

MINUTES OF THE PATERSON BOARD OF EDUCATION WORKSHOP MEETING

October 7, 2015 - 6:44 p.m.
Administrative Offices

Presiding: Comm. Jonathan Hodges, President

Present:

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

Comm. Chrystal Cleaves
Comm. Errol Kerr
*Comm. Manuel Martinez

Comm. Flavio Rivera
Comm. Kenneth Simmons, Vice President

Absent:

Comm. Christopher Irving
Comm. Lilisa Mimms
Comm. Corey Teague

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

Comm. Hodges read the Open Public Meetings Act:

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

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

**Workshop Meeting
October 7, 2015 at 6:30 p.m.
Administrative Offices
90 Delaware Avenue
Paterson, New Jersey**

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

PRESENTATIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS

District High Schools Debate Competition Overview

Dr. Evans: I'd like to call on first Ms. Terry Corallo who will introduce Mr. Ollo, associated with the District High Schools Debate Competition. He is going to provide an overview.

Ms. Terry Corallo: I will introduce Mr. Ollo. You do have packets in front of you and we have some student guests who are here as well, as well as the leader of the debate. Is it a club? Is it a committee? It's a debate team. Without further ado, I introduce Mr. Michael Ollo, who is our Vice Principal at Eastside's Government and Public Administration.

Mr. Michael Ollo: Thank you very much. Good evening everybody. Thank you for receiving me and the students of the winning debate team. I understand I have about six minutes. I'd like to be time efficient in that time with a brief history of the debate program in Paterson as far as I know it. Five years ago I approached a couple of principals and floated this idea about getting all the high schools in Paterson to compete against each other in a team debate format. I thought about the Common Core standards and how they relate to classrooms and what we can do as far as an extra curriculum. Debate seemed like a perfect way to merge all of those standards. The history is that I started with a five-year plan and we're going into the fifth year. For four years now, and you can refer to the information in your folder, we've had tournaments at Eastside High School and invited all the high schools in the district to come with different high schools each year. You can see on the left side of your folder the schools that have won year after year. Team debate, which is in Lincoln-Douglas format, allows a team to prepare but also provides opportunities for debate teams to argue with each other in the format and the protocols that are prescribed by the rules. You can see those, too. I'd like to introduce to you the coach of this past June's winning team, Mr. Ralph Gioia, and the students from Kennedy High School's School of Education and Training. Mr. Gioia will introduce his students and since they're experienced debaters now you can ask them anything. By the way, they've told me that they're coming back for a second win this year, which would be unprecedented, but part of the plan is also to invite districts outside of Paterson. So they're going to see a wider and broader spectrum of students and I wish them well.

Mr. Ralph Gioia: Thank you. I'd like to introduce the team. This team has been together since they were freshmen. They've competed every year since their freshman year. This will be their final year, so we want to go out with a victory and repeat. First of all, we have Elizabeth Ortega, Jonathan Grant, Natasha Torres, and Natalie Nunez. We have a club at the SET Academy. We have over 23 members of the debate club. We debate two days a week. This team prepares upwards of almost two months in advance of the debate. We scored second place two years in a row and then finally we won last year. I'm very proud of the students. They've put an extraordinary amount of work into the program. It's very beneficial to the school. If you have any questions for the team, feel free.

Comm. Cleaves: My question is for all four of the students. Can you tell us your experience in being part of the debate club?

Ms. Elizabeth Ortega: Hello. My name is Elizabeth Ortega and I am currently co-captain of the debate team for four years now. My experience has been very great. It has been challenging as well, but I did learn a lot of leadership skills within the club. I learned public speaking, responsibility, and organizational skills. My coach also helped me to break out of my shyness. I wasn't used to getting up in front of a lot of people. We learned a lot of things and I specifically learned to be very organized. I wasn't

organized before. Now, I'm very glad to have a cooperative team and this year hopefully we'll make it to a win.

Mr. Jonathan Grant: Hello. My name is Jonathan Grant. I came to Kennedy around my sophomore year and I was in Mr. Gioia's history class. I guess Mr. Gioia saw something in me, the way I spoke in class and I was able to present my ideas and arguments. He invited me to join the club. I was in the club in my sophomore year, but I wasn't fully engaged in it. In my junior year I fully joined the team and I was a part of the winning team last year. It just helped me because I always was good with public speaking and having my arguments and ideas and elaborating on them. It's just helped me and it's been a great time with these guys.

Ms. Natasha Torres: I'm Natasha Torres, co-captain. I just joined the team last year because I didn't even know we had a debate team. I was always told I'm very argumentative and I always liked public speaking. I've never really had a fear of public speaking so I decided to join the debate team. I think one thing I've learned from this experience was valuable team effort. It's not all just on one person. Everyone is just as important. It's not the main speaker. It's also the researchers and everybody who's involved. I think that's one big thing that I learned. It's all about a team effort. It's not just about one person.

Ms. Natalie Nunez: Hi. I'm Natalie Nunez. I'm the researcher and secretary for the team. This taught me that public speaking can help you, especially since I want to open my own business. This team helped me with expanding my voice out and knowing that there are resources out there. Researching helps me with my other classes as well, not just reading. It helped me come out of my shell because I'm the one that never really talks in class. I just sit in front and do my work by myself and being on a team that helps out with that is really a good experience to have. Thank you.

Comm. Kerr: I'm so happy that my gender is represented. I need you to tell me how your debating skills helped your educational development in general.

Mr. Grant: Especially a Lincoln-Douglas debate involves a lot of research and having a vast amount of information. Usually you have to look at both sides the way we do it. You can't just come in and only have the affirmative or the negative. You have to know both sides of the story and whatever they tell you to debate you have to debate. Debate taught me how to look at both sides of issues and things that are going around and look for information that supports that. I think that's what is best for my education.

Ms. Torres: Another thing we learned is when we research it also teaches us for other classes. You also need to research when you do any type of research paper. It also teaches us how to research and how to learn to find out what's important, what's not important, and like he said, both sides of the argument. It definitely helps us with the research aspect for our educational time.

Ms. Ortega: Just like my team said, we did do a lot of research and we do have to look at both sides, the affirmative and the negative. We also learned about resources. We learned different formats during debate. This year we're trying to involve those formats more to help the younger students because we're trying to put in freshmen because we're leaving this year. I have told my team that there is a lot of false information in the internet. Not everything is real. So it's really good if we search those resources and see where they came from because it could just be a lie. That's basically what we learned this year. We also learned about different websites that deal with Paterson

Public Schools. Recently Natasha showed us a really good website and we're using that for our research right now this year.

Mr. Gioia: This team is now introducing freshmen. They're now mentoring different teams and I just have to say that I'm so proud to see them take over. I just sit back and mentor the class. They stepped up and they recruited students, put out announcements, and really did this all on their own. I could never be so proud of four individuals right here in front of you. You can see they really speak to you with a lot of confidence. They're very sure of how they are as people and I can't say enough about what they've done for me personally, just showing me what can be done when you really put your heart and mind to it. This is a great group of kids and I'm so glad they got a chance to speak to you all today.

Comm. Hodges: Thank you very much.

Ms. Nunez: Essays are our worst enemy, but it helps with research essays that we do in English classes and also our college essays that we have to write now. It helps us try to put the information together and put it in a time sequence where work can flow easily and you can understand the point.

Comm. Hodges: Thank you. You are wonderful representatives for our students and our schools. We celebrate your efforts and your achievements.

Report of Violence, Vandalism, and Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying (HIB) Data

Dr. Evans: Next, I'd like to reverse the order of B and C. At this time, I call on Director Smith and Kathy Lepore for our Report of Violence, Vandalism, and Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying (HIB) Data.

Capt. James Smith: First of all, I'd like to thank Dr. Evans and President Hodges for allowing us to move up. Ms. Lepore has a pressing family engagement and we appreciate the courtesy given. We'll go through the PowerPoint and answer any questions.

Ms. Kathy Lepore: Good evening Board Commissioners and Dr. Evans. My name is Kathy Lepore. I supervise the Student Assistance Programs for the district. This is part of the violence and vandalism presentation that I'll be doing tonight on substance abuse. We follow proven school-based best practices in the district with the SACs and students. Currently, in the 14-15 school year, we had 12 Student Assistance Coordinators, also known as SACs, which service 35 buildings. Some people may not know what the exact process is so I inserted an additional slide in here so you can understand the exact process and the steps. When a student is identified to be under the influence, in possession, or distribution on school grounds they are sent out for a medical evaluation drug screening. The parent is contacted and informed. A medical evaluation and drug screening is conducted. If the student is negative, the process stops here. However, the SAC may or may not counsel that student depending on the circumstance. If the student is found to be positive, under the influence or in possession, he must have an assessment evaluation. A parent must be present and with our bilingual clinician. The student returns to the school to receive counseling by the SAC, is referred to an after-school program, or is referred to an in-patient treatment program. The SAC provides after-care to students returning from any in-patient program that they are referred to. I'm not going to name all the school-sponsored activities. However, I did highlight the ones in yellow. You should understand that

those are ones that we received for the district and there was no cost involved. The Choice Bus, which would have cost the district \$10,000, was for free. We didn't pay anything for it. They came up from Alabama, went into Kennedy and Eastside, and provided dropout prevention information to students. The bus came in and it's sponsored by State Farm Insurance. We were able to reserve that Choice Bus for those schools this year. Breaking the Cycle was another free program. We did not have to pay for that. The Save a Life Tour was paid for by the Municipal Alliance in the City of Paterson. It costs approximately \$8,000. They're going to be coming back again sometime this year. We do infuse classroom lessons into the academic curriculum. So if a SAC is asked to come in by a classroom teacher or the building principal they will do that in the school that they're assigned to and conduct lessons on the various topics listed here, anything from alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs, gang-related issues, refusal skills. Most recently, the SACs have been coming in to talk about e-cigarettes. I'll just go and reverse the slide one more time. All these other school-sponsored activities were all free. There was no cost to the district whatsoever, including the Mental Health Players. They came and did role-playing with students in three schools in the past year. Passaic County Teen Summit is a county teen summit for high schools at no cost to the district for transportation or anything else of that nature. High school students are referred to attend and every high school participated. We go to William Paterson University and they have guest speakers who provide information on substance abuse to everyone that's in attendance from the schools within the county. We work with some collaborative partners within the Paterson district. The Association of Student Assistance Professionals of New Jersey, the Paterson Coalition Against Substance Abuse, which is known as PCASA, Passaic County Probation Department, Paterson Municipal Alliance, the Passaic County Student Assistance Coordinator Network, and the Passaic County Traumatic Loss Coalition, which every county has in the State of New Jersey. I'm a member of the committee and Traumatic Loss Coalition will go into schools after the death of a student or staff member, if needed, and they will help the building and district crisis response teams. Every county does have that. Related interventions to reduce violence, vandalism, and substance abuse – we've used everything from Comfort Zone Camp for grief and bereavement. We make referrals for students to attend grief counseling and family intervention services. The SACs sit on the INRS committees. If a student has to go out for a crisis the Passaic County Mobile Crisis Unit will come into the school and make a determination if that student should go to the hospital. We refer to the St. Joe's Mental Health Clinic, just to name a few. Some parent outreach that the SACs conduct – we disseminate parent information materials in English and Spanish. We have information tables at back-to-school nights. Some of the SACs, when they're able to, can schedule 15-minute child breaks. Again, this is free with Partnership for a Drug-Free New Jersey for parents. They attend parent meetings in some cases and they work in conjunction with the school parent liaison whenever needed. Drug and alcohol cases for the 2014-2015 year, we've had students being positive mostly for marijuana, alcohol, and prescription drugs. Students were found positive for being under the influence, use, substance type, possession, and refusal. Some findings and updates – we had more positives than negatives. We have students in possession of alcohol, marijuana, heroin, and prescription drugs. More males than females are positive. We have possession of a controlled dangerous substance with some students with negative urine. One out-of-district student was positive. We had two students this year positive for possessing over 20 packets of heroin. More recently, we had a student in possession of 32 packets of heroin. Paterson Public Schools is number two in the state with the number of reported positives for the 2013-2014 school year. That's published by the New Jersey Department of Education. There's a 15-year comparison chart, which I keep up every year. We've had more positives than negatives. You can follow that chart. Unfortunately, on the screen it does show it's black, but it is highlighted in red for the

2013-2014 school year. The ones on the left side of the chart you'll notice in blue were negatives. The ones that are in the darker color are supposed to be red, but appear black on the screen. Then you go more to the right. Ever since SACs were cut we have reversed it and we have more positives than negatives. This is just an annual comparison of the number of SAC interventions and referrals since 2009-2010 when we had 24 SACs. When you go down to 2014-2015 with 12 SACs we cut the number of interventions and referrals by less than half now. Unfortunately, we had 12 last year and I now have 11. One was not renewed and I was not able to replace that person. Now I have 11 SACs and no secretary. This is violence and vandalism so Capt. Smith will speak about that.

Capt. Smith: Just to comment briefly before I start on my portion of it, I work very closely with Kathy Lepore on all these different partners that she's able to gather and it helps us with not only students, but also staff. If somebody needs help we can reach out to people that we know and provide them the assistance they need and to the PEA if they also need it. As the people here said before from JFK, coming in front of the Board has allowed me to also come out of my shell and I appreciate this opportunity.

Comm. Kerr: Are we permitted to ask any questions regarding the substance abuse? How are the drug tests conducted? Are they randomly checked?

Ms. Lepore: No. We're required by code to conduct trainings to staff members in schools. That means not just teachers, but cafeteria workers, security, and administrators. I conducted vice principal and principal trainings and the SACs will deal with the staff training in the school. I also conducted training for security guards. We use a behavioral checklist as opposed to a verbal indication of a student being under the influence. If no one heard that verbal piece then that student would never be sent out. What happens is they complete a behavioral checklist of observable signs and symptoms that they see at the time, which means they're currently under the influence on school grounds. Then they submit that paper to the building administrator and they in turn will give it to the SAC. The SAC will contact the parent and the student is sent out for the medical exam and drug screening.

Comm. Kerr: Why do you think the drug abuse is in the district? From the numbers here 75% of the ones that have been tested have been positive. How chronic is this issue?

Ms. Lepore: It's chronic. I'll just give you a quick example. In September we had over 25 reported cases. It's about 26 or 27. 25 were all positive. That includes the student with the 32 packs of heroin. That was identified by a parent who happened to be in the office in the high school. The SAC was there to send out another student and the parent witnessed the student doing something and notified the SAC. They in turn took the student in and he pulled out a bag full of heroin packets.

Comm. Kerr: I note here that we only have 11 SACs in the entire district. What was the highest number we had in this district?

Ms. Lepore: The highest we had was 24 at one time, which covered all the schools including the k-4 schools. We had a student in June who brought in a bottle of alcohol as a fourth grader and distributed it to third graders.

*Comm. Martinez enters the meeting at 7:13 p.m.

Comm. Kerr: So do you think we have adequacy in our present capacity to check and evaluate the kids?

Ms. Lepore: In my opinion, no.

Comm. Kerr: What would be a good number?

Ms. Lepore: You'd have to have enough SACs to cover at least full-time in the k-8 schools. The students are bringing in things from e-cigarettes to... We had an incident already in the district with a classroom teacher escorting students down the hallway and he saw smoke. He reported it and it ended up being an e-cigarette. Those e-cigarettes can be dangerous. They're filled with liquid nicotine and if they're broken they can be absorbed by the skin and are poisonous. That was an eighth grader. A third grader picks one up and they wouldn't know what to do. You have people that are running back and forth to the schools when they are called by a principal when they have an incident. In the case of the k-5 school, I had to send two people over because there were four students that had to go out and there's a huge amount of paperwork that's involved if we do everything correctly. And as you can see we haven't had problems come into the Board meetings and complain. We follow protocol and we do everything correctly. A school district came in several years ago wanting to know how we do our process. It was a very large district that wanted to come in. They came in and spoke to myself and another SAC about procedures because they weren't doing the correct procedures in their district. Everything involves paper here. You need a paper trail. It doesn't end here with just sending out a student for a drug test and they come back positive. The problem is we have kids in treatment. We just had one today. The SAC goes to the meeting at the treatment facility. He's there for a month and a half and says, "I'm leaving." He only had a month and a half to go to complete. We've had students complete in-patient programs, but the males don't want to attend the treatment program and it makes it difficult. There are phone calls, parents, meetings, and you have to document everything. I can have a packet like this on a student if they had a second or third offense.

Comm. Kerr: Regarding the parent as a piece of the equation, how do we address that piece?

Ms. Lepore: Number one, when parents do come in for the assessment, they have to bring the child with them. They meet with the clinician, sign off on a treatment plan, and we also hand them the policy and procedures and our department brochure. They are aware about the policy and what to expect.

Comm. Kerr: Any obligation on their part to help the child recover?

Ms. Lepore: We have some parents who are enablers. They say, "If my son doesn't want to go, then he doesn't want to go."

Comm. Kerr: So there's a problem with that piece of it.

Ms. Lepore: Yes. In some cases we have that and in some cases we don't. We have parents saying, "Please help me and help my child." At the end of the assessment we have a very quick seven-piece survey we administer to the parents. They ask various questions, such as were there any problems or were people not courteous to them. They can't say enough. You should have more of these programs.

Comm. Kerr: You mentioned that there's a lot of paperwork. From that I would assume that we have some problems with human resources in that area.

Ms. Lepore: Right now.

Comm. Kerr: Thank you.

Comm. Hodges: Do you get assistance from the nurses?

Ms. Lepore: The only time nurses are involved is when they complete a behavioral checklist. They have identified the student. One of the steps is they have to see a nurse before they leave to make sure they check their blood pressure, vitals, and if necessary then they're sent to the emergency room, as opposed to going to the Immedicenter.

Comm. Hodges: We don't have numbers in every single school, do we?

Ms. Lepore: Yes, but maybe not full-time. Most of them are. I should be speaking to Ms. Craft about it. They've had some nurses retiring so they're having difficulty finding replacements.

Comm. Hodges: Dr. Evans, do we have the same complement of nurses this year as we had last year?

Ms. Lepore: No.

Dr. Evans: There was a formula prescribed by the Department of Education. Let me ask Ms. Coy or Ms. Peron. I thought the formula was the same for this year as it was last year, but I know there are some vacancies that need to be filled.

Comm. Hodges: So the answer is we don't have the same complement.

Dr. Evans: We don't have the same complement, but we have the same allocation.

Capt. Smith: Good evening. I apologize for the way I'm dressed. I'm usually in a suit, but I was off today and I came in because I knew we had to make this presentation. As you can see, I keep the same chart as Kathy because we started basically the same years from the last 15 years to show how we've been doing in each area. These are also published on the Department of Education website. We have a few things in this school district that is in no other school district in the State of New Jersey. We have a team formulated with the Paterson Education Association, which is called the Joint Worksite Health and Safety Committee. I know Comm. Kerr comes up with this every year about the amount reporting. So to make sure that we have accurate reporting, if for some reason a principal refuses to sign a violence and vandalism report they have an avenue where they bring it to the PEA and at that meeting we would go over it and see if it falls within the criteria or if they've even reported to the principal. A lot of times they didn't even give it to them. They just gave it to the PEA. Regardless, when we get it we review it and if it falls under the criteria we report it. One thing that I've been preaching to the state, because as you know I was a member of that school security task force, is that you never really get an accurate picture for a few reasons. This is student-on-student and student-on-teacher. I'm not saying we don't take any action because we do. However, if the role is reversed and you had a teacher take someone into a bathroom and sexually assault them, it's not reported on the EVVRS because this is not the venue to report it on. When that does come, because we also handle the

internal investigation part, we take immediate action through the Superintendent and the Deputy Superintendent and we deal with it. We make a serious incident report, which is reported to the county, but it's not necessarily reported on EVVRS because it's not a requirement. What I said about the state, they have come up and they wanted to know how they can emulate some of the program we've started here. As a matter of fact, the NJEA is having a symposium on Friday into Saturday and they've asked if T.J. Best and myself could present on this and answer any questions around the state on how they can start a good program to be effective. As the Superintendent says a lot of times, people are starting to notice what's going on in Paterson. They asked the Superintendent if we can go down there even though it's on a Friday into Saturday. That's really our time, but we go down there and we do it. That's a little bit of the back story. As you can see, once they complete the year like when we go up to 2013-2014, even though it was reported during the six-month intervals we then pull what the annual amount is. The staffs have been advised. We have a new PEA president this year and that's one of their big things also. We want every staff member and principal to know that they have an outlet. Just so you know, the Superintendent, PEA President, and all members of the committee on that, including the facilities director and myself, we sit and meet once a month. We sign off on that criteria of what we have to follow and the avenues that they have if they're not satisfied. It's not only violence and vandalism. It's also facility issues. If they have a facility issue that needs to be addressed, we address it right at the meeting. If something falls beyond our pay grade, we bring it to the Superintendent and the Deputy Superintendent. All those matters are addressed, from rodent infestation to whatever. We immediately take care of it and immediately address it so it doesn't become lingering problems. With that being said, 2014-2015 you'll notice is divided into two, July-December, January-June, and then the red total on the bottom is the total of those two six-month periods. You'll see weapons have gone down significantly from 15 to 7, over a 50% reduction, while cases of vandalism have gone up about 8. The violence has gone down by 10 too. So two of the most important issues for me are the violence and the weapons, and they have gone down significantly and some of the vandalism has come up. Also, there's better reporting. In addition to that, when we have something that's stolen, like a computer, we've worked out an agreement with the Passaic County Sheriff's Department Internet Crimes Division where we track the computers. The last count is that of the computers that were stolen from our school district we have recovered 84% of them from different countries and even from employees that we've had to dismiss who have borrowed it long-term. If there are any questions that I can answer for you, I'd be glad to help you.

Comm. Hodges: It's been my experience in the one or two years that I've been here that you tend to see an increase in particularly the violence in May and June. I'm looking at these numbers and I'm a little quizzical. It's remarkable that it's that low.

Capt. Smith: Thank you.

Comm. Hodges: I'm just hoping that the reporting is uniform.

Capt. Smith: In answer to that question, we have talked about this over the years. Some of the preventative measures that we've put in such as unannounced random wandering at different schools has done remarkable. They don't know when we're going to be doing it. We do that at the comprehensive high schools and we find that's a significant thing because they don't know what day we're going to be wandering, with the exception of one school. We have one school where we wand every day. I guess you know what the school is.

Comm. Hodges: That may address weaponry, but it definitely won't address violence. That's the issue that I'm particularly concerned about.

Capt. Smith: Some of the weaponry that came in involved the acts of violence. Some students wouldn't feel the bravado to commit acts of violence if they didn't have a weapon with them. But I will say with the agreement we have in place, which I can give you a copy of, the PEA distributed it so that every single member of their union knows what their rights are and we encourage them to report it. From the Superintendent, to myself, to everyone else we address it when it comes to the meeting. I'm going through a new phase-in stage with this new administration but the goals remain the same. That's in addition to our internal investigation involving staff members which are not reported on here and which we have a remarkable success rate on.

Comm. Hodges: The only thing that really concerns me is that we are seeing an increase in incidents of fighting, particularly in the classroom with students video-taping these outbreaks on a regular basis. That's a part of my concern. They also spill out into the street in very close proximity to the school. I just hope that we are being very accurate in how we capture this data because everywhere else it's going up. That's all.

Capt. Smith: The only thing I will tell you on that is any video that is forwarded to us, we'll get it. We get it from Dr. Evans, Ms. Jones, and Eileen. We're bombarded with it. A lot of times it's all the same thing, but I just want to make sure that it's being investigated and we find out where it is. Just remember a lot of those videos will occur in instances that are outside public schools. They're in the streets. They may be in different areas, but they're not in the curtilage of schools or in the school but they can impact it if we don't take a course of action on it. So if we've identified two students that are on a video, even though it's not reportable, we'll grab those students when they come in and address it with their leaders. Say it's gang-related. We'll grab the two leaders and we'll have a forum with them. We'll sit down with them and we'll go over it so it doesn't escalate into something that they bring into the schools. So we're all on top of it, but you're right, there are videos all over the place. Thank you, Dr. Hodges.

Comm. Kerr: I have no way of verifying the information that's on here, but I want to tell you something. For this district of almost 30,000 if the report is an accurate reflection of what's happening out there this is real good.

Capt. Smith: Thank you.

Comm. Kerr: However, my problem is when I look at the monthly suspension list and you look at the reasons for the suspensions, it just doesn't fit into these numbers.

Capt. Smith: Let me answer that in the best way I know how. We've been audited at least three or four times by the State of New Jersey. When they come in they bring an audit team on the EVVRS. Just what you just said, they look at the suspension reports and in every single instance, at most, we might have been off one or two. That's pretty good. When you consider the amount of school suspensions, and to be audited by an independent body and come up with the same... They don't care. They don't have any relationship with the Paterson School District. They come up there and they do it. What I will say is you will see significance in harassment, intimidation, and bullying. They may go into a different format. They go into cyber-bullying or something like that. T.J. is on top of that also and we work hand-in-hand very closely. T.J., Kathy, and myself have meetings to see if we're missing something.

Comm. Kerr: Why is it that these numbers are not impacting the perception of what is happening in the wider community?

Capt. Smith: That's a good question. If you look at the Paterson Herald News or the Record every day, let's take what's going on in the city. We're talking about reductions in violence crimes and everything else. I was on the other side also and that doesn't take into account who reported and how many people don't report it. If you were to walk into Eastside High School or Kennedy High School the hallways are quiet. There's good leadership at both schools. There's Zatiti Moody in charge of operations. You have four good principals that are in charge of the academies at Eastside. You have a good operations principal, Mr. Kozar. He's also a born and raised Patersonian and so is Zatiti. I always advocate for that. They seem to be doing a very remarkable job. The only problem that I've had this year – and it's not a problem, just a learning experience – I'm going to be addressing the influx of new principals to make sure that we're all on the same page and that we're all thinking the same things. This is a lot of things that other school districts don't do. We actually meet, go over it with them, and answer their questions. If they run into a problem and they're not really sure of what to do with that problem, my phone is available seven days a week, twenty four hours a day. They call me, we go over it, and we try to address it right away before it escalates into a major problem. So we're on top of it. We stay on top of it.

Comm. Hodges: You don't mean to suggest that the ladies and gentlemen of the fourth state are failing to adequately characterize the school district. That's not what you're saying, is it?

Capt. Smith: What state?

Comm. Hodges: The fourth state - the press.

Capt. Smith: No, I think they're accurate. It's just that the perception is not necessarily the reality.

Dr. Evans: To further answer your question, because you and Mr. Kerr ask great questions, particular Mr. Kerr's perception problem, the community's perception versus the realities in our schools, I see Mr. Moody in the audience and I'd like to put him on the spot for a second. One of his major responsibilities as principal for operations at Eastside is discipline and maintaining order. It is a well-run school. I'd like to ask him to respond to your question.

Mr. Zatiti Moody: What's your question?

Comm. Kerr: Looking at the numbers here, they're very good. These are numbers that should have been making this district a model. These are very low numbers. We're talking about 30,000 kids in our district. With such a good report, why isn't it impacting the negative perception of violence in the district, if these numbers are to be interpreted as being real? How come they are not impacting how people perceive what's happening in terms of our schools in the wider community?

Mr. Moody: From what I've learned over the past few years working at Eastside High School, we actually go out and recruit our own kids to stay in the district. What we hear from parents is that they're afraid to send their kids to Eastside or Kennedy. I believe that the reputation is so bad in the past that no matter what you do they're still going to have that overcast of thinking that things are not safe. Unless you actually come to the building and walk through to see what's happening that will always be the perception.

You have to look at these numbers here from the perspective of being violence issues that have to be reported due to students being arrested. But when you start to change the culture in the building – I can only speak for Eastside with this – the students begin to have a higher expectation of themselves and want the accountability of the building to be safe. No one wants to go into a place that's chaotic and they're afraid to move from one class to the next or go into the cafeteria. Once the adults in the building understand and establish that type of adult presence we expect staff members to speak to students throughout the hallway and not be afraid of them. If a kid is having an issue they can go to any adult in the building to get their issue handled and not in a manner of us just telling you and we document it. Like Capt. Smith said, I don't know if you understand we go out and find who the bad guys are, who their leaders are, and who the boss is for them. We bring them into the school because nobody wants an environment where the schools are chaotic and kids are dying. No one wants that environment. So we work hand-in-hand with them to make sure that is a safe zone. When we have fights in the school, cafeteria, and classrooms, I tell all the students, staff, and everyone who will listen if a school was a bank what's the most valuable asset in the bank? The money! Where do they put it? In a vault! If you come to a school the most valuable asset is the education that's happening in the classroom. That's the most sacred place in the school. So for any student or staff member to violate that, that's the worst crime you can commit in the school. So we have them understand that and that begins to change the culture. We change the dynamics based on what we do as adults. We guide, motivate, and direct students. That's just our belief.

Comm. Kerr: Mr. Moody, how do you justify the high number of suspensions in the schools? I should not say the schools. Eastside has four schools?

Mr. Moody: Three.

Comm. Kerr: And yet those suspensions for violence are not showing up here. Is there a problem in terms of how violence is categorized? Is there a problem with how you define what is violence and what isn't? The point I'm trying to get at is in your suspension rate one school has over 200 suspensions. Built into that number you have 100 for violent situations. That's just one school. When you look at this it says for the entire year you have 70 as a number for violent exercises. How do you balance these numbers? That's the point I'm trying to make.

Mr. Moody: Speaking from my experience at Eastside, when we came in we were experiencing 200 suspensions per month. We drastically reduced that year after year. We reduced that by 50% the first year. We got to the point where we were having less than 5 per academy per month on average. Just a suspension doesn't mean that it was a violence situation. We have situations where young people do not respect the authority of the teacher, the staff member, or the principal. We have to recreate the culture to where that happens and when you do that you start to see a decrease in some of those actions. They don't necessarily mean they were violent actions. I've been in some schools where you have 40 kids in a classroom and a teacher tells a student to move to the next chair and the student says no. Pick up your head and do your work. No. Get the 'f' out of my face. That really calls for a suspension, but for me I think it's an opportunity to teach the student what the purpose is for coming to school and the importance of a teacher, professor, and the adult in our community. Once you start teaching those values it becomes contagious. So what you're seeing sometimes in the suspension numbers is frustration. Again, you put yourself in the classroom with 40 kids and that's how a kid responds to you as a teacher. They think it's okay to curse you for asking them to do their work and pick their heads up. It becomes a frustration issue. The teachers are in the classroom with 40 kids and they still have 39 others they

have to teach. They send them to the office. The principal is in another meeting because two kids may have had a scuffle. What do you do with that population? Sometimes we were guilty of suspending in the past. I can speak for Eastside. I can't speak for all the schools, but those are some of the situations you're seeing in terms of the suspension numbers. They're not necessarily violent situations.

Dr. Evans: Thank you, Mr. Moody. Are we ready for the last presentation?

Comm. Hodges: Are there any further questions?

Teacher Evaluation System

Dr. Evans: The third presentation will be led by Ms. Marnie McKoy and it's on the Teacher Evaluation System. You may remember recently Mr. McEntee came to share with you some concerns and experiences related to, among other things, the teacher and principal evaluation system. So we asked Ms. McKoy to come and provide an update or overview of where we are with the system.

Ms. Marnie McKoy: Good evening Commissioners, Dr. Evans, and colleagues. We're going to talk tonight about this process as being a process of evaluation and support. As you know, the district is in its third year of implementation of Achieve NJ and through the years we've heard lots of conversation about the evaluation side of this and what that work entails. But what we want to do is make sure that as Board members you know that the heartbeat of our Superintendent and those who lead with him is to ensure that this is a system of evaluation and support to accomplish three things – to strengthen leadership, to improve teacher practice, and to advance student achievement. The handout that you have before you, we're going to go through some slides that really demonstrate what it is. It's broken into three sections. The first section is the system, which is a very skeletal overview of the work of the tool. The second section is support, which really speaks to the training and the work that we do with our principals, vice principals, directors, and supervisors, those who conduct observations. There's an inherent understanding that they are not only conducting observations, but also providing support to those that they evaluate. Then the last leg of this is just an overview of the state's rating system and how the summative rating is derived. The tool that we use is Focal Point. It was the original tool that is state-approved by the Commissioner and the NJDOE. It is the tool that the district has continued to use since its original adoption. Media X is the system in which we house all of our observation data. In 2012-2013 the district was one of a few pilot districts to do the work before it was implemented in the entire district. There were about 13 schools that participated in that. In the 2014-2015 school year that was the first year that we fully implemented the tool throughout and those observations and evaluations were conducted with the principals, vice principals, and teachers. In the last school year, 2014-2015, in addition to everyone who was observed and evaluated on the rubric in 2013-2014, we added support services staff and supervisors. That would be your nurses, librarians, and child study team members. This year in the 2015-2016 school year we're bringing on our directors. As a brief overview, there are seven components of our teacher observation tool. Each has a different weight. You see the two that are highlighted in yellow. They're highlighted there for a couple of reasons. One is because they are weighted three times when everything else is weighed. But the second is because these are the two standards where we really look at the actual delivery of instruction that is taking place in the classroom. Because we always do talk about how this work happens as a work in a larger system we always share this slide which talks about the larger work of it in the system. For example, how it relates to curriculum, professional development, and data. When we have this conversation around data, we talk about components of data

and how it's effective. Specifically, it needs to be accurate, accessible, analyzed, and applied. That's the conversation that we have with school leaders who are conducting observations. That's the conversation that we have for teachers as they are delivering their own instruction. This slide indicates the connection among the three tools, specifically the principal and vice principal tool, the supervisor tool, and the teacher tool. Again, you see the yellow highlights here represent everyone's accountability for the delivery of the instructional program. The principal and vice principal are observed and evaluated on how they hold their teachers accountable and how they execute instruction in their building. The supervisors are also and you note their staff development is an accountability that they have as well. We'll talk about that in a little more detail soon. Then, of course, we have teachers for the delivery of instruction and interventions. As I said, this is a process of evaluation and support. We can't only talk about evaluation without also having a conversation about the support that we're providing to meet those expectations. How do we train our principals and observation teams? We have a conversation and training with them around calibration, which means that if a principal and a vice principal are conducting an observation, how are they looking at the different standards in the rubric and how are we ensuring that when you look at it you're seeing what I'm seeing and that your expectations are what my expectations are as a team. For the past couple of years this is a session that we've had with principals, vice principals, supervisors and they come as a team. So the principal comes with his or her vice principal so that they have an opportunity, not to be presented to, but to actually look at video, use our tool, and look at how they would evaluate based on what they're seeing. I'm not going to read training outcomes to you. You have the handout there. The purpose of that is to make sure that we're being as consistent and as fair as evaluators as possible. Training our directors – what I want you to see here is the thread. You're going to see some key words because these are slides not that we created for tonight, but that we pulled from different presentations that we've provided. We wanted you to have real live examples of some of the things that we've done here in the district to make sure that this is a system of evaluation and support. So we asked our directors when they're doing this work these are some questions we need to be thinking about in terms of curriculum, pacing, student performance, teacher performance, and professional development. Then the question is where are we going and how are we going to get there. We get there by providing support, modeling lessons, co-teaching, giving individual support, and small group professional development. What I want to point out here is that a lot of this work also is hand-in-hand with the work of our assistant superintendents. They're going into the schools and having conversations with principals asking them for minutes and agenda items, popping into meetings, popping into trainings to see what's actually happening on the ground. How are they planning support around trends that they see with individuals, in the grades, school wide trends, etc.? This is Bob Marzano who is an expert in education. There are a couple of quotes here, but this is the one that I want to highlight. It speaks to the importance of feedback. I know that there are some people in the room that participate in sports. You don't wait until the playoffs to tell somebody something that they did in preseason. You address it then. Feedback is only important when it's specific and timely. We spend a lot of time talking with them about the quality of the feedback and its import. We also share with them that we have novice teachers in the district. The type of support that a novice teacher may get may not necessarily be the type of support that a veteran teacher may get. This is just some research that we share around novice teachers and the type of support that they need. This is just a note that there is a report if you ever go on the DOE's website. They did a report of the first year's implementation and our district was fortunate enough to have been invited by DOE to have conversations with them about our practices and our learning, some things that we know we can do better and tweak. One of the things that they highlighted in their report was some work that we did with our supervisors where we gave them

benchmark assessment and observation data. Based on that data, they disaggregated the data and created professional development based on the data that they saw. The state captured that in their report. This is an actual agenda that we have from a training that we did for supervisors specifically to support teachers on caps. We provided them with data from the cap observations. There was specific data around different standards, particularly using data to drive instruction, standard 2 and standard 4 on differentiated instruction. Again, feedback has to be specific, timely, actionable, and supportive. Then the summative - so the state provides weights that we have to use to create a summative score for the teachers. Our teachers who are in grades that are not a tested grade or subject, 80% of that is their teacher practice and 20% of that is the SGO. The SGO is the Student Growth Objective. That is something that teachers create in concert with their building administrator. For those who are in tested grades and subjects, English 4-8, math 4-7, 70% is teacher practice, 20% is SGOs, and 10% is SGP. SGP is the percentage of growth from one year to the next on the state assessment. Looking ahead for the 2016-2017 school year we are preparing cabinet level evaluation tools and looking at measurements to look at, first of all, all of the job descriptions. Is this what people are doing? How do we measure what success looks like? How are we goal-setting with cabinet-level positions to ensure that there is accountability at every level of our district? Are there any questions?

Comm. Hodges: You mentioned earlier how you get fidelity between two different evaluators. That was an issue of concern that was raised by the teachers when they presented before us. They don't seem to feel the same way about this process. How do we reconcile that?

Ms. McKoy: I think that with any process like that it's not unusual to have a difference of opinion, which is why for the sake of fidelity to the process and out of fairness to the teachers we provide this training. More specifically, the state requires a couple of things. One, that everybody has an observation by someone other than me. Number two, everybody needs to have a co-observation so that two people have an opportunity to see the same lesson at the same time from the same person. A major concern would arise if I'm scoring somebody unsatisfactory and you're scoring somebody exemplary. That's a really big concern. So what we say that they need to do is to always anchor themselves in the rubric. The rubric is very specific. All of our teachers have the rubric. All of our evaluators have the rubric. The rubric is very specific in listing what we are looking for if we are saying this person is exemplary. I don't want to belabor it, but when we do this training with teachers and evaluators we have slides after each standard that are samples of evidence. For example, standard one is preparation for instruction. Then there's a slide that says here are some samples of what types of evidence we would be looking for to see if a teacher has planned the lesson plan, data that's marked up, and small groups. So when teachers are sitting down with principals they are having a conversation about the evidence. It's not just about what someone's opinion is. It's rooted in evidence and in the rubric, which they all have. I don't know of any examples that are so far spread as the one I just said to you where one person is at one end and one person is at the other. Admittedly, there may be examples where someone says I saw whatever and it was a 2. Someone else says I saw whatever and to me that's a 3. Where the disparity is so great, I am not aware of that great disparity. Are there examples of a point and a point? Absolutely there are.

Comm. Hodges: How does that get reconciled when there is that disparity? What happens then?

Ms. McKoy: If it's not a co-observation situation, so if there's one person observing and another person observing, it gets averaged at the end. I have been aware of situations

where an administrator may say, "I would like to go back." I want to be very clear I believe that we are genuine when we say it's a system of evaluation and support. It's evidenced by supervisors feeling really stressed about making sure they get in there and give the kind of support they need to give to the people who are on caps. That's their first priority. I have seen examples of administrators who have said, "I just looked at John Brown's observation of Susie Smith. I didn't see what John Brown saw. Is it okay if I go back with John Brown and we can do it together?" So there have been incidents like that because people are committed to doing this the right way and with integrity. They understand the impact that it has on kids. Here's the thing that I didn't show. For principals and vice principals you see here where teachers have an SGO. Principals and vice principals share that SGO with their teachers. Supervisors share that SGO with their teachers, the SGP scores. In buildings where there are tested grades and subjects principals and vice principals share that. So they would benefit absolutely nothing by trying to get people. It would be in their best interest. Let's say we know that we're here to serve kids and we're here for the empowerment of kids by delivering an excellent education. Even if we weren't all working under that supposition, my score is tied to your achievement, whether it's through an SGO or an SGP. So even if it's for the wrong intentions, it would behoove building administrations to ensure that teachers practice improves because it's going to show up in an SGO and SGP. They don't benefit anything by letting teachers hang or trying to get them. It's everybody's best interest to get this right.

Dr. Evans: Marnie, I think you need to be a little bit clearer in terms of sharing the SGO. That's the principal's SGO also.

Ms. McKoy: Yes. The principal gets an SGO score. A percentage of the principal, the vice principal, and the supervisor's summative include the SGO score. It's the average of all the teachers in their building. The same applies for the SGP. So the average of all the SGPs in the principal's and vice principal's building is actually a part of the principal's and vice principal's score.

Comm. Kerr: But would it affect the principals the same way it affects the teachers?

Ms. McKoy: I don't have the percentage. It's a percentage. It is everybody in the building. I can't give you the exact percentage right now. I will by the time this meeting is over. Are there other questions?

Comm. Hodges: That seems to be a bone of contention with the teachers.

Ms. McKoy: What's that?

Comm. Hodges: That whole point about...

Ms. McKoy: Calibration?

Comm. Hodges: As I recall, the concern was if a teacher and a principal don't get along then there may be some incentive to unfairly score. There is a considerable amount of subjectivity in this process, and that's the worry.

Ms. McKoy: I think that if we're rooted in the rubric, which the teachers and the observers have, and in the post-observation there's a conversation about evidence. It's evidence. It's not what you felt about me last week. It's about what you saw, heard, or did not see and hear when you came in the room. So if the conversation is rooted in evidence, in the rubric, and everyone who has been trained has seen that slide that

says possible sources of evidence it's very difficult for someone to substantiate an erroneous rating. It has to be substantiated with evidence. If for whatever reason and I'm not denying the plausibility that it could happen, then there's a process. There's a union representative. There are ways to go about that, but the evidence is in the rubric and the training that they received with sources of evidence. We share this with them every year in a refresher which is required by the state just to remind them here are the standards. Those evidence slides are shared again as a reminder to them.

Dr. Evans: Would you mention the appeal process also?

Ms. McKoy: I can't speak as fluently about this as I would like, but it's called the Superintendent's Appeal Process. Basically, that is an avenue where teachers can go to their union representative, share what their concern is, and then their union representative would work with them on their behalf to resolve the matter.

Comm. Kerr: I like the fact that you emphasized the evidence piece of it because I know from experience I was presented with the documentation that a teacher was placed on cap based on the evaluation of superiors. Things that were written were totally outside of what really happened and it was reversed. The point that I'm trying to make is that there's still a level of subjectivity that is deeply embedded in the system and we have to admit that.

Ms. McKoy: I don't know that we can ever have a system that is absent of it. I really don't. Certainly, when the district had EduMet there were no specific parameters to even suggest when we say excellent we mean this and that. This is progress for us in that at least there's clarity in terms of the target that we're aiming for.

Comm. Kerr: The point I'm trying to make is that this person was evaluated by someone that didn't even know the work that person produced.

Ms. McKoy: This is a place where having evidence helped.

Comm. Kerr: Yes. That's a problem.

Comm. Hodges: One thing that really concerns me is – and this stems from a conversation I had with a number of teachers – they're concerned that if an evaluator were to walk into their room and they were caught diagramming a sentence, which is not what the pacing guide says they're supposed to be teaching, there will be sanctions for that and the evaluators will in fact sanction them for trying to add depth to whatever is going on in the classroom. But they don't see that when they walk into the building or the classroom. They see that's not what you're supposed to be teaching. It's September 5, you're supposed to be doing this and here you are teaching grammar or cursive writing. They will be sanctioned for that.

Ms. McKoy: My response to that is as teachers we plan. However, I think that it's a greater disservice to the students to try to push forward with something that's in the pacing guide just because it's in the pacing guide and they haven't taught where we are right now. So here's how that plays out. The post-conference should be a conversation, not a monologue. So the post-conference conversation is an opportunity for you to say to me, "Ms. McKoy, your lesson plan said that you were going to be doing subject verb agreement, but when I came in I saw you diagramming sentences." Because it's a conversation not a monologue, I have the opportunity to say, "Dr. Hodges, the reason that I did that is because I could see out of the 20 kids in my class 15 were really struggling with subject verb agreement. I tried this and that and it didn't

work so I went old school and I just diagrammed a sentence. You left before we finished, but it actually worked.” Teachers who are really savvy, and I had a couple of teachers like this when I was a principal, knew the question. They anticipated it. So they would say, “Kids, why are we going over questions four and five right now? Because we didn’t do well on it on the homework.” They knew. So teachers who are savvy anticipate the question and give the answer before the question is posed to them. But if that doesn’t happen, our expectation is that the administrator asks that question.

Dr. Evans: Let me add to Ms. McKoy’s comment. At the next workshop it is expected that Mr. Carson, who is the Executive Director for the Regional Achievement Centers, will be here to address you. We were attempting to get him tonight, but he had a conflict. He will be here for the next workshop to present to you and entertain questions you have. But in Priority Schools in particular the curriculum is more prescribed. Correct me if I’m wrong, Ms. Peron. There are six weeks of prescribed instruction and then evaluation at the end of that period. You are more likely to see the circumstance under which you describe in that circumstance than in others. For a while we had Priority and Focus Schools and actually all schools in some cases doing certain things consistent with that. But the consistency as it relates to continuing with that methodology continues to reside with the Priority Schools because it is an expectation and that’s part of what the RACs monitor.

Comm. Hodges: My real concern is while that may be sanguine in your mind it doesn’t seem to be sanguine in the minds of the teachers. If it’s not sanguine in their minds, then it’s not going to happen as you envision it. So something has to be done to make sure that those gaps are not occurring. If you have a set of teachers who are afraid to say these kids don’t know multiplication, let’s briefly go over multiplication tables and you walk in saying, what is this? You’re reciting or grilling. This is all wrong. I’m going to punish you for doing this though that’s what the child needs then somehow you’ve got to clear that up in their minds. I’m telling you, I sat there for three hours and heard some of those concerns and we heard them here as well. Something else has to occur to make sure that the teachers understand that when those needs arise they have the opportunity, the leeway, and the responsibility to fill and address those needs. Right now they don’t seem to know that across the board.

Ms. McKoy: So noted. Thank you.

Comm. Hodges: Any further questions?

Ms. McKoy: 30% for SGP for elementary and 40% SGO for those who are not in a test graded subject. It’s pretty significant.

Dr. Evans: That concludes our presentations and communications and my report.

REPORT OF BOARD PRESIDENT

Comm. Hodges: I just have a couple of brief comments. Wednesday Comm. Cleaves, Comm. Kerr, and myself managed to journey to Newark to witness their first public meeting of their return to local control committee. Dr. Evans and Deputy Superintendent Shafer were invited and they were already in the audience. We got a sense of what that committee was about and it was rather interesting. It suggested that they have a few more issues around how they operate than we do. But then again, I thought other districts had as well, but I could be wrong. It was a very interesting evening. Am I speaking out of turn? They seemed to have a lot of issues around just basic operations and what should happen in a school. In fact, they were saying that

their athletic department was... I was heartened by that. We seem to be a lot further along than what was demonstrated by that meeting. However, I guess it is my great pleasure to announce that the City of Jersey City has achieved some significant measure of local control. They have gained four of the five areas. They don't have C&I. Those were awarded to them today. They received two more today in a surprise. They'll have C&I by December. That is a considerable surprise to all of us and probably to them, too. I do want to congratulate them and wish them Godspeed.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

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

Ms. Rosie Grant: Good evening Dr. Hodges, Dr. Evans, Commissioners, staff and audience. I'd like to start by offering my congratulations to the SET debate team. It's really uplifting to see that we have a strong active debate group going on in Paterson Public Schools. Kudos to the team and all involved. I have an announcement. We have talked about this before. Assistant Commissioner of Education Bari Ehrlichson will be here on Tuesday, October 13. I had the opportunity at the State Board of Education meeting this morning to see the PARCC report and it is very confusing. Bari has agreed to come in to do a parent forum next Tuesday right here in this room and you're all invited to be a part of it. Announcements are going out and we are collaborating with the Department of Family and Community Engagement to make sure that parents know that they have this opportunity next Tuesday. It's at 6:00 p.m. I was at the State Board Meeting this morning when Jersey City got their two additional pieces to return them to local control. It was indeed a surprise. What was even more surprising is that the Commissioner presented his recommendation to the State Board of Education and not one single member asked a question and nobody had any discussion and it carried. It would be very interesting to find out how that moved ahead and perhaps we could take advantage of that as our time approaches. Dr. Evans, I'd like to request a copy of the violence and vandalism report that was reviewed today. Hopefully I can help with that community perception about what is happening around violence and vandalism in Paterson Public Schools. Also today Ex-Commissioner Cerf, the now Newark Superintendent, asked the State Board of Education to use the School Funding Reform Act formula and told them how very debilitating it was to flat-fund districts while holding charters harmless. Jonathan, my mouth fell open the same yours is right now. This is quite a change from when he was in the Commissioner's seat, but he is hurting. He has recovered \$50 million. They're in deficit and they're still looking at a \$15 million deficit for the current year. So expect more from past Commissioner Cerf around funding the School Funding Reform Act.

Comm. Hodges: That poor man. I feel his pain.

Ms. Grant: There was audible laughter in the room. Thank you.

Ms. Marcella Simadiris: Peace and blessings, Marcella Simadiris, Napier Academy. The thing that needs to happen with the whole evaluation piece is the DEAC committee needs to meet and function like it's suggested by the state. The first Board of Education meeting I shared a little bit of information with that, but there are DEAC and the state does provide guidelines for it, which we don't even come close to following. If this district is interested in figuring out what the disconnect is, maybe they should follow those guidelines and create a functioning DEAC. I have so much to say I don't even think I'll get through it because I do need to comment on some of the presentations.

The big targets are centered around achievement. It's always burdening the children before providing equity. We heard Mr. Moody speak about the importance of climate and culture. I'm telling you it doesn't get the attention it needs because of the pressure for achievement and the pressure for data. If this district is really interested in helping these children, our school was locked down yesterday because there were shootings in the playground up the street on Clinton Street. If you're really interested in tackling those issues, then you need to get your priority straight. Let's go moral, not so much performance, especially when it's burdening children. As far as everybody being held accountable, I don't know how the cabinet is held accountable. I'd love to know that. I'm looking for funding for some PD. I have not been able to find it. I went to my principal, my supervisor, and Dr. Newell. If anyone can give me information on how I can receive some funding for PD I'd appreciate it. Grades 6, 7, and 8 at Napier Academy do not have art. If there are any students that want to go to Rosa Parks I'm not sure how much help they're going to get with that. I want to reiterate the issues that I've been having all the time about tracking students, having your high, medium, and low classes. What are we saying to our students when we do that? We're segregating them. The lack of travel time, the lack of constructive and intentional scheduling, the supervisory staff at RAC, I would like to know who's monitoring them and who's holding them accountable. Any attempt I've had at holding them accountable I run into a brick wall. I've been asking the district to change their practices of emergency closing. We have a six-day cycle. If you had gym it wouldn't be on Tuesday and Thursday like when you were little. It would be on day A and B, which could fall in any day of the week. What happens is I created a calendar for my students so that they can be prepared for class and also I use it to make appointments with people who come in to serve our students from different programs. When a school closes it's disruptive with the practice they have. You'll see it on this form. On one side it's my calendar for October and I'll show you how if there was an emergency closing, currently what happens is if the snow day was on a B day when you came back, instead of being on a C day, they make you meet on day B. It's a domino effect and it throws everything off. You'll see it better on the calendar, but thank you. I appreciate it.

Mr. RyJhan Willis: Hi, my name is RyJhan. At School 4 they put a court in the middle of the playground. Now when we play the big kids are going to be on the playground and the little kids don't have anything to play with. They exercise and stuff. We want them to add stuff from the park and bring it to our school like monkey bars and slides for the little kids to play on. The big kids can play on two courts and not one in the middle so the little kids won't get hit.

Comm. Hodges: Thank you very much. We appreciate that. The concern is there are no playground facilities for the little children?

Ms. Linda Willis: No, there's not. The basketball court is right in the middle of the playground and the bigger kids are knocking them down and cursing them out because they want to play basketball. The little kids can't do anything but just stand there and look at them because they try to play and run around and they're knocking them down. I don't know what genius decided to put it in the middle. They should have put it on the side. It's big enough for them to put it on the side. I went to that school myself. I graduated from School 4. They have a lot of room to put that basketball court to the side. They shouldn't have it in the middle. Like he said, they need monkey bars and things that the little kids can play on and jump around. I see that in other schools. Not in Paterson, but I see it in other schools. I see it at the park over there by Montgomery Street. They have a lot of things over there that the little kids can play with. They need to put a couple inside these schools in Paterson. I'm Linda Willis, RyJhan's grandmother.

Mr. Charles Ferrer: Good evening everyone, Charles Ferrer, Paterson Education Association. I'm having something passed around. While they're doing that I just want to touch on a couple of other things that were discussed. The associating would like a copy of Ms. McKoy's PowerPoint. Every time I see Focal Point I just get upset. I think we need to go with another system. In that presentation you talked about lessons being molded. Every time teachers request of the administrators to model a lesson, there always seems to be tap dancing around that issue. Old school administrators and old school principals come in there and take over a class. According to the dynamics of certification of administrators they're supposed to be master teachers. In most cases they should be able to come in there and model and let the teachers know exactly what they're looking for. I'm questioning the rubrics that the teachers have. They may have a rubric or something that tells them round one, these standards will be evaluated, round two, so forth. But I don't think the teachers have the scoring rubric so that they can know exactly where they are and what their score is after each evaluation. That's part of the problem. I think we need to address that. The material that I just handed out is the guidelines for class sizes in the State of New Jersey. As you can see the legal citations are alongside of it. Preschool is 15 students, one teacher, plus an aide. Kindergarten is 21 students, one teacher, plus an aide. First to third grade is 21 students and one teacher. Fourth and fifth grade is 23 students and one teacher. Sixth through 12th grade is 24 students and one teacher. When you go above that you are then supposed to provide additional staff in the classroom. I'm getting reports of 42, 32, and all kinds of numbers. I feel sorry for the substitutes that are in some of the classrooms with 40 students as well as the teachers. We're not in compliance. That's something that must be brought to the attention of the State so that they can provide the additional resources that are necessary. It's amazing how the State can get away with violating the law. Everybody is held accountable except for the State. When does that start? They can't sit there and say we didn't know and things like that. You know. You knew as soon as you cut our money. You knew as soon as we had to let go of over 300 staff members that the class sizes were going to go up. They didn't care. Their children weren't in those classrooms. But we have to care. We have to let the State know the kinds of numbers that they are allowing in this district and that they're out of compliance. It's not something that needs to be fixed next year. It's something that needs to be fixed now. The State needs to be in compliance. This is the tool. It comes from them. Tell them to honor the laws of the State. It's not my law. It's not the teachers' law. It's not this district's law. Honor it because at the end of the day it's unfair to the children as well as the teachers. When the teachers say we can't even move around that we do the pass me down system because there's no room to move. You expect teaching and children to learn under those conditions? We know what happens when people start bumping into each other. There are going to be issues that could be avoided if the state would uphold their end of the bargain. I'm going to leave that with you. That's what I'm here to talk about today. The other this is it's nice to see it in your agenda because I spoke about it last year, but I'd like to know one thing. On A-11, A-12, A-13, and A-14, how do we determine how much each school gets? I'm glad to see that Reverend LaGarde is getting a little more than last year. Last year it was \$200 and now it's up to \$520. But it still disturbs me I see \$1500 at Dawn Treader. St. Gerard's is over \$4,000. St. Paul's Community Development Center is over \$5000. How is this based, by their enrollment?

Dr. Evans: Ms. Peron, the question was about the allocation for non-public schools. In this case I think he's referring to technology.

Ms. Susana Peron: They get an allocation for technology. They get an allocation for their health needs. They get an allocation for their textbooks. It is based on enrollment.

Comm. Hodges: Mr. Ferrer, I know that you're a social studies teacher.

Mr. Ferrer: By the way, the student that was here earlier from the debate team is one of my former students. Just for the record. And he used to debate me all the time.

Comm. Hodges: The spelling and grammar, I really want to tie this down because grammar is a problem in this school district. If we are intending to teach it without any clearly designated place in the curriculum I can't believe it's happening across the board. Someone may do it and someone else may not. I'm trying to find out is that continuing to be a problem.

Mr. Ferrer: It is and I guess I have to use my son as my model. Up until the eighth grade my son had a grammar book. He went to a Catholic school. There are two things that I commend the Catholic school for. From second grade on he could not print, only write cursive. Since they say cursive handwriting is tied to test scores, 96% percentile and above. If the wheel is not broke, it works in the Catholic school. They still use the old thing. The only thing I don't approve of is the one principal was pulling kids' hair and still using the rulers and stuff like that, but I guess that worked too because they straighten out. Spare the rod and since they are a religious school. We walked away from teacher basics. We talked about when a teacher might have them doing the diagram. It's very important. I always remember Ms. Thomas. You always knew what students came out of her class because all of them could write. We had a system at School 13. Ms. Byrd was kindergarten. First grade was Ms. Woolfolk. That was Ms. Hussein's sister. Second grade was Ms. Smith. Third grade was Ms. Johnson. Any children that came out of those classrooms were always on point. The best part I liked about it is any of the students that were Ms. Woolfolk's students, if they acted up in the eighth grade and you started walking them down to Ms. Woolfolk's class tears started coming down because she had always instructed them, "Don't you dare embarrass me. Until you leave here you belong to me." So we have to go back. I don't really care what the state says. We know what our children need. They need the grammar and the penmanship. When I was in school penmanship was a grade. You got graded at that. That has to come back.

Comm. Hodges: What's worrying me is Ms. Woolfolk did it, but Ms. Anderson may not have. If one teacher is doing it and somebody else is not doing it then it's not being done because it's not being done uniformly. That's the problem. That's what I'm trying to get a handle at in this district. We have to make sure it's done uniformly and I'm getting a clear sense that's not what's happening.

Mr. Ferrer: Once the directive comes down from the top then it's on every administrator in every building to make sure that it's being followed and done. It's about what's going on in their building. What's important and what's necessary. I'm sorry. I questioned it when they took it out of the curriculum. It's funny that you talk about it because on Facebook someone posted that they put script writing and everything was there. Everybody was talking about it needs to come back. Our children can't write, but we want them to do better. Someone said give them the Constitution or the Declaration of Independence to read. If it's not in print, they'll probably struggle because they're not used to what they're going to be looking at. We have to bring it back. Grammar is important. If it's important in the Catholic school, how come it's not important in the public school? And the Catholic schools get money and books from us, but I guess they decide the Catholic school had the Common Core but they never gave up the grammar books. They never told their students they only had to print now. Writing is not important. Sorry. They didn't do it. They have guidelines that they have to follow but

they said they're not budging on this issue. The state is out of compliance on class sizes. We can't be out of compliance on teaching our children how to write? I'll take that fight every day. That means that's only two things that we're doing wrong. Look at what they're doing.

Comm. Hodges: Thank you very much. I continue to maintain that in other districts when those students go home they can get the reinforcement around the grammar that our kids cannot get. So while it may work in other places because there is reinforcement at home, it does not work here. If it's not expressly in the curriculum it will not be done uniformly. That to me is a tremendous disservice, to have a child go through 12 years of education without any formal structural training in grammar. That is unacceptable and, I will add, is contrary to policy.

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

RESOLUTIONS FOR A VOTE AT THE WORKSHOP MEETING:

Resolution No. 1

BE IT RESOLVED, that the list of bills and claims dated October 2, 2015, beginning with vendor number 86 and ending with vendor number 799444, in the amount of \$13,141,258.62, and checks beginning with number 195126 and ending with number 195373, in the amount of \$9,508,564.33 approved on September 16, 2015; and

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

It was moved by Comm. Cleaves, seconded by Comm. Martinez that Resolution No. 1 be adopted. On roll call all members voted in the affirmative, except Comm. Hodges who voted no, and Comm. Hodges who abstained on anything pertaining to himself, the YMCA, and Jumpstart, and Comm. Rivera and Comm. Martinez who abstained on anything dealing with the NJCDC, if necessary. The motion carried.

Resolution No. 2

WHEREAS, on March 15, 2007, the State of New Jersey adopted P.L.2007, c.53, *An Act Concerning School District Accountability*, also known as Assembly Bill 5 (A5), and

WHEREAS, Bill A5, N.J.S.A. 18A:11-12(3)f, requires that conferences/workshops have prior approval by a majority of the full voting membership of the board of education, and

WHEREAS, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:11-12(2)s, an employee or member of the board of education who travels in violation of the school district's policy or this section shall be required to reimburse the school district in an amount equal to three times the cost associated with attending the event, now therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education approves attendance of conferences/workshops for the dates and amounts listed for staff members and/or Board members on the attached and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that final authorization for attendance at conferences/ workshops will be confirmed at the time a purchase order is issued.

CONFERENCE/WORKSHOP REQUESTS

STAFF MEMBER	CONFERENCE	DATE	AMOUNT
Susan Ronga	Garden State Employment & Training Association (GSETA)	October 7-8, 2015	\$87.42 (transportation)
Program Director/Adult School	Atlantic City, NJ		
Jazmin Rotger de Parra	Transformational Leadership: From Compliance to Practice to Growth/NJPSA & FEA	October 8, 2015 November 30, 2015 January 13, 2016 2 additional dates (TBD)	\$650.00 (registration)
Director of Assessment, Planning & Evaluation	Monroe Township, NJ		
Anita West	Transformational Leadership: From Compliance to Practice to Growth/NJPSA & FEA	October 8, 2015 November 30, 2015 January 13, 2016	\$789.51 (registration, transportation)
Director of Information Management Systems	Monroe Township, NJ		
Luis Rojas	Legal ONE-Sex Discrimination/Sexual Harassment	October 13, 2015	\$75.00 (registration)
Executive Director/Labor Relations & Affirmative Action	Monroe Township, NJ		
Annette Casabona	24 th Annual New Jersey American Academy of Pediatrics School Health Conference	October 14, 2015	\$230.58 (registration, transportation)
School Nurse/St. Mary's	Somerset, NJ		
Carol Smeltzer	NJSBA Annual Conference 2015	October 28-29, 2015	\$462.83 (registration, transportation, lodging, meals)
Asst. General Counsel	Atlantic City, NJ		
Anthony Cavanna	NJAFPA Fall Conference 2015	October 30, 2015	\$149.00 (registration)
Executive Director/Unit I	Eatontown, NJ		
Irene Del Rosso	NJAFPA Fall Conference 2015	October 30, 2015	\$149.00 (registration)
Supervisor of NCLB	Eatontown, NJ		
Sandra Diodonet	NJAFPA Fall Conference 2015	October 30, 2015	\$187.84 (registration, transportation)
Acting Associate Chief Academic Officer	Eatontown, NJ		
Jenna Goodreau	NJAFPA Fall Conference 2015	October 30, 2015	\$164.50 (registration, transportation)
Supervisor of SIG	Eatontown, NJ		
Marguerite Sullivan	NJAFPA Fall Conference 2015	October 30, 2015	\$125.00 (registration)
Director of NCLB & Federal Programs	Eatontown, NJ		
Anne Marie Urgovitch	NJAFPA Fall Conference 2015	October 30, 2015	\$187.84 (registration, transportation)
Supervisor of NCLB	Eatontown, NJ		

Maria T. Lorenzo	HiSet, Educational Testing Services	November 9, 2015	\$39.98 (transportation)
HiSet Examiner/Adult School	West Windsor, NJ		
Steve Morlino	AHERA Inspector Refresher & AHERA Management Planners Refreshers	November 12, 2015	\$300.00 (registration)
Executive Director of Facilities	Piscataway, NJ		
Christopher Irving	NABSE 43 rd Annual Conference	November 18-22, 2015	\$1821.58 +tax (registration, transportation, lodging, meals)
Board Member	Washington, DC		
Corey Teague	NABSE 43 rd Annual Conference	November 18-22, 2015	\$2260.50 +tax (registration, transportation, lodging, meals)
Board Member	Washington, DC		
Nancy Castro	Rutgers 2015 Gifted Education Conference	November 19, 2015	\$175.00 (registration)
Principal/Paterson Academy for Gifted & Talented	New Brunswick, NJ		
Rita Route	Rutgers 2015 Gifted Education Conference	November 19, 2015	\$175.00 (registration)
Supervisor of Gifted Education	New Brunswick, NJ		
Erin Taylor	Rutgers 2015 Gifted Education Conference	November 19, 2015	\$175.00 (registration)
Teacher/Paterson Academy for Gifted & Talented	New Brunswick, NJ		
Frank Pajuelo	Infinite Campus TS03 MS SQL Reporting Services Training	December 10-11, 2015	\$2330.44 (registration, transportation, lodging, meals)
Data Management Specialist/IMS	Hauppauge, NY		
Anita West	Infinite Campus TS03 MS SQL Reporting Services Training	December 10-11, 2015	\$2330.44 (registration, transportation, lodging, meals)
Director of Information Management Services	Hauppauge, NY		
Catherine Forfia-Dion	International Baccalaureate Category 1 Workshop: History	February 19-22, 2016	\$1988.78 (registration, transportation, lodging, meals)
IB Coordinator/International H.S.	Charleston, SC		
Ivan Rosa	International Baccalaureate Category 1 Workshop: History	February 19-22, 2016	\$1988.78 (registration, transportation, lodging, meals)
Art Teacher/International H.S.	Charleston, SC		
Christopher Wirkmaa	International Baccalaureate Category 1 Workshop: History	February 19-22, 2016	\$1988.78 (registration, transportation, lodging, meals)
History Teacher/International H.S.	Charleston, SC		

Catherine Forfia-Dion	International Baccalaureate Category 2 Coordination	February 25-28, 2016	\$1594.47 (registration, transportation, lodging, meals)
IB Coordinator/International H.S.	Bethesda, MD		

TOTAL CONFERENCES: 25
TOTAL AMOUNT: \$20,427.27

It was moved by Comm. Simmons, seconded by Comm. Cleaves that Resolution No. 2 be adopted.

Comm. Cleaves: It's written out 18, but in parenthesis it's 25. Is it 18 or 25? It's supposed to be 25 staff members?

Comm. Hodges: I'll entertain an amendment to this. I will withdraw my motion and reread the motion as corrected.

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

Resolution No. 3

Whereas, the Eastside High School Girls Basketball Team have been invited to a high profile National Nike Tournament in Phoenix, Arizona. The 2015 Nike Tournament of Champions is a nationally recognized tournament with a very select few teams in the Nation have received the distinguished honor of being invited.

Whereas, the District is committed to exposing student athletes to opportunities that can further their personal, athletic, and social development in various areas, therefore, the team requests that the Board supports the efforts of providing student participation in this trip that takes place during the school day, which will assist in team building and the efforts of good sportsmanship;

Whereas, the proposed trip in which students voluntarily participate will enable them primetime exposure to many of the nation's top colleges and universities. Our student athletes will also have the opportunity to compete and mingle with some of our country's top rated student athletes nationwide. The transportation for this trip will be handled by the Southwest Airlines via our student activities account. This up-front cost will be reimbursed via account #16.20.038.100.516.063.000.0000.003 which is a donation that has been secured for our Girls and Boys basketball teams. The girls portion of the donation will be used to pay for the transportation and has been approved by the Grantor;

Therefore, Be It Resolved, that the Board of Education shall approve this trip in its entirety, as it will expose our student's to the nation's best basketball competition in the country. This will also encourage our students to master the concepts of teamwork as well as overcoming adverse situation in the most adverse athletic situations imaginable. Our student's will ultimately gain the exposure needed to secure full and partial scholarship opportunities to the best colleges and universities in America;

1. Transportation Cost:
Southwest Airlines: \$10,429.30 (23 tickets)

16.20.038.100.516.063.000.0000.003

2. Lodging and Ground Transportation
Provided by Gabriel Travel at a cost not to exceed \$15,000 (incl. tax & fees)
Account #15.402.100.500.063.000.0000.000
(All tournament participants must stay at the Host Hotel)
3. Meal Expenses to be covered by Coaching Staff

Be It Further Resolved, the Board of Education approves this overnight field trip to be held December 16 – December 23, 2015. It is affirmed that the coaching staff will chaperone and is paid as per P.E.A. Contract (2014-16 Schedule C – Part 2 Athletic Salary Guides, Group B) as this is part of their regular coaching assignment. They are as follows: Head Coach Ray Lyde, Jr., Assistant Coaches, Donald Davis, Tatyana Crawford, and Patrick Thompson.

Not to exceed threshold amount.

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

Comm. Cleaves: Is this dollar amount in the budget?

Dr. Evans: Yes.

Mr. Moody: Actually, I don't think the action was recorded properly. That money is just the flight and is actually in an account that was donated to us last year. Joseph Taub came to the basketball game and donated \$25,000 to be split between the boys and girls. The other piece is in the athletic budget. That's for the lodging and ground transportation. That total will be \$15,000.

On roll call all members voted in the affirmative. The motion carried.

Resolution No. 4

Whereas, each school district annually adopts the list of Field Trip Destinations for use within the schools of the district,

Whereas, the Paterson Board of Education recognizes that field trips are an educationally sound and important ingredient in the instructional program of our schools, and

Whereas, the field trip conducted for the purpose of affording a firsthand educational experience not available in the classroom, and

Whereas, the Assistant Superintendents have approved/recommended the addition of field trip experiences to support instruction;

Therefore Be It Resolved, the Paterson Board of education accepts the attached list of approved actions for destinations as appropriate field trip sites for the students of the Paterson Public Schools for the 2015-2016 school year.

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

Comm. Simmons: What is the addition?

Comm. Kerr: It's on the action.

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

GENERAL BUSINESS

Items Requiring a Vote

Curriculum and Instruction

Comm. Hodges: The curriculum committee has not met. They did not meet Monday. Unfortunately, I had to reschedule that. It will meet tomorrow. Are there any questions for the items in curriculum? Are there any questions? Your questions can be cataloged and brought tomorrow. Are there any questions?

Legal/Policy

Comm. Simmons: The legal committee actually met by teleconference on the 24th. We discussed the Bollinger insurance for students. The committee didn't want to actually take a stance as we wanted to discuss the matter with the entire Board. Now that that is on the floor this is a matter for discussion.

Comm. Martinez: I saw a copy of a memo that went home to students. I'm not sure if this was prematurely sent home or if the information was accurate, but essentially the letter to students was saying that students who were involved in athletics would no longer be covered under insurance. In other words, if I'm a football player or an athlete of any type in this district and I'm injured on the football field, I essentially have to pay out of pocket for whatever medical coverage I would be in need of. Is that the case?

Ms. Pollak: Why don't we take a couple of minutes and read the memo that I prepared for the legal committee and then we can answer that question.

Comm. Martinez: I'm waiting until others have had the opportunity to finish reading this. Do folks need more time to read through this?

Comm. Kerr: We're done.

Comm. Martinez: Fantastic. Can you just provide the long and short of it? I received a couple of phone calls about some parents of student athletes who were very concerned that if their son or daughter was injured on an athletic field would the parent now be responsible for footing the bill of any injury.

Ms. Pollak: Dr. Evans, do you want me to respond? Yes, the decision was made that given the fact that the premium was going to go up so much this coming year and the fact that it was very lightly used last year and it was not legally mandated that the district would discontinue the student accident insurance program. It would make available to every student the ability to buy the insurance individually in every school. But the school program that the district paid for was going up. We've had a fixed price of \$292,000 for four years and now it's going up to \$364,000. We would no longer purchase it.

Dr. Evans: Last year 17 students took advantage of it?

Comm. Kerr: 42.

Ms. Pollak: It's in the email. There were 42 claims, which considering the number of kids we have... The bottom line is that a lot of kids have insurance. In fact, everybody is required to have insurance. Some of it is Medicaid and some kids have private plans. But we only got 42 claims. Of course, if we had gotten larger use of the program the premium would go up exponentially from there.

Comm. Martinez: Is this primarily done for savings?

Dr. Evans: The initial decision was for savings. I have to tell you since that time I've received some new information that suggests that it's a mistake not to have it. I received some information recently regarding football injuries and that's being publicized pretty widely these days.

Comm. Martinez: I'm glad that you're now feeling and thinking that because this to me is problematic on so many levels. The fact that we're exposing our children to being injured and then leaving them hanging out to dry is unfathomable to me. We're expecting greatness of our students and we're not providing them with what they need. If this were to continue our athletic programs would just be dormant. What parent in their right mind would want to have their child on an athletic field to run the risk of getting injured and then having to come out of pocket? We're not a wealthy town. I don't think families can absorb if a child breaks their leg playing football or soccer or whatever. How can a family absorb the cost of the medical attention that student would need? The letters are out there. Families have been made aware of this. It's circulating. Folks are aware of this. I don't think it's really hit home and folks really understand the ramifications of this, but I think this is a horrible mistake. I think this needs to be undone as soon as possible. To have our students on the athletic field without having coverage is insane to me. I don't see how that was even a consideration to put on the table in the first place.

Comm. Simmons: I did talk with the other members of the committee. Although we wanted to have the discussion with the entire Board, we were going to recommend two things. One is that this coverage be continued. The second is that decisions like this should be brought before the entire Board. The Board and the administration in consultation should arrive at a decision.

Dr. Evans: That is part of the consideration.

Comm. Hodges: What tends to happen in situations like this is that parents will reach out to Board members before they even get to you. Something like this is so important that we were caught blindsided by this. In fact, if Mr. Kerr had not brought this to my attention I had no idea whatsoever that it had taken place.

Comm. Martinez: Correct. The fact that this fell through the cracks and no one up here was aware of this and this is already information designated to the public and families were aware of it. I received several phone calls and folks were inquiring. Again, I'm fumbling over my words. I don't know what you're talking about. How much money were we trying to save here at the expense of our students' safety? That's number one. Number two, how did it even get this far where it was disseminated to people without so

much as a conversation, a memo, an email, or anything to any of us? How does that happen again?

Dr. Evans: Part of the answer to that discussion begs for an executive session. I'll be happy to be frank and honest with you. The cost factor you're mentioning was the increase that was just mentioned, the \$300,000+. When we had that discussion a couple of months ago, it was my understanding that the number of kids was different from 42. I understand now it's 42, but 17 was the number that was put on the table at the time of the initial discussion. Like I said, since that time I've received new information which suggests that's a mistake. We should reinstitute that.

Comm. Martinez: I think a mistake is an understatement. Trying to save money on the backs of the safety and well-being of our students is shameful. I don't know how it even got this far without so much as a discussion or a conversation. Pulling insurance from our student athletes so if one of them gets injured now they're on their own? How is something like that even considered a viable option? I don't even know how it got this far. That's not even a viable option in my mind.

Comm. Rivera: Dr. Evans, I appreciate you looking at different areas for savings, but saving \$71,000 and taking away...

Dr. Evans: \$364,000.

Comm. Rivera: It went from \$292,000 and the new quote is \$364,000. Is that over four years or yearly? That's \$71,000 a year.

Ms. Pollak: The decision was made not to take the insurance at all. The savings is \$364,000.

Comm. Rivera: So we took the insurance off. That's even worse. Let me just leave it at that.

Comm. Hodges: Dr. Evans, are you prepared to have that discussion tonight?

Dr. Evans: If the Board wants to. The insurance is going to be reinstated as of tomorrow.

Comm. Simmons: Will the effective date be tomorrow? Or would it be retroactive?

Ms. Pollak: We can do either one. I think we should discuss it.

Comm. Hodges: We'll have an executive session afterwards.

Comm. Martinez: I'm welcoming of the executive session, but these are the kinds of things that leave me scratching my head about the way things are done. How can we even have considered saving a couple hundred thousand dollars at the expense of the health, safety, and well-being of our student athletes? How was that even put on the table for consideration, never mind having gotten this far? Honest to god. This is shameful. How did it even get this far? We're talking about our student athletes here. We were willing to jeopardize their safety and well-being for a couple hundred thousand dollars. How did it even get this far? Honest to god. That's absurd.

Comm. Hodges: I share your concern. I definitely do and I'll just remind people that we had to lay off an extraordinary number of teachers and now we have to bring a number

back. My concern is that this not takes place, but the financial climate that we're struggling in causes some of these unfortunate decisions. We must not allow that point to not be put on the table.

Comm. Martinez: I agree with you. The financial hardships are one thing, but not at the expense of student safety. Never, ever at the expense of student safety!

Comm. Hodges: I have to agree with that 100%.

Comm. Simmons: Beyond that, we do have two other items in legal, B-1 and B-2. Are there any questions or discussion for those items?

Comm. Kerr: Does B-1 carry a price tag?

Ms. Pollak: No.

Comm. Simmons: Are there any other questions? That ends my report.

Fiscal

Comm. Kerr: The fiscal committee met last Thursday and we met for the purpose of going over the bills list, which we found to be in order. Tonight we are presenting C-1 through C-14 for the Board's consideration. Are there any questions?

Comm. Rivera: I think they were vetted out in the finance committee so we don't have to discuss it here.

Comm. Hodges: It's not regarding one of the items, but I do have a fiscal question. There seems to be a long process to order materials here. For instance, if you have an emergency in an area you just can't order something rapidly and get it into the district, which may affect schools. I have one in particular in mind. You have to be able to walk an order through in a short timeline and I'm finding that that's not the case. It can be extremely cumbersome to walk an emergency order through. I'm trying to find out why that's the case, if that's the case.

Comm. Kerr: By definition, what's an emergency order?

Comm. Hodges: There's an outstanding part and you need to order a part from a vendor who happens to be on the list. In order to order the part you have to go through...

Comm. Kerr: You have to generate the requisition and the order.

Comm. Hodges: How long does it take to do that?

Comm. Kerr: I don't know. Maybe two days? Some can be expedited in a day. I'm sure it can.

Dr. Evans: They have been.

Comm. Kerr: If it's an emergency, why not?

Comm. Hodges: I'm glad to hear that because I'll be back. That's fine. I'm hearing things much to the contrary. I don't know unless I raise the issue.

Comm. Rivera: I understand emergencies take place and I appreciate you asking what type of emergency. A lot of times, many things that are constituted as emergencies are things people leave for the last minute and not planning ahead of time. Although they need to be ordered, like Ms. Shafer and Dr. Evans said, if they need to expedite the process of turning that requisition into a purchase order, that could be done within hours. You just need to contact the purchasing department or the administration. The reason I took the time to speak now is because, as you can recall, yourself, Mr. Kerr, and I sat in the finance committee one time and we tried to enforce a policy. It's been months and months and I'm still waiting. I'm just going to use this as a segue to bring it up again. I don't know if it ever went through. It was regarding the actions we were going to take against staff violating this policy of confirming orders. I don't know what ever happened with this policy. We made the change to the language to make sure and we also advised you to discuss it with legal to make sure that it was okay. I'm still waiting and I'm sure you're still waiting, also.

Ms. Daisy Ayala: It's with the policy committee.

Comm. Rivera: Did it go through already?

Ms. Ayala: No.

Comm. Rivera: Not yet, and that was about four or five months ago. We need to expedite this. The beginning of the year already started and this is actually going to assist the administration making sure that line items are not over-expended in the budget. It's very important, believe it or not. Thank you.

Ms. Ayala: I was going to answer to that. I just sat here and went through 70 requisitions on the last approval. If I don't do it at night, I do it first thing in the morning. So there's no reason for a very long delay unless, as Comm. Rivera said, they forgot to do something and now all of a sudden they need a bus tomorrow and the requisition is coming to me today.

Comm. Hodges: Okay. Actually, that may have been refined, but the last time I have personally been involved in ordering parts and things it has taken a long time.

Ms. Ayala: It has a process and unfortunately the regulation says that a person with a qualified purchase agency has to go through the approval process so if the person is not there or out of the office or in a workshop, it may delay it by a day or so. In addition to that, it has to be approved by me because I have a certification as a school business administrator. Those are two required signatures. People have to give it time and we had this conversation at the principal's meeting. People have to give it time because we don't just have that. That's a portion of the job that we have.

Comm. Hodges: That's what I'm trying to narrow down. If you're not here or somebody is not there, I want to find out what the alternatives are.

Ms. Ayala: You're right. After tonight, I won't be back until Wednesday.

Comm. Hodges: There you go. So what happens in your stead?

Ms. Ayala: There's one that's urgent. If I have to come in tomorrow, I'm going to have to come in because it needs my approval. It's pretty much going to my level. However, that's why we have two certified people in the business office. When Mr. Kilpatrick was

here, if he was absent, I would sign off. We don't have that right now. I'm the only one doing both of those jobs.

Comm. Cleaves: So she's saying that if she's not here it won't get done?

Ms. Ayala: Yes. You know I'm going to be here locally.

Comm. Cleaves: But hypothetically if she had to leave the country...

Comm. Hodges: If you're in Jamaica or whatever.

Ms. Ayala: Hopefully by then we'll have a BA and then the ABA is the second person as a backup.

Dr. Evans: A solution is on the horizon. We've had that discussion that we need to make sure we have a backup person here.

Ms. Ayala: That's usually the ABA. As I said, when Mr. Kilpatrick was here we never left at the same time. There was always someone here, but we don't have that luxury now.

Comm. Hodges: All I'm doing at this point is asking the administration to take a look at that process. I need to have a clear understanding of what your expectations are for the length of time it should take to go through a regular purchase versus an emergency purchase so that if we see that it's abnormal we can bring it to your attention and get that addressed as soon as possible. So there should be some sort of...

Ms. Ayala: There is a process for the emergency. When we claim an emergency, and that's usually at the facilities, it's done within a couple of hours. It's really sending an email or memo to the county assistant superintendent or business administrator and within a few hours we have an approval. That can bypass the process.

Comm. Hodges: Anything that comes to my attention is usually an emergency, in my mind. I just want to make sure there's a uniform standard of what you expect. Whether it's a week or two days, whatever you decide is a reasonable period of time should be the period of time. If it goes over that, then we need to find out why it went over and correct it. That's all I'm really looking for.

Comm. Kerr: What's the average time right now to process?

Ms. Ayala: 24 hours.

Comm. Kerr: Mr. President, did you hear her answer?

Comm. Hodges: Yes, I heard her answer, but I'll defer to your committee to address.

Comm. Kerr: The time now is one day to process the orders.

Ms. Ayala: This morning I had 10 requisitions. By the time I sat down I had over 70. There's nothing now. Everyday they're reviewed. However, if there's a delay between the principal and assistant superintendent, for whatever reason, I have no control over that.

Comm. Kerr: Another thing that can hold up is if certain information that she is looking for in a requisition to turn into a purchase order is not there. Then she vetoes it and it goes back down. That adds more time for it to be processed.

Comm. Hodges: All I want is, again, a standard.

Comm. Kerr: All things being okay, it's one day. But then there are other humbugs in the process. So if the person is not meticulous in the information given to her, then she's going to say she's not signing off on this one and she sends it back down.

Ms. Ayala: That can take a week because it goes back and forth. If I make a change, it goes back to them because they are the initiator. They should be aware of what changes I made. That will delay the process. If it comes back, sometimes it comes back and they haven't made the change. So it goes back and forth. There are various reasons why it may take longer than 24 hours, but everything being equal, everything being in order, it shouldn't take more than 24 hours.

Comm. Hodges: When that kind of thing happens, what I'm looking for is some sort of analysis to address and so the people who are involved understand why it took so long. You didn't do this or this didn't happen or whatever. There should be some sort of analysis so that people understand if you do what you're supposed to, it will occur in this period of time. If you don't, then this is why it took so long.

Ms. Ayala: When I deny a requisition it won't let me move forward unless I put a justification. There's always a justification for why it was denied. Either you have other requisitions pending, or if you decide you want to spend it all, you're going to go into the red and you don't have sufficient funds. I send it for review and only put forth the requisitions that you really need because you're going to have insufficient funds in the account. They may decide they don't want this and look at the other ones. But there always has to be justification or it won't let me move forward.

Comm. Hodges: As chair of facilities, I certainly will be testing that.

Comm. Rivera: Just to you know, Dr. Hodges, it also depends on the workload during the time of the year. You may have some times of the year where you have more requisitions being put through. Again, it's a two-step procedure. Daisy would do the first approval.

Ms. Ayala: The last.

Comm. Rivera: I thought the purchasing agent does the last.

Ms. Ayala: He's before me.

Comm. Rivera: Okay, vice versa. The purchasing agent would do the first and she would do the last. It goes through two stages. It depends. You can't say someone put a requisition today, it's been a week and it's not approved. It's also the responsibility of that person that put in the requisition that if there's an immediate need for what they're purchasing they can always place a call. We have to work here as a team. We shouldn't say, "You took a week to approve it." It's just courtesy. If you need it, give a call. We're all involved in a lot of things. I'm sure Daisy has a lot of things on her plate herself. Just try to push that forward. People should just give a call.

Ms. Ayala: They do. I know you have a lot on your plate. This is urgent. Unfortunately, whatever happened, happened. And yes, I will expedite it.

Comm. Hodges: Okay. Thank you very much.

Comm. Kerr: Are there any other questions? That concludes my report.

Facilities

Comm. Hodges: I present to you D-1 and D-2 in facilities. Are there any questions regarding those two items? We met in facilities last night. I was actually by my lonesome. I'm just going to go very briefly through the facilities. We had a work order record. There were a total of 1,256 new requests over the month. Completed were 239, pending are 647, going out to vendors are 104, parts are 54, and department of health violations are 212. What that reflects, presumably, is a new health inspector has come on and is very diligent and zealous about their work. The School 5 roof repair is underway. They're working on the parapet. This is an ongoing project with a lot of leaks from the roof. The other part of that issue is there is some actual water seeping into the building, but this is the largest part of that problem. We're doing some upgrading to the lights at School 24, which you've seen as part of the report. There was this recent kerfuffle regarding Boris Kroll wherein we received a notification that there were five different violations, four of which were considered to be serious and one less than serious. Apparently these were presumably identified by employees, i.e. teachers, and they called out to the Labor and Workforce Investment who came in and said these have to be taken care of or you're going to be sanctioned. They're currently all abated and that report is being sent forward to the inspectors. There's some additional work being done at Boris Kroll, closing off stairways and there are still some issues with the leaking roof that we're working with the landlord on to get that addressed. On new construction, School 16 and Hazel/Marshall are progressing quite a bit; however, not far enough in the eyes of the vendors to allow any visitations at this particular point in time, which is unfortunate. I'd like to see where they are and some of those things that are occurring in case we have any questions that we might want to offer or things we might want to correct which we can see can be done now in their early stages. Colt Street update – the elevator is still missing a part. PSE&G is currently providing power to the building. Once power is provided, the HVAC will be worked on and installed. The fire escape and catwalks are 98% complete. The fire alarms need monitoring cables to be attached. Verizon is still experiencing some difficulty with their labor and not getting total access to their services because of their job slowdown. Currently, we're looking at a possible October 30 date for that building. There's a question as to whether or not that will truly be completed because of Verizon and a few other small issues that remain outstanding. On Hinchliffe Stadium, Dr. Evans, I'm not quite sure where we are with this grant problem. We might need to look into this. There are some questions as to whether or not that grant is still available to us and whether the money is still in place. They were supposed to be, but they may have called the cash away two days earlier because we went down close to the deadline in terms of submitting this request. They were supposed to have that remaining, but they may have pulled it because supposedly the line item may have ended on September 27 instead of December 29 when we submitted the request for the monies.

Dr. Evans: If I can give a brief history and Mr. Morlino and Ms. Ayala can fill in the gaps, just so the Board knows what happened here. Actually, the Board voted on an item well over a month ago, further back than that actually in June. The entire \$196,000 was to offset the cost of the plan that was developed through the processes that were in place involving the district and the city. After you voted that was submitted. Let me call

Mr. Morlino because he actually submitted it on our behalf. It resided with them I'm not sure for how long, Mr. Morlino. They ultimately notified us that they had received it, but they could not support funding the entire package. There was a portion of it they would fund, but the rest they wouldn't. As a result, we got busy and identified other items. I'll let you take it from there and fill in any gaps I've left.

Mr. Steve Morlino: You're 100% right, Dr. Evans. In June, the PO went out to the company to do the business plan market analysis for the total amount of \$196,000. Subsequent to that, they did some studies. They came out and did a site visit here in the city with the Division of Historic Preservation and us. We visited the site. We toured the site. They at that time gave us the timeline for the project. They could not give us a deliverable until April of 2016 at that point in time. We asked them if they could break it up in pieces and they could not do that much of it in that short time. We spoke to the contact we had in HUD to see if we could extend this because of the fact that this would drag out until April. They were very clear at HUD that we could not extend the timeline. At one point we learned that although we were under the understanding that we could use all of the money for the market analysis business plan, we were then told that only 20% could be used for soft administrative costs of that nature. The rest had to be actual construction costs. I believe Dr. Hodges sat on that committee and had indicated that a while ago, but we were under the impression it could be done another way. After much discussion, we did finally submit the full \$196,780 to the HUD people within the timeframe. They approved the voucher and forwarded it for payment. It was then they told us that even though we met the deadline – we were actually a day prior to the deadline – that the money may have expired the day before, which would be two days prior to the deadline that we were told. We couldn't quite understand how the budget could be out of sync with the deadline for the actual submittal. Ms. Ayala's office has been on the phone with HUD. They had told me if the money was not deposited within three business days it was most likely sent back to the general fund and we would not be funded. I'm not sure if we got any more news.

Dr. Evans: So how much longer do we have to wait before we can get back with them to say we never received it?

Mr. Morlino: The three days has gone by.

Dr. Evans: The three days has gone by. At this point, what is our recourse?

Mr. Morlino: To my knowledge, none. To my knowledge, the funding went back to the general fund and the funding is no longer available. They did remind us that the district had three years to officiate this and five years to implement it and that the time had run short, even though the budget cycle was out of sync by three days. That was their answer to us.

Ms. Ayala: We've actually been in contact with that young lady that we've been dealing with on the financial piece of it. We told her we'd check with the banks and now she's going to try to write a justification to see if she can get us the funding.

Dr. Evans: The bottom line is we met the deadline.

Mr. Morlino: The voucher was approved within the timeframe, yes.

Ms. Ayala: She's working on it and she's been very helpful.

Comm. Hodges: The last item I'll cover is the gym floor at School 24. We had some problems with flooding secondary to the connection of the sewer with the city's sewer system. What happens is there's pooling at a door right above that connection point and it enables water to come into the building. We're looking at removing the door so that we can eliminate that site of flooding. The insurance is covering the new gym floor, but we have to make sure the flooding doesn't happen again to the floor. There will be new material which is rubberized so that we won't have the same kind of problem down the line. That completes my report. Are there any questions?

Comm. Martinez: I'm still scratching my head. We had three years to do this. We waited until two days before to submit it and now the money is gone.

Dr. Evans: No. We submitted in April or May.

Mr. Morlino: It was approved in June, the marketing plan portion. The PO went out in May.

Dr. Evans: It was discussed here in the Board and it was submitted as soon as you voted. As Mr. Morlino went through it when we submitted it to them they basically said we can fund part of this but we don't fund the rest. We had to see construction in addition to what was submitted.

Mr. Morlino: That's correct.

Dr. Evans: So we had to go back and find additional information and actually had invoices. We had what they asked us to get and we submitted it.

Comm. Martinez: Now the money is in limbo.

Dr. Evans: Apparently, the feds withdrew it before the deadline.

Comm. Hodges: But the truth of the matter is this money was supposed to be part of the shared service agreement, which is now in its fifth year. The money was ready. The city has neglected to uphold its end of the shared service agreement so this has been sitting there. When the new Mayor came in, who was the old Mayor who helped write the shared service agreement, he made some changes as to what they want to use the money for. That's why this whole thing came about. The money was being sent to a company for assessing how to market it and how to make money off the facilities. That's what happened. In trying to do that, which some of us didn't want to do, we agreed to go ahead and follow through. That put us in this particular bind because they said we couldn't use the money in that way. They had to go back and reconstruct how they were going to actually use the money in a way that comported better with the dictates of the grant. That timeline apparently ran out or is in limbo.

Comm. Rivera: Thank you for that information, Dr. Hodges. I didn't know the history behind it. I see what happened. The bigger picture is that if we don't get this money – and you did what you could to get it – the bottom line is this is going to hit our fund balance at year-end because we're going to have to absorb that money. This is an expense that we thought we were going to get reimbursed for. It wasn't budgeted for. When we cancel this receivable in our books it's going to hit our surplus at year-end. This is \$196,000 less that we have to anticipate in our budget next year in surplus.

Dr. Evans: There may be another option and we'll need to pursue that because there's work in progress that can be stopped.

Items Requiring Review and Comments

Personnel

Comm. Martinez: The personnel committee has yet to meet. We're scheduling to meet perhaps tomorrow.

OTHER BUSINESS

MOTION TO GO INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION TO DISCUSS LEGAL AND PERSONNEL ISSUES

It was moved by Comm. Martinez, seconded by Comm. Simmons that the Board goes into executive session to discuss legal and personnel issues.

Comm. Rivera: I just wanted to put in a request. I could have done that through an email, but since we're here already. Dr. Evans, I just wanted to put in a request because we talk about it often and we tend to forget. After I saw what we tried to do to save money before it occurred to me that we have not asked for a status on the implementation of ALIO. Remember we had a big discussion. I think given the fact that we purchased this software a couple of years ago, and I'm confident you guys are going to make it work this year, I don't want to have a discussion at year-end of what took place and why we couldn't implement it. So again, I want to get a status of what we have done so far to try to make this work. At the same time, if you guys can recall, we approved a contract for a consultant and a lot of us had questions regarding the work that will be performed. It wasn't very specific to the work that that person would be doing to help us implement this software. Aside from the status of where we're at with this system, I also want to see any invoices that have been submitted by this consultant. I just don't want to see hours. I want to see a synopsis of what she has been doing.

Dr. Evans: It may be wise to have her come and address the Board. I know she addressed the technology committee and hopefully a lot of your questions were answered by her. We could have her come and address the Board as well to be able to answer any questions that you might have. And she can give a status report on the ALIO implementation.

Comm. Rivera: I would like a status report from the business office. I know she tried to implement that aspect of the software. Again, it's us being responsible. We're paying the bill and we need to know what is being done for that substantial amount of money that she's charging us. I'm sure she's going to do her job, but I just want to see it as a Board member.

Dr. Evans: Sure.

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

The Board went into executive session at 9:40 p.m.

The Board reconvened the meeting at 10:16 p.m.

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

The meeting was adjourned at 10:17 p.m.