funded in the way that it should have been funded even after that decision. I can understand if we were balanced and performing in the way we should be performing. But if you look at the PARCC scores it will tell you that we are nowhere close to where we are supposed to be. This budget is going to create so much pain and it's going to turn back the progress that we have made in your administration over the past couple of years. Dr. Evans, I can let everybody know right now that this budget is a 'soak the children' budget and I'm not prepared to support this. Thank you.

Comm. Rivera: Good evening, everyone. I am not here to play politics. I'm here to tell you exactly how it is. We recently obtained local control in the area of finance and we were handed a \$45 million deficit. It's very simple the way the budget works. For every dollar you're going to spend you need a dollar coming in. It's very simple. No one wants to cut anything over here. That's the last thing we want to do. We all said that the state needs to give us, and we're right. We need to get what we deserve for our kids. But what I can tell you is what we have done ever since we've gotten local control, which is about a month ago. People tell me to calm down because I get real passionate when we're talking about the finances of the district. It's because I understand that this is the most important document that we have here. This one would determine the level of service that we're going to provide our kids and you're also playing with people's lives when you start mispending funds. We're going to try to do our best to balance this budget. No one wants to cut, but we have to balance the budget. It is our duty. We cannot operate without a balanced budget. It's the legal way of spending money in the district. We're in the situation we're in because of a lot of things that happened in the past. For example, we need to hold people accountable in the district. I'll tell you why I'm passing these comments. Let's start at transportation. I've noticed that in the past few years the most we spent was \$14 million, the \$15 million, and the most we ever spent was \$16 million. Then I guess people were not doing their jobs and we decided to set a contract with Essex County. All of a sudden now we're spending over \$20 million with Essex County. Did the Board make that decision? No. We were run by the state. I just want to make that clear. Another thing I did when I came here was I noticed we have a huge contract for maintenance. I asked them for something simple. I never said it was more beneficial bringing it in or maybe going to bid to see what other vendors we could obtain. It's a contract close to \$10 million. Let's look into it. To this day we still don't have that cost benefit analysis. We're talking about not closing any schools. We're talking about leases here. When we say close schools I don't mean lay off teachers. That's the last thing we want to do and that's not the plan. Remember, we have a lot of facilities that are really old and what you guys don't see is how much it costs to maintain them. That could go into services for the kids. What we're paying in leases could go back to services for the kids. That's the way I see it. We have a budget to balance and that's how you have to view it. Also, there are many things that have gone on. I wasn't around, but at one time we're purchased a program for \$2 million and it never got implemented. It's poor planning. Something I noticed happens here is someone will go to the podium and say, "We should have this program." If it's not in the budget and you didn't plan for it you can't just have a program out of nowhere. You need to plan. That's why you have a budget process. Mr. Kerr mentioned why we have

\$5 million for the anticipation of a sale of a property. It's funny. When I came on the Board we had it for three straight years and nobody noticed anything. Now I come in and ask why we have a property for sale that we never realized. That means that you've started the year with a deficit already. Remember? If you're going to spend a dollar you have to have a dollar coming in. That dollar never came in for the sale of that property. So I'm going to give the Superintendent the benefit of this doubt and that's the only legal way to put this in the budget. If he can show us a contract for the \$5 million then we're able to put it here. Also, we have to make sure the state is going to allow us to keep it. I just want to conclude by saying other measures that we're taking in finances is monitoring the overtime and you guys are going to see the difference. We're not just here to play politics. We're here to keep an eye on what's going on here in the district. Whatever we're spending in overtime can go back to the kids. I'm sure there's going to be some overtime, but it can be controlled. Something else that we're doing is we are requiring that most of the contracts that take place in this district need to be vetted in the finance committee. That wasn't being done before. That's why we're in the situation we're in right now. We talk about surplus. That is part of the process of building a budget. I will pay anyone here in this crowd if you can find 10 municipalities that have not tapped into their surplus. It's just a savings account for you to minimize the taxes. For example, let's say the City of Paterson doesn't want to raise the taxes this year. If the county feels that we have \$30 million set aside and they want to maintain the taxes down they might want to use \$20 million of that. That's just a tool. There is nothing wrong with using surplus. That's what you use to balance your budget. I just want to thank every one of you for coming here tonight, but I'm always going to tell you how it is. This is what we have and this is what we have to do. Thank you.

Comm. Mimms: Good evening. It is such a great night to see so many parents and community leaders that have come out tonight to voice their opinion. One thing that I want to go back to which I fought hard for last year and I'm going to stand firm on even now is that we need to do a cost benefit analysis in the district. I said it last year because we cannot keep bringing in programs to fix every problem that is in the district and then we find out that it doesn't work. We were excited about Newcomers and now we're looking to close it. We wanted to bring in the Single Gender School for boys, which I thought was a clear-cut issue with all the limited resources and the facility issues we had. On the other hand, where was the single gender for females? Then we had a concern with the Single Gender School where we had an issue with the principal being moved outside of the district. So what happens is we keep making reactive decisions with the children's lives at stake. I don't speak just as a Board member. I speak as a parent, a community leader, and as a person that visits all the schools every day. I advocate for the parents. I sit with them. I mediate. I fight with them for IEPs trying to make sure that what they need is in place. When we look at an exhaustive list we received the list last week and I voiced my opinion. Any time you take the time to identify 19 line items, that means that there are documents that will break down those 19 items and we will be put in a position to make a decision. What I said last week is now presented to us here. I asked and we did receive, so Dr. Evans, I thank you. If I did not request it last week we would have gotten it tonight and we would have been blindsided just like you were. I requested that we receive these documents and I thought we would have gotten at least five plans, not two, plan A and plan B. But then to look at these plans without having a cost benefit analysis in place to say these programs are not effective, not working, and we have not tested them, they have not been proven to be effective, let's not move forward. Let's not put \$2 million into trying to merge a program to interface to make sure HR speaks to payroll and then we have to go and add more money to the program because they don't have a fix in place to get it done. These are some of the things that happen behind the scenes and we have to fight hard to say why were these things done and our children are suffering. We had

the parents come. One of the parents was here tonight. It took her five opportunities to get her son's report card from Don Bosco. The reason is because she reached out and nobody responded. She called me twice and I requested it. After the second time of it being requested she finally got the diploma for her child that they so rightfully deserved. We have Ms. Gamorra coming again for School 21. I voiced the opinion that there were no teachers in the entire seventh grade class. There were no teachers for the first marking period. They had substitutes that were being rotated. They were coming in, they didn't like it, and they would leave. I asked what would be the grades that the children would receive and the principal stated, "It would be something beneficial to all." On their report cards they got As, Bs, Cs, and Ds. That is not beneficial when we do not have teachers with credentials in a classroom. We cannot sit back as a community, as a people, and even as a Board and allow these vacancies and having supervisors supervising math, supervisors supervising language arts and we're paying these certified teachers when there are vacancies in the classrooms. I totally agree with cutting the supervisors. I totally agree. Send them back into the classrooms and fill those vacancies. Our teachers need true instructional time. We need to have teachers that are highly qualified in the classroom that know what they're doing so our children can get what they deserve. We don't need supervisors being in charge of four schools trying to determine if they're teaching math. They were hired to teach math. That's what they were hired for. We give them a paycheck to teach math. We sit at the table and negotiate with the union to make sure they get the best pay scale grades. We know they deserve more, but we sit at the table to make sure. So we should not continue to have parents coming to the meetings. I'm glad you came tonight and I've heard it said so many times before parents show up. But let me put this out there – even if no parent showed up there's nine of us that were voted here. How many votes did each of us get? All of your votes represent parents. If nobody shows up when you show up, you represent that amount of parents in the school district. So it is our responsibility, like I did last year, I voted no clearly on the budget. Some of us sitting here tonight voted yes and it passed. These two plans are not plans that would help our school district or our children. How in the world could we get rid of a legal department? Some of the legal issues that have not been rectified and/or resolved in the district and we want to get rid of legal? How can you get rid of representation to review what we don't look at? We're not looking at the document so we need someone to review what we don't review to make sure that the district stays in compliance. That's why a cost benefit analysis is so important. With Title I funding, it gives us a monitor and a gauge to ensure that once stipulations are in place by the state and the federal agencies that we adhere to those guidelines. When I requested it last year we were able to do five programs. We need to do more. If we don't stand up and ask for the hard things we're going to keep coming back and saying there is a \$45 million deficit, now it's \$38 million, and then we come and we have parents come out. I'm going to put this on record. This flyer was handed to me when I was standing outside the school. Let me make this clear to the public and I hope this is put in your paper, Joe. Tonight's meeting was supposed to be at 6:30 p.m. The HIB meeting was at 5:30, but budget was at 6:30. I called and I spoke to Mr. McDowell because on the letter it says PTO leadership team. I chair Parent Community. So I called Kemper and I asked is there an error on the letter because the meeting is at 6:30. He said he'd check it out. I called the secretary and I left a voice message and spoke to them personally to get this changed. This was handed out. It was on Facebook and on social media. It was like we sabotaged the parents to come here too early to get you agitated to make us seem like we were not concerned that you were here. This letter is proof that we misrepresented what the meeting was supposed to identify tonight. I'm not about this whole political gambit of tricking the community. The meeting tonight was supposed to be at 6:30. There was a bullying concern at 5:30. That meeting was at 5:30 and the budget meeting was supposed to start at 6:30. The question goes back to the district to ask why we allowed

this company paper that we wasted to distribute to the community with misinformation on it. We had people standing outside the building and in the hallways, but when certain individuals whom we thought were important showed up in the hallway we dismissed the parents. These are their children. We dismissed them because a pastor was here. We dismissed them because a community leader was here. It's not right. If it was one of our friends and they texted somebody on the Board we allowed them to come through the door and other people couldn't come in. It's not right when we misinform the community. I will not have it. I will not tolerate it. It was misinformation and the point needs to be taken. We have to take this assignment seriously. Our children are suffering. They are failing miserably. I'm in the school every day. I had to report an incident last week. I was out canvassing the community for something totally different and I saw a police officer show up at one of the schools. The children know who I am because I've been there for years. They said to me, "Dr. Mimms, let me tell you something. The school was so out of control today they had to lock down the third floor of the school." So I called the district office and they know nothing about it. That's a serious issue that's been going on for a while in the school and no one knew about it. Now there's security in the school because I had to step up and say something. If something wasn't said there would have been another child that would have suffered a loss at our hands. We have to stop playing games. Stop playing games and trying to prove another point! If it was really for the people to come out for their voices to be heard the communication would have been clear. The meeting was at 6:30, not 5:30. I voiced it so nobody can say you didn't say that. Yes, I did. I said it. That's why I'm calling names, because I said it and I called it in. I was talking to people that were very irate and upset. I was taking the time individually to tell them the meeting was at 6:30, not 5:30. I apologize to you on behalf of our district. We failed again. We failed again that you had to sit here for an hour because we had a meeting that was scheduled, but we misrepresented it by sending this document out to you to have you come for whatever the reasons were. I don't know what the reasons were, but we can't tolerate it as parents. We can't tolerate it as Board members. We can't tolerate it as a district. This budget needs to be revamped. We can't allow any other schools to close. There are some schools in here that only have about nine children. So merging some of these schools is not a bad idea, because there are only nine kids there. Then the other schools are fully staffed. So it would give some of these children a better opportunity to learn. Some of these schools, like Urban Leadership, are not a bad idea because if there are limited resources and we can move them into a school that's fully resourced it will benefit our children. But when it comes to some of the other items like getting rid of the legal department and technology when we've been without a director and we have a new PARCC assessment right before us, we want to get rid of technology and cut positions and get rid of some consultants that we don't even know where the others are. Then we want to look at programs that we thought were great ideas. That's a problem. You said Newcomers was great. We love it. We need it. The tests show we needed it. Now we want to close it. We want to move it. We have to say to ourselves did we ever need it. Did we ever need it? Move it. Introduce it. Did we really ever need it? When it comes to the male child test scores are lower. But when it comes to the other needs in the district, did we really need to open up a Single Gender School at this juncture? We have to really ask ourselves these questions. Then we come to these meetings and vote. We're presented with these items but we don't tell the community the truth. We have to be honest with you and the community. I'm not paying for a bus. I'm not paying for a bus because I'm going to pay for the bus right here and I'm going to vote no on this budget. If the budget does not suit the needs of our children, I'll sit right here and I'll be on this bus.

Comm. Cleaves: Comm. Mimms touched on something that I had a question for you, Dr. Evans. With the possible elimination of the Alternative School that has about nine

students, I see what the savings could be with salaries. You're saying move the Boris Kroll students out of their leased building into the Prospect Park building.

Dr. Evans: Correct.

Comm. Cleaves: There's a big difference in dollar amounts there. Actually, what is the actual savings?

Dr. Evans: Ms. Shafer, you need to add to what I'm about to say. The savings for the Alternative program for middle school students is both salary and facility. The Boris Kroll is facility only.

Comm. Cleaves: So the facility amount is included in that where you have salary.

Ms. Shafer: No. The Alternative Middle School is all salaries.

Comm. Cleaves: For nine students this is salaries?

Ms. Shafer: Yes.

Comm. Cleaves: Are you serious?

Dr. Evans: It was designed for many more students. That's why we want to close it.

Comm. Hodges: Before we get off track, we are being illegally underfunded by the State of New Jersey. You need to focus on that. We're being illegally underfunded. The Commissioner himself came to Paterson and said that we are not receiving the money that we are supposed to receive, to the tune this year of probably \$73 million, which would take us out of this discussion tonight. That's number one. If nothing else happens tonight, we have to resolve to get the money that we are entitled to, to deliver a thorough and efficient education. That's not me saying it. That's the New Jersey Supreme Court saying it. That's the law. All I'm saying to you is that's the bottom line here. We have room to maybe make these cuts this year. But think about what happens next year after you've done all of this. If they continue to underfund us because we allowed it, we can't make those cuts next year. They're not going to be here. So the real issue is how do we stop the cuts and make them give us the money that they're supposed to give us. That's number one. The consolidation of the athletic programs - we have cut music, art, and SACs. We're down to 12, which are the substance abuse coordinators. We've cut nurses. We've cut librarians. We are already under siege because of what we've done to special education. These are all support services. You don't have programs for your kids now after school. How in the world do you turn around and voluntarily cut sports to deny your children outlets for expression? How do you do it? How do you take those kids, primarily males, and put them out on those streets which we all know are unsafe? How do we do that? The possibility of going next year and expanding when the cuts that you have now are so severe that there won't be a chance to go back. If you cut schools, if you cut buildings, you can't get that real estate back. You cannot. Even if we passed all of this, you have not heard a single word about academics. You've not heard about putting together a curriculum that responds to those low test scores of PARCC. You've not heard about trying to get from 19 kids who the district says are qualified to be college students to get to a reasonable number. You've not heard anything about that because we haven't even got to that. We're not even talking about that. We're supposed to rewrite our entire curriculum. That means you have to hire people to do it. You have to pay them. That's not part of this discussion. It's not. We're not even there yet. Your whole science

department has to be restructured. One of the fastest growing areas of employment in this country is computer science. We don't teach it in the ways we're supposed to teach it. We have to get to our junior year in high school before we begin to introduce computer science. That's outrageous. Everywhere else is doing it in the elementary school. So folks, we can sit here and nitpick about we're not doing this and that. Okay. That is supervision and management. That has to be done by the administration. But the blunt trauma that's coming to us is the pen that says you've got to cut \$45 million and your academics be damned. That's where we are tonight. There's a real value to the all males school. What happens is, those are the lowest performing students in our district and we need to focus on trying to address them, in my opinion. If you don't address it, if you don't try to find a way to address putting them in an environment we can teach them how to approach school in a different way, we're going to lose them too. We have been losing them. We've been failing them across the board. And the way we set out putting the program together has been a disgrace. I will agree with that 100%. That's been wrong, which is why I want to move them from a substandard church, move them to School 16, and put them in an environment where they're going to want to come to school, which is one of the biggest problems, and create a magnet environment where we can enhance their educational opportunities. Then we can sell that building. Why would we want to put more of our children in a church as opposed to putting them into a decent school? Those are the things that I'm pushing for. Lastly, we're going to have to as a Board and as an administration you have got to go down to Trenton and explain to the Commissioner of Education that we cannot tolerate these kinds of savaging of our educational system. We cannot be allowed to sit here and administer the dismantling of what's happening educationally in Paterson.

Comm. Mimms: Point of observation, it's not that I'm saying that the school is not of value. Don't misinterpret. I'm just saying that we need to be properly prepared to launch these programs. That's what I'm saying. I'm not saying we don't need it because we need to it for the girls too. But we need to be properly prepared, we need to make sure that we are not limited in resources, and we have the facilities to house these initiatives. That's what I'm saying.

Comm. Kerr: Mr. President, what we have here tonight is a budget debate. We are looking at the priorities of our district and to me the priority of this district is to educate every child that walks into a classroom in Paterson. I'm not here to be necessarily fiscally responsible at the expense of the education of our kids here in Paterson. That's not what I was elected to do. The point I'm trying to make here tonight is that I am not going to sit here and absorb \$45 million. We did not misappropriate \$45 million in this district. We did not. The state underfunded us. Therefore, that's the reason we are where we are. It's not because of overtime expenses. It has nothing to do with overtime expenses. It has nothing to do with a \$2 million building that we're not selling. It has to do with the state underfunding us. This is the reason why we are where we are today. I understand. We can talk about balancing the budget and income and expenditures. That sounds pretty classy and pretty slick. The fact is if we do not educate our children in Paterson it's irresponsible. I want the Commissioners who are sitting around this table tonight to tell me if they're going to vote on this budget for a \$45 million shortage. When they do that, what do they expect to come out of that translating into our classrooms? I need to know that.

Comm. Redmon: I sat here and I listened to all my counterparts. I listened to what they had to say and I have a couple of concerns. When our district was proposed to get \$1.6 million, if anybody that's here is listening, that averages out to only \$10 per student in this district. If you look around at our other counterparts in the other cities like Passaic, Wayne, Totowa, and also Haledon, their budgets were tripled. That should be

a major concern to you parents. Another thing is I am not proposing to close schools. When we start closing schools we start losing our children. Maybe some programs we can adjust and move to other locations. That's fine. But as far as closing complete full schools, I am not in support of that at all. I'm glad that you're here and I do have a thick skin. You sat here and you yelled at me tonight because that's what you put me here to do. But when you look at that money that they're proposing, \$1.6 million, and when you break it down to the district that's only \$10 per student. That's a shame.

Comm. Castillo: Good evening. Comm. Kerr, I agree. As of right now, I'm not voting on this budget. You guys put us in this position. We were out there and we asked for your vote. Now it's only fair that you come up here and you tell us what you feel, tell us what's right, and you hold us accountable for what we said we were going to try to do. We do have to balance the budget. I do agree with combining a few schools. Some of our schools are falling apart and it's not fair that our kids are in them. The programs are missing teachers. Combining some schools is actually a pretty good idea for a few of them. Closing down schools, never! We have some schools that have a minimal amount of kids and we are opening up two new schools. The facilities that we would be closing are facilities that are falling apart. I've been into some of these schools and it's not good that our kids should be in them. But I'm here and we're going to be accountable and try to figure it out. Comm. Mimms, I want to work with you and this Board so we can have this show of parents at every meeting, not just tonight. At every single meeting our parents should come here and tell us what they need, what they see when their kids come home, and they can be part of this team. We need their input as well. We can't do this alone. Even though we represent them, we need every one of their inputs to come here and tell us what we need and what their kids need. Thank you.

Comm. Irving: Is there anything else? I have a few comments. Number one, School 11 and St. Mary's and that church the boys are in are probably three of the worst buildings we have in the city. The absolute worse! The fact that kids still go to school at School 11, at St. Mary's, and in that church... I'll get to the cost in a second, but I'm just talking about just the sheer conditions to put kids in. If there are other opportunities to move kids from those schools into newer school buildings I'm absolutely advocating for it. I'm not advocating giving up the school buildings themselves at all. It makes no sense to give up a school building.

Comm. Kerr: That's what I'm talking about when I say closing. It's giving up your building. It's not the program.

Comm. Irving: I agree that wholeheartedly. If a school remains vacant because we tend to put kids in a better situation, the cost-savings associated with operating the facilities we then absorb. But that is a very smart way to look at how you try to figure a way out of this. I would never put my kids in St. Mary's. I went to the Boys' School today and read to those beautiful young men and amazing kids that we have in that school. These boys are hungry for brotherhood, discipline, love. I spoke to this principal today and he told me he met with every single parent in the school. I asked him how many fathers he met with in that group and he said out of 33 parents he met with 31 mothers. That's why programs like that need to happen. That's also why programs like that need state-of-the-art first grade facilities. I want to hit on some of this stuff because I am a realist. I look at the fact that there is a budget deficit and a hole we have to plug. I want to talk about what this Board can and should be doing after we get through this process to push the state accordingly. For months and years we've talked about eliminating consultants and pushing this administration to cut positions in central office. I'm happy to see a lot of consultants that are here. I tend to think that there

might be some other stuff out there as well. I'm happy to see that the consultants are now going to go. We talked about reductions at central office before. The great example was what I heard about from you guys in the technology committee about having an executive, a chief, two directors, and an assistant director. We have lived too high on the hog for too long. Last year we felt easy to go to the schools and to tell teachers that we had to cut there. I believe that this budget needs to continue to reflect the elimination of central office staff in excess. Not positions that certainly teach kids, but unnecessary excess. I say all that to say Cheryl is going to hand something out to you all in a second. I told you all at the last meeting that I would draft a letter to the Commissioner and to the Governor on behalf of this Board. I'm handing out the draft for the purpose of getting your feedback. I'd love for anyone to tell me the elements you want to take out and put in. I'd like for this Board to vote on that. In addition to that, my intent is to take that same letter and submit it as a letter to the editor. Subsequent, I did have a meeting with Assemblyman Wimberly. He is actually convening a meeting with him, Senator Pou, Assemblywoman Sumter, as well as other legislators to discuss the concerns we have. I'm going to be very frank with you. Whether we like it or not, we're going to find our way through this process. The issue is next year is going to be terrible. Here's the truth – after we cut back this year there is nowhere else to go. There's nowhere else to cut. There's nowhere else to trim fat. Unless this Governor and this Commissioner pony up, we're going to be bankrupt next year. I'm serious about the word bankrupt. We will have no money to fill a hole that will probably look to be about \$80 million. After that, the only places to cut are teachers and programs. After we reduce all of this, the only thing left to cut will be teachers and programs. We have to get through this process and lean on our legislators to hammer to this Governor that in the next cycle... To be honest with you, I don't know if this Governor is ever going to give up any of that money. But I do know an election is coming for a new Governor and the priorities that we set now we will reap in the next administration. But if we don't sit up now, if we don't press the issue now, if we don't press our legislators now, whoever the next Governor is, who I hope and pray will be a democratic Governor, these folks will come and say Newark fought hard and Paterson didn't need as much. We need to make it very clear we need just as much as anybody else in this state, if not more. So I'm prepared to start this conversation about what this Board does. Take a look at this letter. I want us to vote on it and discuss it, if we can, by Wednesday. I'd like to have it as a Board as the budget is adopted to the Commissioner. I'd also like to have it published in NJ.com and hopefully put in The Record as well and our community and local papers as well. That's where we start. I have to give you credit, Dr. Hodges. Last year I think you began that process with the legislators truly leaning on our senior elected officials. There also has to be a conversation with the City Council and with the Mayor as well and making sure that all those parties involved recognize that if we do not get our act together these folks will force us one day to raise taxes. That is absolutely unacceptable.

Comm. Hodges: I'm alarmed by even the sheer mention of taxes, which the Superintendent has put on the table.

Comm. Irving: Don't be alarmed.

Comm. Hodges: I'm a homeowner. Yes, I'm alarmed. I think it's sort of tone-deaf. Not necessarily on your part, Dr. Evans, but it's tone-deaf on the part of the state. I told you last year it was going to happen.

Comm. Irving: To not pay their fair share and expect the folks of this community to do so.

Comm. Hodges: Yes. We already have a problem with our city in terms of the taxes. To go back to the community as a distressed city and turn around and mention taxes when the City Council just voted down a tax increase on the taxpayers is tone-deaf. But let me get to something that you mentioned. I wouldn't close School 11. Keep it open and change its priority in the long-range facilities plan. Let's push to have something done about that building and use that condition as leverage. I'm telling you, if you close the building you don't have leverage anymore. Use the leverage. That's my point of view. I'm very concerned about closing any schools right now for the reasons that were already stated. I'm afraid to close any of them. There is a move underfoot to acquire our facilities for other purposes. We can't afford to put ourselves in the position where we have competitors further undermine us in our budget. As you know, it comes right off the top. Next year, we have Tech coming along with 1,000 new seats and perhaps as much as \$5 million more off the top. Every charter school will be increasing their enrollment on top of that and let's not forget the hold harmless provision, which means we will pay double for some kids. That's what's in front of us. When I spoke to the Law Center today, my concern was what happens if we... I won't get into that. That needs to be a conversation that we have in closed session. There are some real issues there about how we handle this budget and what the consequences are for us doing one thing versus the other. That's a real problem for us and we need to have a serious discussion about that in closed session.

Comm. Irving: Dr. Evans, I think this Board has given you a great deal to chew on. My expectation on Wednesday is that the full rollout of the budget will be reflective of recommendations that the folks have had here. I want to remind the Board even after Wednesday we have a full month to do changes and adjustments to the budget. For those who may be new, the budget process is indeed a process. The budget is introduced on Wednesday and we have roughly less than 25 days or so for us to look into the budget, augment it, make recommendations and changes, and then those have to be formally adopted and voted upon by the Board. After the budget is introduced to us we're going to meet to thoroughly vet and see exactly where these cuts are reflected in the budget.

Comm. Kerr: I just want to add something to the comments that have been already made. I remember, Mr. President, about six years ago in terms of the legal department we were paying millions of dollars. It was like a runaway train. As a result, we made the decision to set up our in-house counsel so we had our legal counsel to take care of the legal matters. I really don't know if there has been a cost analysis done regarding whether or not it would be beneficial to us in terms of savings to outsource our legal department as opposed to having legal in-house. I think knowing the history of what it was that's something I would like to have done. We are sure that there is a savings there. I remember those days and that's the reason why we...

Comm. Irving: I remember when I first got here.

Comm. Hodges: In 2002 when I got here the biggest issue was the legal department and how we were outsourcing. As you said, they were runaway costs. So we were demanding that they bring legal in-house so that we could control those costs. That's why they're here, because we fought. They had all kinds of questionable practices in terms of who they were hiring for legal and we had no way to control it. I'm telling you that is a dangerous area to leave to somebody outside which you can control your own legal department. If you don't, you're going to have this firm and that firm who charges whatever so that a phone call runs the clock. There are all kinds of issues that people have to call up about and with the phone call that clock starts running and so does the cost. So I'm telling you it is really hard to stop. You never know what the legal issues

are. We have parents now who are getting involved in a lot of action cases. That's not going away. It's not slowing down. I'm telling you, getting rid of legal is a very questionable practice. I don't think we should be doing it.

Dr. Evans: As a point of clarification, particularly around the facilities, we have leases that we've been trying to get out of. These are buildings that we don't own, but we're paying leases continually and in some cases we've been in some way going for lease purchase and other kinds of things. As compared to buildings we own that are on this list that we put on there as a possibility of closure. I think Dr. Hodges made the comments regarding not closing any building. Were you including getting out of leases?

Comm. Hodges: I'm fine with that.

Comm. Kerr: We're talking about our buildings that we own. We just don't want to close those. We have to find uses for them.

Comm. Irving: I gave a great example the other evening. 4Cs for Passaic County and some other agencies are looking to rent space. If there are spaces that we can rent that we own we need transparent and good community partners. To me it makes sense if these places are going to be vacated to look for partners to work with and to use those spaces. Even space here could potentially be a good sublease. I think all of us are in agreement that giving up properties that we own that are being used makes no sense.

Comm. Rivera: We see that facilities and finance is combined now and a lot of the questions that were asked were how much money are we spending on some of these buildings that are really old and how much is it costing the district to maintain them also. What the administration is trying to do here is maintain the same level of service but just cut costs. We're making it seem like it's bad to just close a building. We not saying close a building and lay everybody off. That's not what we're saying. We're saying we're going to move the kids to a better school if possible with less overhead. That analysis was done. There are a lot schools that are overcrowded, but a lot of them are underutilized. So why keep two schools that are underutilized when you can just have one close to capacity or below?

Comm. Irving: School 16 is an example of that.

Comm. Rivera: We have to strategize here. We're in a whole different situation. In the past we had a huge surplus. The way we should have used the surplus in the past is put it into one-time things that way next year you don't depend on that surplus to put your budget together. For example, throw it in facilities. But that's not what we did. We threw it into regular budget items and then that's how more salaries were used to continue to hire people because you had the room and the capacity. Right now we don't have the surplus anymore to hire additional staff. That's where we're heading. That's the discussion we had.

Comm. Hodges: The concern I have in terms of the loss of buildings is if we sell the property we're in dire straits because we don't know what the SDA is going to be doing. They've been very tenable. Dr. Evans, are we flat in terms of our enrollments?

Dr. Evans: They're projected to be flat. There was not a lot of difference between last year and this year. For all intents and purposes it was flat. However, if history tells us anything, it really is to a very great extent unpredictable.

Comm. Hodges: There's a possibility that it could go up.

Dr. Evans: It could go up.

Comm. Hodges: If there's a potential of us having an increased enrollment, you can't get rid of buildings. Where are you going to put them?

Comm. Irving: I don't think anybody is saying to sell buildings.

Comm. Hodges: We're talking about closing schools. What I'm saying to you is you really want to make sure that you have those things in place so that you have leverage in the future. I'm telling you, there's going to be a fight. They may or may not do Don Bosco. I'm hoping they will, but they may or may not do Don Bosco because it's two years from now. Did they give you a start date for that?

Dr. Evans: This summer.

Comm. Hodges: Okay. So you get that one done. What's next?

Dr. Evans: After Don Bosco? There is a new school. Keep in mind that we get Paterson Catholic.

Comm. Hodges: All I'm saying to you is you have a problem that you're not going to be able to fix. Once those buildings are given away, that's it. They're not coming back.

Comm. Castillo: I think we go back to the same thing. We're not talking about getting rid of buildings that we own. It's just moving the kids to a better facility. I don't want to create confusion there. We're not trying to close buildings that we own. If there's no point of them being there and we can put them somewhere else where they will be better, why not?

RESOLUTIONS FOR A VOTE:

Resolution No. 1

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	Transfinder University Routing Software Proficiency	March 1-3, 2016	\$160.00 (lodging)
Supervisor of Transportation	Austin, TX		
Annette Rodriguez	Transfinder University Routing Software Proficiency	March 1-3, 2016	\$160.00 (lodging)
Senior Specialist	Austin, TX		
Lisa Vainieri-Marshall	Transfinder University Routing Software Proficiency	March 1-3, 2016	\$310.00 (lodging, transportation)
Interim Director of Student Assignment Services	Austin, TX		

Total Number of Conferences: 3
Total Cost: \$630.00

It was moved by Comm. Redmon, seconded by Comm. Simmons that Resolution No. 1 be adopted. On roll call all members voted in the affirmative, except Comm. Hodges who abstained on anything pertaining to himself, the YMCA, and Jumpstart, Comm. Irving who abstained on anything pertaining to the Workforce Investment Board and Passaic County One Stop, and Comm. Rivera who abstained on anything dealing with the NJCDC, if necessary. The motion carried.

Resolution No. 2

Whereas, The Bright Futures Strategic Plan, Priority II – Safe, Caring and Orderly Schools – Goal 7: Facilities are clean and safe and meet 21st Century learning standards will be supported by the acceptance of the generous donation from Ms. Lauren Schiffman 7th grade student of Ridgedale Middle School Florham Park, NJ.

Whereas, Ms. Shiffman will be providing all kindergarten students with notebooks, crayons and pencils after winter break and interact by reading to the students. Supplies provide a sense of pride in the school community, and

Whereas, the donation of the supplies will serve the educational community at School No. 12.

Whereas, the Paterson Public School District will accept the donation of supplies.

Therefore Be It Resolved, that the Paterson Public School District Board of Education acknowledges and accepts this generous donation of school supplies, at no cost to the district.

It was moved by Comm. Cleaves, seconded by Comm. Castillo that Resolution No. 2 be adopted. On roll call all members voted in the affirmative, except Comm. Hodges who abstained on anything pertaining to himself, the YMCA, and Jumpstart, Comm. Irving who abstained on anything pertaining to the Workforce Investment Board and Passaic County One Stop, and Comm. Rivera who abstained on anything dealing with the NJCDC, if necessary. The motion carried.

Resolution No. 3

WHEREAS, the Board of Education and the State District Superintendent support N.J.S.A 18A:37- et. Seq. by prohibiting acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying of our students grades Pre-K thru 12. A safe and caring environment in school is necessary for pupils to learn and achieve high academic standards, and

WHEREAS, Harassment, Intimidation, or Bullying (HIB) means any gesture, any written, verbal or physical act, or any electronic communication, as defined in N.J.S.A. 18A:37-14, whether it be a single incident or a series of incidents, and

WHEREAS, the law requires a thorough and complete investigation to be conducted for each report of an alleged incident of harassment, intimidation, or bullying, and

WHEREAS, the chief school administrator shall report the results of each investigation to the board of education no later than the date of the regularly scheduled board of education meeting following the completion of the investigation, and

WHEREAS, the chief school administrator's report also shall include information on any consequences imposed under the student code of conduct, intervention services provided, counseling ordered, training established or other action taken or recommended by the chief school administrator, and

WHEREAS, at the regularly scheduled board of education meeting following its receipt of the report or following a hearing in executive session, the board shall issue a decision, in writing, to affirm, reject, or modify the chief school administrator's decision,

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education has reviewed the HIB investigations for the month of December, 2015 in which there were a total of *54 investigations reported, 22 being confirmed* bullying incidents requiring consequences, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Education affirms the chief school administrator's decision in accordance with the law.

Resolution No. 4

WHEREAS, the Board of Education and the State District Superintendent support N.J.S.A 18A:37- et. Seq. by prohibiting acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying of our students grades Pre-K thru 12. A safe and caring environment in school is necessary for pupils to learn and achieve high academic standards, and

WHEREAS, Harassment, Intimidation, or Bullying (HIB) means any gesture, any written, verbal or physical act, or any electronic communication, as defined in N.J.S.A. 18A:37-14, whether it be a single incident or a series of incidents, and

WHEREAS, the law requires a thorough and complete investigation to be conducted for each report of an alleged incident of harassment, intimidation, or bullying, and

WHEREAS, the chief school administrator shall report the results of each investigation to the board of education no later than the date of the regularly scheduled board of education meeting following the completion of the investigation, and

WHEREAS, the chief school administrator's report also shall include information on any consequences imposed under the student code of conduct, intervention services provided, counseling ordered, training established or other action taken or recommended by the chief school administrator, and

WHEREAS, at the regularly scheduled board of education meeting following its receipt of the report or following a hearing in executive session, the board shall issue a decision, in writing, to affirm, reject, or modify the chief school administrator's decision,

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education has reviewed the HIB investigations for the month of January, 2016 in which there were a total of 57 *investigations reported, 20 being confirmed* bullying incidents requiring consequences, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Education affirms the chief school administrator's decision in accordance with the law.

It was moved by Comm. Mimms, seconded by Comm. Cleaves that Resolution Nos. 3 and 4 be adopted. On roll call all members voted in the affirmative, except Comm. Hodges who voted no, Comm. Hodges who abstained on anything pertaining to himself, the YMCA, and Jumpstart, Comm. Irving who abstained on anything pertaining to the Workforce Investment Board and Passaic County One Stop, and Comm. Rivera who abstained on anything dealing with the NJCDC, if necessary. The motion carried.

Resolution No. 5

Whereas, Title 6A:27-13.2 requires all districts to submit reports necessary for the calculation of State transportation aid and the analysis of the numerical values (cost factors) contained in the transportation aid formula in accordance with N.J.S.A. 18A:7D-18 and 19, and

Whereas, the district has a need to maintain and update student data to develop and schedule transportation routes for Paterson Public School District pupils and to provide an accurate and detailed district report of transported residents students, now therefore

Whereas, pursuant to 18A:18A-5a(19) the District is allowed to procure goods and/or services by resolution at a public meeting without public advertising for bids and bidding; and

Whereas, the Department of Transportation has determined the need to procure proprietary goods and services from Transfinder during the 2015-2016 school year; and

Whereas, the procurement of services and/or software from Transfinder constitutes a proprietary purchase and therefore they are excluded from competitive bidding pursuant to 18A:18A-5a(19); and

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

Therefore Be It Resolved, that this Board of Education ratifies the action of the State District Superintendent to approve the services of the original Contract & License Agreement with "Transfinder TM, Forth and Associates, LTD" 120 Erie Boulevard,

Schenectady, NY for Option "C" at 0% cost increase: Non Eligibility Zone Functionality, Redistricting Functionality, DRTRS State Reporting and Custom Data Conversion.

The Department of Transportation recommends that, pursuant to 18A:18A-5a(19), Transfinder be awarded a contract for the procurement of proprietary goods and services during the 2015-2016 school year, not to exceed \$46,170.00 plus travel and expenses not to exceed \$1,500.00.

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

Comm. Cleaves: Can someone explain this, please?

Ms. Ayala: Transfinder is the tool that they use to do the routing of students for busing. We had it at one point, but we didn't have it because we didn't use it. We're trying to get it back in-house so this way we have a better control of where the student resides and we can do a better job with that.

Comm. Irving: Let me make sure I'm clear because I think I remember we just discussed this in finance. This is the software that we'll be able to use that will help more accurately establish the routes that we will use for next year.

Ms. Ayala: That is correct. The software that is being utilized now does not have that flexibility.

Comm. Cleaves: And this is for next year.

Ms. Ayala: No. We're going to buy it now because we have the summer around the corner and we need to start putting in student information to make sure that we do it in a timely manner. We don't want to wait until July 1 for the new budget cycle.

Comm. Cleaves: And this is because we're bringing transportation back.

Ms. Ayala: Besides that, we need it because we need to know where our students are. Whether it's in-house or outsourced we need to have control over that.

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

Ms. Ayala: It also has an application where you can monitor the buses from your I-Phone.

Resolution No. 6

Purpose: Resolution is to comply with purchasing laws in the process of purchasing Direct Speech-Language Therapy Services, PPS-181-16, for the period of July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2017.

Whereas, the awarding of this contract is in line with the Brighter Futures Strategic Plan 2014-2019, Priority IV: Efficient and Responsive Operations, Goal 4: Increase administrative staff capacity; and

Whereas, the Acting Chief Special Education Officer determined that the District has a need for speech-language therapy services and provided the technical specifications for the formal public bid process for the 2015-2016 and 2016-2017 school year(s); and

Whereas, this solicitation was made by advertised public notice appearing in The Bergen Record and The North Jersey Herald News on May 7, 2015. Sealed proposals were opened and read aloud on May 19, 2015 at 10:30 a.m. in the Purchasing Department, 4th floor, 90 Delaware Avenue, Paterson, NJ 07503 by the Purchasing Department, as per the attached bid summary; and

Whereas, the Department of Special Programs has an emergent and immediate need for these services, therefore services may begin upon immediate contract execution

Whereas, based on the bid analysis of the attached bid summary, the departments of Special Programs and Purchasing recommend that Advance Education Advisement be deemed as the awarding vendor who was both responsive and responsible in providing the best proposal to the District, be awarded a contract for Direct Speech-Language Therapy Services, PPS-181-16; and

Whereas, the original award was made to the primary vendor at the board meeting of June 17, 2015, item #A-87; and

Whereas, the primary vendor, Advance Education Advisement and secondary vendor Therapy Source Inc., do not have the capacity to solely meet the district's needs for these mandatory services; now

Therefore Be It Resolved, the State District Superintendent supports the Department of Special Education Services and Purchasing's recommendation that Kid Clan 340 Main Avenue, Clifton, NJ 07014, be awarded a contract as a third vendor for Direct Speech-Language Therapy Services, PPS-181-16 for the 2015-2016 and 2016-2017 school year(s) at a cost not to exceed \$250,000.00 annually combined; PENDING BUDGET APPROVAL AND SUBJECT TO REVIEW AND RENEWAL YEARLY.

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

Comm. Irving: I'm just questioning the language of the action item. I'm sure we need the services because I'm sure we outsource a lot. I'm just trying to understand the language. We're predating it and postdating it and then saying everything...

Ms. Ayala: We went out and did bidding for the services and we awarded the contract. However, they're not providing the services so we went to the other two vendors. That was my conversation with Cheryl Coy.

Comm. Irving: So we're actually backdating these services by hiring this vendor. Am I correct?

Ms. Ayala: We're not backdating the services. The services haven't been provided, but it's for this year.

Comm. Mimms: Do you have the information as it relates to the other bid that we did not go with in comparison to this one?

Ms. Ayala: You have to speak to Cheryl Coy. She has the logistics on that.

Dr. Evans: We do have it. There was a vendor that was the low bidder. We went with them and they didn't deliver. So we went back and there were two other bidders. We went to the next highest bidder. That's why the lag for 2015-2016.

Comm. Rivera: That's what I've been saying for a while. When it comes to professional contracts I know we have to do our due diligence and get the best services for our money. That's why the lowest is a little flexible. In the State of New Jersey it doesn't necessarily have to go to the lowest bidder for the same reason. This is what I told you guys earlier this year. I just want to reemphasize that. Yes, we always keep in mind when we're making decisions that we're going to try to go to the lowest bidder. But when it comes to professional services you don't. Another thing I want to mention, and we're trying to change the culture, every contract needs to come through finance. The President here made a good point. Anything that we're going to do, he wants an analysis to make sure if it's beneficial to the district or not based on what happened in the past. He wants an assessment of everything we approve there. So please, Dr. Evans, make sure it gets to us.

Comm. Kerr: I understand what Comm. Rivera is saying, but everything is not predicated on the fiscal judgment. Sometimes there are other things that we take into consideration. In a matter like this it has to be somebody who knows exactly what is required and therefore that decision carries more weight than the fiscal component of it. Because of our fiscal constraints, I would love to see things evaluated for the fiscally responsible side of it. But also we can't just use that as the weight to make our decisions. I just want you to keep that in mind. Dr. Evans, when you said the contract was an issue, did this service provider start fulfilling this obligation and we decided they were not doing it?

Dr. Evans: We didn't decide it. They didn't deliver.

Comm. Kerr: What does that mean? They never started?

Dr. Evans: They never actually began to serve students.

Comm. Kerr: They said they couldn't do it?

Dr. Evans: They didn't do it.

Comm. Kerr: Okay. With something like this I think we should have gotten the documentation.

Dr. Evans: You should have received everything on that.

Comm. Kerr: So we know exactly the reason for this.

Dr. Evans: After you vote on this I would like to comment on the committee. We had the same discussion in the cabinet and I gave them some direction in terms of the role of one committee versus another. Actually, something ultimately needs to be put in writing, but you have a vote here.

Comm. Hodges: I'm very jealous of my meager powers as curriculum chair and I'm not about to surrender one ounce of it. I'm being facetious, but in reality the curriculum committee would love to know what exactly your concerns are with fiscal. We will print out a form that addresses all your concerns. You're not there for the full range and scope of our curricular discussions so we can't reduce this to just a fiscal concern. We want to know the impact on the kids and all the things that we're doing.

Comm. Irving: We had a discussion about that in finance and the purpose for finance is making sure that it's budgeted for and that the process is being adhered to. The finance committee is not going to look at the confines of the decisions that are going to be made. We're always going back to look at is this as a budgeted expense and was it approximated.

Comm. Hodges: We will create a form, if need be, that will track how we're going to pay for whatever it is and send it to you for your review.

Comm. Irving: That's fine.

Comm. Cleaves: I think that should apply for all committees. That's why when we got the issue in personnel around technology, that's not our expertise or our committee. It should have gone to the technology committee for vetting. I think that the form would work well for all of the committees that are looking to spend money.

Comm. Irving: The reason we brought it up is because we caught two irregularities in two contracts when it comes to how they were being procured. That might not be something you're looking at in your committees. You're looking at the action item for curriculum and instruction. In finance we're asking, quite simply, is it budgeted for.

Comm. Hodges: Send me the information that you want and I will help to write that form and submit it on to you for review.

Comm. Irving: Are there any other questions for Item No. 6?

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

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

The meeting was adjourned at 10:05 p.m.