

MINUTES OF THE PATERSON BOARD OF EDUCATION WORKSHOP MEETING

September 2, 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. Christopher Irving
Comm. Errol Kerr
Comm. Manuel Martinez

Comm. Lilisa Mimms
*Comm. Flavio Rivera
Comm. Kenneth Summons, Vice President
Comm. Corey Teague

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

Comm. Mimms read the Open Public Meetings Act:

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

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

**Workshop Meeting
September 2, 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

Introduction of New Paterson Education Association (PEA) Membership and Matters of Interest

Mr. John McEntee: Good evening Dr. Evans, Board members, and cabinet members. My name is John McEntee. I'm the newly elected Paterson Education Association President. You've probably all read I won by a vote. I'm here with our supporters. This evening I'd like to bring to you some concerns. Dr. Hodges was gracious enough to come to the PEA office sometime in July. I thought we had many fruitful conversations

and one of the main concerns we came here this evening to talk about is the evaluation system. We recognize we have some of the best administrators in all of New Jersey, as we do teachers as well. Quite frankly, this evaluation system is something that was forced down everyone's throats. We're all getting to know it as best we can and we know that this evaluation system comes with its problems and challenges in the classrooms because sometimes we don't have all the necessities we need to implement it. Earlier this summer I met with Luis Rojas and we were representing on the association side staff members who were rated effective. These staff members were non-renewed for performance-related issues, but we were looking at evaluation numbers of 3.02, 3.2, numbers that when we looked at them our eyebrows went up and we said to ourselves, "How could this staff member have allowed him or herself to be in this type of a situation, rated effective, and then be non-renewed for performance-related issues?" When we sat down as an organization we said to ourselves there really needs to be some more education about this model because for staff members to go through a school year thinking that they're doing okay and then to find out at the end of the year you've now been non-renewed for a performance-related issue is extremely problematic. We have concerns that the principals may or may not be receiving enough information to pass along the education necessary to our staff members. As a teacher last year in the classroom – and I gave this example to Dr. Hodges when he came out – for the longest time when you're evaluated as a teacher you say to yourself, "I know I have to be evaluated." But this new system feels like – and I know we've all probably been in this scenario – you're driving down the Parkway and you're probably going right about the speed limit but you know at any moment there could be a police officer somewhere in the weeds and the moment you see that police officer, what do we all do? We take our foot off the gas and think, "Was I speeding?" That's kind of what the new evaluation system feels like. It feels as if when someone walks into the room the identical feeling you have to seeing a trooper on the highway and you say, "Was I doing something wrong?" My colleagues are here tonight because we feel like this system is almost designed as a gotcha system. In my particular building, I know of several instances where there were staff members who were required to sit in a post or summative evaluation and bring hours' worth. I'm not being facetious when I say hours' worth. They were there with the administrator who was quite fair and the administrator was allowing the staff member to bring documentation to show evidence of certain aspects of the evaluation, but it took hours to get to a certain goal. Ultimately the staff member was able to provide enough evidence to show that he or she was effective and should be moved up to a certain category to receive a certain score. But it seems to me if we have to go to those great lengths to show that a teacher is effective in a specific area, it's extremely problematic. Staff members in my building, whether they were on a cap, effective, or highly effective, most of them had an extremely difficult time trying to locate the rubric to explain to him or herself how they were being rated after it's all completed. We as an association, prior to me taking over, were trying to seek this rubric to no avail. We weren't able to find from anyone in the Paterson Public Schools this particular rubric. Another problem that comes up often is that we have these school-based supervisors who go from school to school to school. They're there to do a job and we understand that. If they're there to do the job we need to do the best job that we can because our first goal is to teach the children of Paterson. But oftentimes we will see discrepancies between supervisors and administrators when someone walks into a classroom on the same exact schedule. You have two administrators who when they leave see two different things, that also is problematic. This didn't just happen in one isolated school. This happened across the city. This happened in schools where two people would go into a school building, they'd see the exact same teacher, walk out, and see completely different things. You have to ask yourself why that is happening. I'm not here to tell you I know the exact reason why two people would see two different things. But I certainly can tell you it's extremely problematic. I believe that everyone

employed in this school district is doing their job to the best of their ability. And I've heard of instances where this evaluation instrument is being used in a vindictive manner. This has been something I've said throughout the campaign and something I'll continue to say including for myself. Every teacher who is tenured is only two years away from being out of a job. That really is the reality. This tenure law, I believe, has really cut into what tenure was meant to be. But if you run into a situation where you have a disagreement with an administrator, you could be put on a cap within a year and fired after the second year. That's extremely problematic. No one can ever take the subjectivity out of an evaluation. I don't know if there's an evaluation model on the market that takes the subjective nature out of it. But our particular model has instances where they'll mark you down for something that doesn't exist in your classroom. For instance, we have a situation where on the model it talks about 21st Century learning. We have school classrooms without 21st Century technology. It's extremely problematic that you can walk into a classroom, demand something to be there, and then when you look around, where is it. In School 20 where I taught, I've been blessed with some wonderful administrators. From the date that I was hired I was blessed. I don't think that every school, including my own, has some of the technology needs necessary to meet that 21st Century category on the evaluation model. It might be because we can't afford it in every school. We have 56 work sites. It would probably be a couple million dollars to put starboards and whiteboards. But let me talk to you a little bit about the technology we're buying. Some of it is rollaway. We have whiteboards that have been in some buildings for years with scratches across them and missing pens for the whiteboard technology. They should be mounted. They probably should have a projector that in most school districts they put it up in the air so the wires aren't running across the floor. We're not investing. If we're going to have things like this on the model itself we really need to invest in the technology necessary so that when an administrator comes in and they're doing their job they can say to themselves this teacher had the technology and the available instruments to do what we're asking them to do, but why aren't they using them? To mark someone down now without having that 21st Century technology is quite problematic. My colleagues would also like to speak tonight so I'm not going to take too much of your time, but I would like to leave you with this thought. The only way our school system is going to move forward is to put the best teacher in every single classroom. We know that. The association recognizes we have to have the very best teacher in every single classroom. But here's what every one of our teachers really needs from the Board and the community. We need the best from the Board as well. We need to make sure that when we invest our money into our children we're buying things that last, that are used, and that are not discarded. We had a set of books. It was the old math series. I believe it was called Envision. I can't sit here today and tell you I know the price tag for that model that we purchased, but it's being given to the students to take home. If we had taken that and invested it into 21st Century technology it would still be in our classrooms. It would be utilized every day and our staff members would be able to be evaluated properly. I'm only giving you that one example, but I think we really need to take a very close hard look at this evaluation model. Let's say if we're going to put our staff members through the wringer and we're going to rate them as difficult as we do, let's please make sure we provide every available resource necessary to make them successful. Thank you very much.

Comm. Hodges: Are there any questions from the Board?

Comm. Kerr: I'm very interested in the fact that you mentioned that a lot of your teachers are being evaluated on 21st Century learning techniques but we do not have the technology inside those classrooms.

Mr. McEntee: That's correct, sir.

Comm. Kerr: Can you elaborate a little more? Is this an experience that most of our teachers in the district are facing? Are they being challenged in this way?

Mr. McEntee: I can only speak intelligently about what I've experienced and the experiences so far over the first 60 days that I've noticed going in and out of the schools. I will tell you that particular instance and why I brought that up is because there were many folks over the summer and during the course of the campaign who said to me they didn't even have the electricity necessary to support some of the technology that we're purchasing. We had a staff member at one of the elementary schools who was electrocuted when trying to do some of the things that we're doing here this evening but didn't have the necessary components. I'm not very good with the electricity, and I probably should only put it in when there's one because I don't know much about it, but I can certainly tell you we're lacking. One of the initiatives that the assistant superintendent and I had talked about was outfitting some of the schools with some of this 21st Century technology. If you were to walk into one of your brand new buildings, Roberto Clemente is top-notch. It's aces all the way. It has all of the technology and the things that they're using, not just in the city school systems, but in the suburbs as well. I would try to make the case that the new Roberto Clemente School is the goal that every student in Paterson should have a building as beautiful as that. I understand and the association understands there are financial restraints, but to answer your question more directly, we are lacking many of those 21st Century technologies.

Comm. Kerr: You mentioned that the evaluation system is highly subjective. Can you walk me through why you believe that?

Mr. McEntee: I know of a particular instance where two administrators were in a classroom. They stayed for the duration of the lesson. This is in one of the high schools. When the supervisor and the administrator left together they saw completely two different things. So much so that when the individual who uploaded the evaluation to Media X finished what needed to be uploaded the staff member went to the other individual and said, "When I spoke to you, you gave me the impression everything was wonderful. Can you explain to me now what Media X says? This has to be a mistake." It got to the point where the administrator who had a little bit more power needed to go back and amend the system, but the system wouldn't allow for changes because it had already been submitted into Media X and the timeframe had already passed. They waited right until the last second. So for two people to walk in and see completely two different things is really problematic. I don't know how you can have two people say the exact same thing, but to be so different.

Comm. Kerr: The point I'm trying to drive at is I need to know how widespread this is.

Mr. McEntee: This is across the district. I'm not telling you tonight that that exact scenario is happening. If I were able to garner up all the members I'm sure I'd be able to have members who could tell you a couple hundred stories citywide of what's going on with this particular model.

Comm. Kerr: I would love to see some of this in writing so we can read it and see if we can challenge the Superintendent some more and challenge the Department of Education. If you can document some of these incidents where our teachers are being victimized by this new system, then we need to have it. We're about fairness and justice and I'm not going to sit here and take away anything from any person in the classroom that they are truly deserving of. I am with you as long as I get the

documentation and I will represent your interests. I want you to know every member of this Board is willing to represent that interest. We're about justice and fairness.

Mr. McEntee: One of the first things I did as President was make myself available during the Donaldson hearings. I have some experience doing some Donaldson hearings in a part-time job that I had as a teacher. I know that a non-tenured teacher can be released and a School Board can say, "You're wonderful. We just choose to go in a different direction." But it was really difficult as my first drive as President to sit with a non-tenured member and say they were rated a 3.2 but they've been non-renewed for performance. If the school district had said they're a wonderful employee but we choose to move in a new direction, that's a different thing than saying they're a 3.2 but they've been poorly rated on their evaluation system. Something either sounds vindictive about that to me or the system itself has crashed and burned. That was really different to explain to a non-tenured teacher. So much so that we tried to have the verbiage changed – and thank you very much Dr. Evans – and we were successful in amending some of that. But I don't know if it went far enough and I hope that moving forward we can all collectively as a union and as a School Board put our minds together and maybe even look for a model to replace this. I'm sure there are some competing models out there that might be more fruitful. Thank you very much everyone. I appreciate your time.

Comm. Hodges: Are there any further questions? Thank you very much. We really appreciate your perspective. It's important for us to get an understanding of the conditions as you see them so that we can challenge the Superintendent and the administration to ensure that any possible misconceptions on your part or ours gets corrected. Thank you very much.

Ms. Lakresha Hodge: Good evening, my name is Lakresha Hodge. I'm the 2nd Vice President of the Paterson Education Association. I'd just like to thank you for inviting us out and listening to us and what we have to say. Hopefully, you can take some of this and we can work together to improve. One thing that I've seen as the evaluation chairperson and representative from my building and for the association is exactly what John was talking about with the subjectivity. I know you asked about that so I just want to add a little bit onto that. First of all, our rubric is very long. The rubric is broken up into different boxes. It will say 'progressing,' 'progressing 1, 2, 3,' 'proficient 1, 2, 3' and then 'highly effective.' The difference between those boxes is so slight that you can have a 'progressing 3' because you had some students do this and it makes a difference when someone else may come in and say I saw all students doing this. It's just a slight degree from wording where you know that the majority of the students are doing a good job. We have really good teachers in the district and I feel that because this evaluation tool is only being used in Paterson it's very difficult to gauge the success of this evaluation tool. We have the entire State of New Jersey. We decided to choose this and that was our choice. But we can look at the things that we see that are wrong so that maybe next year when June comes along we can consider looking at another model. I don't know if it was the highest, but it's one of the highest ineffective rates of teachers. I do not believe that we have that many ineffective teachers in this district. I will go and say proudly that I know our teachers go in. We work every day. We prepare what we need to do. But we have very small windows of gauging what we're doing from our administrators. Because our evaluation tool is 27 pages it gives a lot of work on our administrators as well. They're spending so much time evaluating and conferencing with teachers that we don't even see them. Once evaluation begins in October, that's what they're doing. They're spending a lot of time in this room and that room, but who's really seeing what other improvements we need within the building? So I think it's not only that it affects us as teachers, it affects administrators and our students because we

are held to a standard that, as John said even with technology, you didn't have technology in your room but I've put in a work order for it four weeks ago. It hasn't been fixed and now when you came in to evaluate me you're saying no 21st Century skills are being done. This child was not on the computer. You weren't using technology. If we had it, we would. I'm not saying we as if it's just me, but I'm speaking for us in a broader sense. I really want everyone to understand that we all understand that we need to be evaluated. That's not a question. No one is saying that. We do need to be evaluated, but we want to be evaluated fairly. We want this to be a tool that is not so subjective so that an administrator that may not like a particular teacher can easily say, "I'm marking you down to this." I know that there were a lot of issues with the fact that we don't have a scoring formula that we can accurately gauge what our numbers are as we go throughout the year. Everyone wants the teachers to improve no matter where you are. If you're highly effective to begin the year you want to stay that way. If you are partially effective in the beginning of the year you want to show increase. But how can we gauge where we are if we don't have a rubric? We let the district know about that and we are seeking to make sure that all members know, not just our association members, but our administrators. Many administrators weren't sure. Some people were using numbers to gauge what our ratings were. Some administrators were saying there are two boxes. You have two of this and three of this so this is what I'm going to give you. It seemed very random. If a teacher goes to you and they want to know why they got this, they want to know specifically these were the numbers, this is why. We want feedback just like we have to give to our students. We want that too. We want that immediate feedback. We don't want to have an observation and then not find out until two months later here's your feedback and this is what you did. Now it's time for the next round of observations. We also would like to get a timely feedback and know what we need to improve on. But then we again ask that we're provided with the tools that we need and the training that we need. And not just training for training's sake, but effective training that we can take right back with us and say, "This is what I can do in my class tomorrow." So as I said before, I really think that we need to sit down and talk. We need to have a representative to talk with the district and really be able to look into it and see how we can make it better and improve. I think it would be better not only for us but for our students as well. That is our main goal. We're there to teach our students and if we are able to teach our students the way that we know we can... I'm a very creative teacher and I know there are a lot more behind me that are like that as well. But I know that we want to be able to be creative and also be able to reach those goals. The only way we can do that is if we're all knowledgeable, prepared, and we're given the things and resources we need to have. I'm a product of Paterson Public Schools. I'm very proud of it and I want the kids that I teach to have the same education I had. I didn't have teachers that said we've got to prepare for a test right now. They taught me the skills that I needed, and that's what I want to be able to do for my students as well. So if we can get a more effective tool in place, if we can have a voice in that decision process, I think that we'll come out all the better. Thank you.

*Comm. Rivera enters the meeting at 7:09 p.m.

Comm. Hodges: Thank you very much. Are there any questions from Board members?

Mr. Charles Ferrer: Thank you for this opportunity for us to have this dialogue. I appreciate it. One of the things that Paterson has to do is come into this century. My son is a student at Passaic County Tech and the first day there this, which we condemn our students to have, is a tool that Tech is allowed to use every day for everything. If I want to reach the principal I can't call. I have to send them a tweet. The principal tells the parents if they're not hooked to Twitter they better get hooked because if they need to reach him that's the only way they're going to be able to do that. My son was given a

Chrome Book. Every student up there has one. That's where they're moving. I think we have to change. We might not be able to give every student a Chrome Book, but just about every student in this district has a better phone than most of us in here. But they're not allowed to use it. With teachers' permission they should be allowed to use it. Computers break down but their phones are still good. I think we might have to change our mindset because other schools are doing that, not just Tech, but Ridgewood, Bergen Catholic, and Paramus. We're going to have to change and get on board with that if we really are preparing our students to be ready for college and for their future. I'm the one that gets the problem when the RIF letters and everything come out. This is what I want to share because it's disturbing to me when somebody comes to me and says, "I've been RIF'd for poor performance. My summative says 3.20. If I wasn't RIF'd, I would be considered an effective teacher." Some the district was willing to change, but not all. People can deal with being RIF'd, but the problem that they were worried about is when they went to collect unemployment, or when I applied in another district and they asked why they left Paterson they want to know why and it was for poor performance. Not when you have a summative of 3.19, 3.7, or anything that's effective. That should not be on their letter. RIF'd because of lack of funds. Everybody can understand that. But to say RIF'd for poor performance when my summative says one thing? I represent teachers, but some administrators had 3.20 on their summative and it said poor performance and they were moved from one school to another. You can't say I'm effective and then move me or RIF me for poor performance. You can't do that. There's another thing that I want to talk about very quickly because it seems like there is a lot of chaos behind this. I understand that management has the right to transfer people. Going forward can we possibly do it before July 31? When you do it after August 1 every person that you transfer has a right to a hearing. I know you transferred about 100 instructional aides. I don't know how many teachers you transferred. Let's say it was 100 teachers. Do we really want to sit and have hearings for 100 to 200 people for transfer moves because of what's in the contract? You didn't just wake up the date before August 1 and decide that all these people needed to be transferred. It should have been done in a timely manner. Also, you have teachers and even instructional aides that are preparing and getting ready for their school year. They walk into school on the first day, they come back the next day and there's a letter saying they're being moved over here, you're moving from a kindergarten general education class and you're going to be a personal aide. I've never worked in special education or anything like that. I don't know the procedures so when are you going to provide them with the training so that we make sure they do things right in that setting so that they don't jeopardize their career or hurt any child that might be in their care. We have to consider all that when we're making these moves because things would run a lot smoother. The last thing is I got a lot of calls today because the buildings were very hot. One teacher said her temperature gauge in her classroom was 98 degrees. Here's a suggestion that I want to throw out to the district. We know the district doesn't have a lot of money to put AC's in every classroom. But there are teachers out here that are willing to purchase the AC for their classroom. The only thing the district would have to do would be to install it in the window because they would need to put something that would secure it. And the majority of them said when they retire we can keep the AC. That's a savings. The district doesn't have to spend a dime. There are some teachers that have medical situations that may need an AC unit in their class. We need to start considering if they're willing to buy that unit let's allow them to have it. If it's 90 degrees outside, it has to be 95 to 100 inside. If it's unbearable for the teacher, what is it going to be for the student? And we want them to be able to do their best. Fans blowing hot air are not going to work. Again, that's something that's on the table. Many teachers said they will buy the unit. If they need to buy two, no problem and they will leave them with the district. That's all I need to say at this time.

Comm. Hodges: You're an elementary school teacher and I'm kind of curious of how the district asked you to approach teaching grammar to the students.

Mr. Ferrer: I'm really not the person to speak to that. I teach social studies. But one of the things that I'm going to put out there that's disturbing to me is when I was in grammar school here in Paterson penmanship was taught. Only some teachers, even though they're not supposed to, teach it. I remember when I raised that question before they said their parents will teach them. When the parent comes for report card night they print their name. Their grandparents will teach them and when the grandparent comes they print their name. I'm coming back to my son again. All through his educational career he was required to write cursive. No printing from second grade on. When we talk about data, there's data that supports that the students that can write cursive score better on tests. So it makes me wonder because I think if we do better on the test we might lose money. So do we not teach them how to write cursive so that we can keep the money coming in because the test scores don't go up the way that they should be? Penmanship should be taught throughout this district. 20 years ago I was disturbed when I asked an adult to please sign their name. I gave them the pen and he did that. He put his mark. Do we want our children putting their mark? Or do we want them signing their names? Grammar and phonics is not being done like it should. I remember one time somebody said in a workshop that vowels don't have sounds.

Ms. Mary Chowhan: Good evening, Dr. Evans, Board members, and administrative cabinet. My name is Mary Chowhan. I'm a proud graduate of Kennedy High School back in the dark ages. I spent 17 years teaching outside of Paterson. When I had the opportunity to come back, I came back home and I've been at Kennedy ever since. I feel privileged to teach there. I have a wonderful administrator that I work with and be it as a teacher, as a PEA delegate, or now officer we have an excellent relationship. We did not have one grievance filed from BTMF last year because we do work very well together. I'm here tonight to talk to you once again about the evaluation system. There are parts of the evaluation system that are interpreted differently depending on the administrator you talk to. Some administrators will tell you, you have to show growth so we're scoring you low on the first one and we'll give you your true score as the other observations occur. Teachers are concerned about that because it affects their ability to achieve a highly effective rating and if they're on the universal guide that affects their income because it makes a difference in whether they move one step or two steps on the guide. Another thing is that we try to give our children rubrics so that they know what we expect of them. They can pretty much self-score to know how they're doing. If we had a rubric it would make it much easier for us to look at the observations and evaluations and be able to convert that into a numerical score so we would know where we stand. A few years ago when we're first started teachers were given this in one of the folders that you had given and it made it easy for us to take a look and say I find the average on standard 1, I multiply it by a weight of 2, and I can get it. Last year we weren't told that this was the model that we were using so we really didn't know how to score ourselves. Something as simple as putting something like this back in and letting us know this is what we're required to do and this is what we can do to be highly effective would help. Another issue is that when we would have our pre-conference and our post-conference, depending on the administrator that you spoke to, some administrators would ask you to bring your data binder and that seems to be a catchphrase. My data binder is this thick because I have everything in there so that when I go I have my proof of what I've done. I had the privilege for the past few years of teaching the HSPA program which was the last alternative that the seniors had to be able to meet the state standards to graduate. All of my seniors met those standards and did so quite well. My biggest problem with that is when we were developing SGOs I had to do those for them from the STAR assessment which had absolutely nothing to do

with the HSPA. In my opinion, to rate my effectiveness see how many seniors I had that came in that hadn't passed the HSPA and how many of them did I get to move on and graduate. That's where you can tell whether I'm an effective teacher, not by that STAR testing. STAR testing has its place, but not for every single class. So I would ask you to consider the courses that the different teachers are offering and if it really is an effective tool to demonstrate a child's growth. The last thing that I would like to say is that while some administrators were very happy to make changes I would present my proof, our teachers would present their proof, and some administrators would sit there and say, "You're right. You do that. You are on this committee. You do help there. You do deserve a different rating than what I had given you initially." But there were some administrators that would say, "Once there was a Media X there could be no change" and to me that defeats the purpose of a post-conference. The post-conference was for us to bring closure and for us to address the areas of need so that we would know as professionals where we had to improve and grow. By the same token, it was also a place for us to say, "I do this in my classroom. You didn't happen to be at a lesson that I presented it that way, but I want you to see here's all of my data." Based on the data some administrators were willing to make movement on the observations and others weren't. If there could just be a more level playing ground that all administrators were under the same impression. I don't know if that's the right word, but it seems as if some administrators would interpret something one way and others another way. That really doesn't seem fair. We try to be fair with our students. I got to go to an IFL training today and they said that you should ask assessing questions and advancing questions. I believe that's true of teachers with their observations and their teaching ability. We should be asked assessing questions. What are we doing to help educate our children? Then we should also be asked advancing questions. What are we doing to improve, not only your students, whether it be 21st Century skills, but what are you doing to improve yourself as an educator? Paterson gives its teachers wonderful opportunities for workshops and I thank you very much for the workshops that you do provide for us. But we also need to be able to know that when we implement some of the workshops that we've attended we won't have an administrator say, "I'm marking you down because that's not how it should be done," when you're following the rubric of the workshop. Thank you very much.

Comm. Hodges: Thank you.

Mr. Gennaro Tortoriello: Good evening everybody. Dr. Evans, administrative cabinet, and members of the Board, thank you for the opportunity to speak here tonight. My name is Gennaro Tortoriello and I'm the 3rd Vice President of the Paterson Education Association. I'm also a special education teacher at John F. Kennedy High School. Before serving on the association as a Vice President, I was an executive board member who co-chaired the grievance committee. The majority of our grievances that we processed were evaluation grievances. First let me say I have a great deal of respect for many of our school administrators and I'm proud to call some of them friends. I'd like to take the time to thank our administrators who have treated our members with the professional respect and courtesy that they deserve. Unfortunately, there are a number of administrators that do not and they've used the evaluation tool as a method of punitive discipline, retaliation, and intimidation. Here are a few examples that we've dealt with over the last two years. An administrator wrote an observation while the staff member was on prep. That person received an effective rating of that observation. Unfortunately, there was one last year where an administrator conducted an observation where a staff member was on prep and rated that person unsatisfactory in every category. Administrators are threatening to place teachers that they do not like on caps. Administrators are marking teachers down for data walls after directing them to place information that violates student's privacy rights. Administrators are rating

physical education teachers unsatisfactory for not using technology in their gym classes, directing art teachers to teach IFL without training, and directing special education teachers to not adhere to IEP's because they were not rigorous enough. These are a few examples. There are many more. Thank you for the opportunity to speak tonight.

Comm. Teague: I can actually attest to some of that. There was a teacher who did work here and they were RIF'd. They were told on numerous occasions don't follow the IEP because it's not rigorous enough. They were at School 28 and they were dismissed this year. I can attest to that.

Ms. Joy Spinelli: Good evening. My name is Joy Spinelli and I just wanted to give a couple of examples of when they said that the evaluations were subjective. In 2013-2014 when we had the yellow evaluate book a lot of teachers finished the year off effective. Coming in the fall of 2014-2015 when the first round of evaluations went out all these effective teachers were now receiving progressing 1 and 2 on their evaluations and told, just like they said before, they had the whole year to move up to it. We were low-balled the first round. We started already low because we had to have the whole year to prove up. Another example is when we're receiving our evaluation there are check marks. Suppose in one category you get three check marks. Two of them are in the proficient column and one is the progressing column. One supervisor may consider that proficient because two outnumbers one. Another supervisor might say if you add it up and you use the numbers it doesn't come out to a 3 so we're going to mark you as a progressing 2. So even in the numbers there is subjectivity. Finally, another example I want to give is last year when the evaluations were starting in the fall a lot of teachers were nervous. I teach first grade. We have the Imagine It Kit and we thought Reading Foundations and Word Work is our favorite. We're going to be observed in something that we're most comfortable with and we use the Imagine It, a program that you bought and we use in our classrooms every single day. We were nailed. Our evaluations were so poor because it didn't fit in the rubric using the program that was brought to us. Thank you.

Comm. Hodges: Before you leave, could you address my question about grammar?

Ms. Spinelli: I can absolutely address it because I love literacy. There is no grammar in our classrooms. I have a 120-minute literacy block. I was at a meeting today with the first and second grade teachers. Not all first grade teachers even have 120-minute blocks. Not in all the schools. In my 120-minute block I teach one period of phonics, one period of guided reading, and a third period of comprehension or writer's workshop, which is following what the chart is. But we don't have a specific time where we discuss nouns and pronouns. We used to have time to bring in the grammar when we had our other programs. I have not taught grammar in about three years in the district. However, I'm lucky enough that I get to do spelling. Based on our phonics I have spelling in my day.

Comm. Hodges: My understanding is that what's supposed to happen is if a child incorrectly uses grammar we're supposed to address it.

Ms. Spinelli: Exactly. When I'm doing a writer's workshop conference and their grammar in their writing, I can use that time conferencing and we can do a little lesson together as it comes across. Or when I'm doing guided reading I can have a group working on a grammar lesson in that sense. But we no longer have time for explicit grammar lessons as were taught in the past.

Comm. Hodges: Does this current process allow adequate training for students?

Ms. Spinelli: I don't believe so. I believe we're putting holes in the foundation of their learning. I believe that we're so overwhelmed with what we're putting on the plate for them that we're forgetting sometimes what is most important.

Comm. Hodges: Thank you very much.

Comm. Kerr: I just want to go back to the whole business of assessment. When the teachers are assessed if they are given a score that they are not quite in agreement with, are you able to contest those scores?

Ms. Spinelli: In black and white it appears to be. We're supposed to have a post-conference. What happens in reality is our administrators and supervisors are evaluating a large number of teachers at one time and they're overwhelmed with their course work. If you're evaluated earlier than someone else there's more time for you to have a post-conference, have a discussion, and bring your evidence to prove it in case they didn't notice it. However, if you get observed closer to the deadline everyone is so overwhelmed, that time is not available, and you have to pretty much fight for it. It doesn't come as easily as it does for the earlier ones.

Comm. Kerr: It should not be.

Ms. Spinelli: Absolutely. I feel badly for the administrators and the supervisors. There are times when I receive my evaluation through an email at 11:00 on a Sunday night. Their workload is so large they just spent their weekend working on it for everybody.

Comm. Kerr: If something is put in your file I believe you have the right to count on whatever is placed in your file. Nothing should be placed in your file without you knowing or agreeing.

Ms. Spinelli: We see it. Nothing that is put in our file is a surprise. We see everything. But we may not have a chance to... What I saw most frequently last year is we were given our evaluations and scores so quickly we didn't have time to really understand. We were told, "Don't worry. You're going to show growth. It will all work out." When we were given this feeling we moved on and we didn't realize how every single point in every single box matters. As the year progressed we knew to be more aggressive in making sure we had our post-conference and our time.

Comm. Kerr: That's your position now.

Ms. Spinelli: Yes.

Comm. Kerr: That will be required of the district to make sure that you're treated adequately in that area. You're going to have your post-assessment discussion.

Ms. Spinelli: Normally you would assume the principal would say, "You're going to come today during this time to swing by and we'll have our post-conference." What happens is you have to make sure that the teacher goes in and gets that time. It didn't come easily to all the teachers throughout the whole year.

Comm. Kerr: If that's the process and you're given the opportunity to contest it, sit down, and have a discussion.

Ms. Spinelli: None of the administrators or supervisors ever said they would not. The problem arises with the length of the observation and the amount that they have to do. They don't physically have the time to sit and that's why we have to push our way in. It's because the evaluation is so lengthy. Every box that they mark off is so specific and wordy that you have to pay attention to every detail. I've had post-conferences that lasted an hour. I won't lie. I wanted every point that I could get and I wanted to understand exactly where they were coming from so that for my next evaluation I can then bring that evidence also.

Comm. Kerr: Teachers have to exercise that right of theirs to make sure they're protected. It's your right to be protected. My thing is to make sure that you get it so that you're not in any way victimized in the process.

Dr. Evans: In the next workshop we should have Ms. McKoy come and explain the process. There are some things that are not negotiable that are required like post-conferences and things like that. So you need to hear what the requirements are. Because of our agenda tonight I would defer to the next workshop to allow Ms. McKoy to come and explain in detail what that process is. Actually, the Board has it in a handbook that we gave out quite some time ago, but I'm going to ask her to come and explain it.

Ms. Spinelli: Please understand I'm not saying that we don't have them because we're being refused them. We're not having them at the time because there's so much work to do. I cannot recall a time that someone was denied a post-conference. It was difficult to get to them because of the timing.

Comm. Hodges: Dr. Evans, I certainly will have a number of questions as a result of this I need clarification on.

Mr. Ryan Cohen: Dr. Evans, Dr. Hodges, administrative cabinet, and Board, thank you for the opportunity to speak to you tonight. I was going to speak wholly on the evaluation system but something has arisen that I think bears immediate attention. I'm a teacher at YES Academy, which is one of our alternative high schools in the city. YES Academy, we were told, is being moved. At the end of last year we were told we were being moved and we were going to be housed within HARP Academy in a new building retrofitted downtown right next to City Hall and it would be ready to go by September. It is not ready to go by September. Not at all! In fact, HARP is now in its original facility, which has many work site health and safety issues, which is the reason they were being moved out, and YES Academy was displaced because of a new all boys elementary school. YES Academy is now being housed in the same facility as two other alternative high schools in a building that is connected to an abandoned mill that is being worked on as we speak. A teacher and a supervisor came to me today saying to me there were construction workers removing pieces of the roof of the mill and throwing them into the open space below into a dumpster causing debris and dust to kick up. We had some windows open and it was coming into the room where we were working. We were working on student schedules. We don't have any of our materials. Our materials are being housed in Newark. The Board feels it would cost too much money to unpack our materials just to repack them again, which I can understand in terms of the financial cost, but our students are coming tomorrow. We're being housed in a facility where two alternative schools already exist. Just to give you a little frame of reference, each alternative high school has its own focus. Great Falls triages at-risk youth that may be just coming out of problems with the law and things of that sort. DESTINY Academy deals with younger students that are having problems so they need an alternative setting. YES Academy is for overage under-credited students. We have students in

their 20's that are being taught. So now we have a situation where our older students, students that have major issues at Great Falls, and our younger students are all going to be placed in a facility that, from my best estimation, is too small. Also, our own materials are not even available to us and it's a facility that is just a retrofitted mill and is being constructed. This is not a situation that can go on and I think the Board needs to be made aware of this. I've heard many different time frames, but I would implore everyone at this meeting to expedite this process. I understand that the new building needs to be safe for occupancy. I understand that. But we were also promised that we would be in there and our students are coming tomorrow. This is a major problem that the Board needs to be aware of. I'd be happy to answer any questions on that. I do want to speak somewhat to the evaluation. Mr. Kerr, you asked Joy about recourse for teachers if they didn't agree with the evaluation. I just want to speak to that for a minute or two. If you're evaluated and you have your pre-conference beforehand and the post-conference, if the administrator agrees that your evaluation is a certain way there is no recourse. If a teacher disagrees with that evaluation there is no recourse. We can't grieve. I know a grievance sounds like a rough word, but all a grievance really is, is due process. You cannot grieve an evaluator's evaluation. You can rebut it, but all that means is you write your opinion and it goes in your file. You have your voice in the file, but your evaluation stands. That, coupled with our new contract and the new steps that we have, can be very detrimental. You could not receive your step or you could be placed on a cap where in two years you could no longer be teaching. When we talk about recourse I think it's very important to highlight the fact that teachers do not have due process when it comes to disagreements over our evaluation system if we don't agree. We can have our voice in there, but our administrator's word is final. Also in terms of scoring, I'd like to talk to you about my own personal experience just to show that, not that I benefitted from this new evaluation system, but I'm doing this for the good of the order. I was rated highly effective last year and I'm on the single salary guide so I jumped two steps. I benefited from this new evaluation system and the new salary guide. But I see the massive problems that exist in this in that it is punitive and subjective. I'll give you a couple of examples. There have been teachers that I know that have scored four on their student growth objectives, meaning that they have met their SGO's and their students have grown, but they have been rated ineffective. So how can a teacher who has shown that they are not only teaching but meeting the state's mandates beyond still be rated ineffective? This goes to the idea that this is more subjective. From my own personal experience last year I was rated highly effective but when I was going to sign in Media X my evaluation I looked through it. My administrator said, "Come down and we'll sign this." I looked through it and thank goodness I did because it turns out that large swaths of my evaluation were blank. They were already filled out. I already had my post-observation. I had already signed off on it. Everything was fine. But when I looked over it, there were not even check marks in there. Then I had to bring it to the administrator and we had to sit down. She had to call my supervisor and it took time out of her day and my day just to really cobble together what scores I was evaluated on. Again, this speaks to a system that is not ready. If it's ready to be rolled out, something is lost in the sauce here. I have talked to administrators that do not like this evaluation system because of some of the reasons that have already been brought up. It is so time-consuming. I had administrators say to me, "If I was to do what this evaluation system says to the letter of the law, that's all I would be doing, evaluating teachers. I wouldn't be able to run the school." I guess I'm a bleeding heart and I really believe that we're here for the students and the students aren't being served by an evaluation system where our administrators who are supposed to be running the building are worried and preoccupied and teachers are being haggard by a salmon booklet that is over 100 pages long. Our priorities are on the wrong things. This evaluation system is punitive and subjective. It can be used as a tool if you get an administrator to come down on an employee. To Mr. Kerr's

question, we don't have any real recourse. I think we really need to sit down and look at how we are structuring our evaluation system and really think about if this is the best way to do things. It's not usual when administrators and regular teachers or ESP's sit down and agree that something is wrong. When they do, I think it bears some looking into. I want to thank you for the time. Are there any questions?

Comm. Teague: Throughout the course of a school year, what percentage of time do you think is being spent on the evaluation system?

Mr. Cohen: If you take into account SGO's, compiling data, there are so many different facets to this evaluation system that off the top of my head it's very hard to quantify. I can't put a number on it. It's a very good portion.

Comm. Teague: That's time that is being taken away from instruction.

Mr. Cohen: It's being taken away from instruction time. Let me go even further. There is instructional time being taken away, but even if we're doing work at home such as lesson plans, planning for the next day, grading tests, we are expending energy on things having to do with the evaluation we can be putting into our children. That's the fact of the matter. I would love to answer some questions about YES Academy. Please don't let that get lost.

Comm. Teague: What is your location now?

Mr. Cohen: Currently we are in the Boris Kroll complex. Boris Kroll is located at 47 State Street. It was an abandoned million retrofitted to a school and some apartments. This is the same building where the roof collapsed two years ago because of the snow situation. This is not a place to house comprehensive education, let alone our most at-risk members of this city. I would really love to hold your feet to the fire and be able to get some sort of a timeframe of when we can move into this new building because it is absolutely necessary. We can't provide quality instruction if we don't have a building, let alone textbooks and all these different things that are locked up some place in Newark or wherever it may be. This is truly unacceptable, not so much for teachers and administrators, but for these children, our most at-risk children.

Comm. Teague: What's the holdup with Colt Street?

Dr. Evans: The landlord still has some work to do. The big issue right now is that we're waiting on the power company, PSE&G, to finish its work. I think there is some technology work by Verizon that is going to take an additional couple of weeks to finish. We're waiting on the utilities to finish what they're doing.

Comm. Hodges: Is the inspection waiting?

Dr. Evans: All of that won't be done until this other work is done.

Mr. Cohen: So we're looking at the end of September or early October?

Dr. Evans: The utilities have said two weeks, but we're planning for at least a month just in case they aren't finished in two weeks.

Mr. Cohen: We're waiting with bated breath.

Comm. Hodges: Are there any further questions? Thank you very much. I personally want to thank Mr. McEntee and his staff. I thought that it would be useful for the Board and the administrative staff to hear your perceptive. Obviously we're going to ask the administration to help clarify some of the issues and perhaps we can work together to make a smoother and a more equitable system for everybody. As I told people before and I told Mr. McEntee in this office, I'm not concerned about the adults – the teachers or the administrative staff of the district. It's the impact that those people have on our kids that is of great concern to me. When they're not able to reach their levels of effectiveness they can't relay that to our children. That's a driving concern for us. We're going to try to make you as effective as you can be so that you can deliver that product for our children. Thank you very much for coming and sharing with us today.

Comm. Irving: Given our timeframe, I know we have folks here who want to speak, would it not make sense to go to public portion now, hear from the public, and then go back and go through all our business?

Comm. Hodges: That's fine. Is there any objection from the Board?

PUBLIC COMMENTS AND SPECIAL SESSION ON POLICIES FOR SECOND READING

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

Ms. Jamie Bland: Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. My name is Jamie Bland. I'm a community activist, youth advocate, and the Executive Director for Jumpstart Community Training and Services. I worked at the Board of Education in 1997 through 1999 as an IA at School 30 with Mr. Caramico and at School 13 under Dr. Monroe. However, in 2000 I found the need to start a program called Jumpstart. Jumpstart is a program for mentoring, counseling, and the arts. Two years ago, my Board members and I decided to start a homework assistance and tutoring program. However, as a volunteer in the City of Paterson working under different agencies and capacities I felt that if we come into the schools in the warped areas where we could work with some of the children because of the budget cuts I figured if we got that homework done we could help bring some of the children and get them in tune with their class work and up to par with their grade levels. Yes indeed it has worked. At the same time, we had to ask for a donation/co-pay of \$60 from some of the parents. Some of the parents had to make arrangements for that so we might get \$30 of that and sometimes we get \$20 of that \$60. What we don't get we still take the child. We also have hired your teachers that are working in the existing schools to work as certified teachers. The state says that you have to have 12 children to one teacher. So we have to have a certified teacher and we take and we pay the certified teacher out of whatever we get. I also do fundraisers. For those of you who know me I have a couple of different categories in Jumpstart. I'm out there doing other things as well. However, the teachers that have been working with the children that they're already familiar with have been a great success. Some of the kids have made it to the Honor Roll and the Principal's List. We also have parents that are excited and they love Jumpstart. Some of them still owe \$10 or \$20, but it's okay. The reason I'm here today is because we're working with your children. We're paying your teachers. But now it's been said that we need to pay the security and the custodians. Unfortunately, we are not a Boys' and Girls' Club. We don't have people that give \$50 a week and 21 Century grants. We are a grassroots organization that's very popular, but we have always been boots on the ground doing what we have to do without money. We have been doing a successful job and

collaborated with some of the best. We're partnered in with you guys and your children. But we don't want to make money an issue to break my spirit and then have to stop the program because we cannot meet the requirement of \$70 an hour. That's \$1,500 a month and we're paying your teachers because your teachers have to be paid. We are asking if there's any way that we can continue these great services that we have been providing since 2000 and other capacities. This new project as a pilot it worked well and now we have more parents and principals beating down the door, and I'm happy about that. It's just that I don't have the capacity to pay what it takes to teach, empower, and educate your kids. I don't think it's fair that I have to pay you to help the kids in the community because that really is not what the mission coming from the Board should be. We are a grassroots organization working with great people in the City of Paterson and certified teachers. We have my board member here Ms. Jeannette Thomas, Sister Waheedah Muhammad, and others that have opened up this program. We thought it was a great thing, but we definitely cannot pay \$70 an hour. So I am asking you if we can get that waived because I think that's a bunch of foolishness. It's about the kids and we would like to continue. I can't keep taking little Johnny whose parents don't have anything because I don't have a lot of money out of my back pocket. But I have definitely been trying to do the best that I can. Again, we're asking to at least waive one of those hours so that we can come in and continue to get this homework done. It means a lot, whether you know it or not. When those kids come in that classroom and their homework is done they have a whole new lease on life as opposed to not being able to. Some of the kids don't have the same support system in line as some of the fortunate children that do. We always have to think about those disadvantaged children.

Comm. Hodges: Thank you very much.

Ms. Bland: Since you're saying thank you, Dr. Hodges, I really don't want to leave here. I've been here since 2:00.

Comm. Hodges: I understand that.

Ms. Bland: I would like to know where we stand as far as that's concerned because I am looking to start and continue with my boots on the ground. I don't want to break the spirit of the parents or the children.

Comm. Hodges: Dr. Evans, I don't know whether you want to handle this now, or sidebar, or meet with her.

Dr. Evans: I had a brief conversation just prior to the meeting and I can tell you our position. First of all, any principal that's willing to work with her I support. However, what she was asking for was for Board and district level support to waive the fee. That's a problem. That fee includes liability insurance if the kid gets hurt.

Ms. Bland: I have a \$2 million policy.

Dr. Evans: It also includes security and the custodial services. Principals are responsible if indeed they have custodians and guards that work beyond hours. They're responsible for paying us if indeed that happens. If a principal decides to cover that cost for you, I don't object to that, but the district doesn't have the funds to cover that cost.

Ms. Bland: But I have a \$2 million insurance policy and I can bring that. I find the custodians to be there anyway. I understand security. Is there any way that you can waive some of that portion and I bring you my own insurance and you can see that?

Dr. Evans: I support a principal who wants to do it. Once I assume it then I assume the costs for those services and I don't have the funds to do it. Our budget is very limited. But if a principal wants to, I will support that principal.

Ms. Bland: So when you say if a principal wants to take the program then you support them how? I don't know what you mean? Can you just make that a little bit clear? I really don't understand when you say you'll support a principal.

Dr. Evans: Morally, not financially.

Ms. Bland: Now we're clear. I'm still at square one. Is there any way that you can break the fee down a bit? We work with your children and we are getting some of the results we need. I'm not asking you about my kids because my baby is 27. I'm talking about these kids in the Board of Education that are actually getting services and we can see the improvement.

Dr. Evans: Fees are tied to provisions in union contracts. Any time a person works overtime that fee is driven by the language in the contract. We're required to pay time and a half and those kinds of things. I can't waive that provision in the contract unless I'm willing to pay and I'm telling you I can't afford to pay it.

Comm. Martinez: How many sites are you guys currently working out of?

Ms. Bland: We have four, but then we have four more that are asking if we can come. That will be eight. We try to put a couple in each ward so that we're servicing some of the kids that were struggling.

Comm. Martinez: How many days a week and how many hours a day?

Ms. Bland: It's five days a week, but I spoke to Captain Traina and he said that the security is there until 4:00, so we would only be looking to waive maybe from 4:00 to 5:00. We can't get much done if it's up until 4:00, so we have to stay at least until 5:00.

Comm. Martinez: We're looking to operate...

Ms. Bland: Just one hour of waiving between 4:00 and 5:00 or whatever we can do.

Comm. Martinez: It was a \$70 fee for custodial?

Dr. Evans: Not to her.

Ms. Shafer: It's normally \$60 for custodians an hour and \$60 for security. But because Jaime and Jumpstart partners with us there is a partnering fee of \$39. It's \$39 an hour for the custodians and \$39 for the security.

Comm. Irving: Is it possible to identify schools that already will be in use and will have security and maintenance services? How many classrooms do you need?

Ms. Bland: One. Sometimes we might use the cafeteria area or whatever is convenient.

Comm. Irving: I'm just saying there might be an opportunity if there is another program going on that you might be able to connect onto. If it's rec and they're doing an afternoon basketball game that's going to go from 4:00 to 6:00 security and maintenance is already there and that might be an opportunity for you to partner either with the school and recreation to come under their umbrella. There has to be a minimum waive. We're only talking about four sites to try to make this work.

Ms. Bland: It was School 12, School 14, Urban Leadership Academy, and Kilpatrick. But now with Ms. Galicia word got out and they want the program. It's right there. The kid just comes to Ms. Galicia at Alexander Hamilton Academy and School 10 with Ms. Vaughn. We also have School 30, School 29, and School 15 with Ms. Garcia. If I have to pay it, \$39 is a little bit crazy. Why do I have insurance? I have the insurance from Veronica. I can show you the insurance policy and we can go over that. Is there anything you can chop down until I can piggyback? I know Mr. Wimberly wouldn't have a problem with me piggybacking when they're in the building and 21st Century as well.

Dr. Evans: I think Comm. Irving is right, but there's a missing piece here. The principal has to be willing to work with you. That's what I've said all along.

Comm. Irving: I think we've come down to an agreement. If you can identify if recreation is currently using the facility and the school is already going to be open for that time and the principal is willing to cover the cost, then it makes sense for you to tack on for that timeframe. If it's only 4:00 to 5:00, you only have that time. You'll have to work specifically with that principal or that other agency or group that might be using that same space and be able to negotiate where you all will fit into the program. I think creating a proposal which would identify your principals they have a level of commitment. Then if it's recreation that you're partnering with who's already going to be in the building is already covering the cost of having facilities and security there. That's probably the best bet given the scenario.

Ms. Bland: So I probably would have to worry about this month of September when everybody really wants to get it going and then October I think some of the other programs come in. I know all the programs and program heads and I work with them as well.

Comm. Irving: It will probably take you about 30 days to be able to get agreements, signatures, and commitments. Use September to set it up and establish the partnerships you need.

Ms. Bland: I'd rather just say that I would pay for the hour. I don't know how. I have a lot of parents that definitely and desperately need services for their child. I'm not going to bow down. I'm going to go ahead and do what I have to do. I did ask if it could be waived a little. Instead of the \$39 is there any way we can at least go to \$30? Is there any way?

Comm. Rivera: During the time that she provides the services, I thought the custodians are supposed there anyway.

Ms. Shafer: Just until 4:00.

Comm. Rivera: I heard what you said, Dr. Evans, regarding leaving it up to the principal to support whatever they have in their buildings. The way I interpret it is as long as they're willing to use their budget that you provided for them and reimburse the district,

which is the same budget if you think about it, I'm a little concerned. If you're going to pass a districtwide policy then it should be left up to you to decide how these fees are going to be waived depending on the services that are going to be provided. But leaving it up to the principal you're still going to incur overtime. It's still your budget. Although they're using the budget that you provided for them, you're still incurring overtime as a whole. I just don't like the theory of always us leaving it up to the principals to do what they want in their buildings. You have to give them some leeway, but ever since I've been on this Board all I hear is it's up to the principal. Why are we parking cars in front of the building when that could be a fire hazard? We leave it up to the principal. We have to get that mentality away from the district. Please let's stop that. The comment that you made I'm going to repeat – as long as the principal is willing to work with you that means that you might not have to pay. As long as the principal grabs that money from their budget and reimburses for that overtime, it's still the district's budget. We're still paying for it. It doesn't matter if it's coming out of their budget or our budget. We're still paying for it.

Dr. Evans: Not necessarily. I think Comm. Irving gave a great example. If something already is happening there and the custodians and guards are already there and the principal is willing to use that guard and security to take care of the bigger needs for the building including any space that's used by her program, then that's their call. I don't want to impose that on the principal. Principals are responsible for everything that goes on in their building. I hold them accountable for everything that happens in their building. If we decide we're going to take the lead, we're assuming that responsibility at the district level and I prefer not to. We have enough to manage and principals are very capable managers.

Comm. Irving: I just want to put this to rest. Jamie, you have your answer.

Ms. Bland: I just want to know what line item with the principals. I don't want to go there. The principals will say...

Comm. Hodges: They can figure out generally how they spend their money.

Ms. Bland: It's been said to me we don't have money and we don't have a line item for that.

Comm. Irving: Then you can't use that school. We're trying our best right now to work with you. I'm just saying at this point in time I think we've given you two very credible, possible, and realistic ways to make this happen. It is incumbent upon you now to leave and go back and check with the principals to see what other programs are going on and figure out how to do it.

Ms. Bland: That's what I have to do. I don't have a problem with that. I just wanted to ask that last question. Now I do have my answer and I thank you all very much.

Comm. Irving: Thank you for your hard work. We love you.

Ms. Bland: I still love you, Ms. Shafer.

Mr. Christopher Gonda: Good evening everyone. My name is Christopher Gonda. I'm the Regional Coordinator for Safe Routes to School in Passaic County. I'm here to talk to you today about what we've done in Paterson so far. Over the course of the last year and a half we've done assemblies at schools to teach children how to cross streets safely. It sounds like something that's very elementary because we all do it without

thinking at this point, but from when we were younger conditions have changed. What's happening is you have more children walking across the street holding their cell phones and you have more drivers driving around doing the same thing. Conditions have changed when it comes to pedestrian and bicycle safety. We've taught kids how to stop, look, listen, and think. This is only one part of our program. Our program is funded by the Federal Highway Administration and State DOT. What that means for the community and the district is that our services, our consultation, and everything we do is free. I was talking to a couple of our partners from the Rutgers Voorhees Transportation Center and they wanted to know what's going on in Paterson when it comes to walking and biking for kids who are going to school. We already know that a lot of your schoolchildren are walking being that you're a walking school district and we've done some surveys in schools that give us some data there. But what they'd like me to do and propose to you is to do a districtwide school travel plan. This is a service that comes free for us to do the report. What we're looking for is permission to go into each school, talk to the principal, talk to the PTA, and see if they want to organize a group to take one afternoon each and walk with us around where their students typically walk. We will take into the report what the structural deficiencies are and what the infrastructural barriers are for kids walking to school. It doesn't have to do with the local violence. We can compile that into the report as well, but what we're concerned about is things like are crosswalks not painted well and is this causing crashes, has a student been struck by a vehicle here, are students cutting through certain areas because it's not safe in certain sections. We want to survey this with a group of volunteers from the school, PTA, active parents, and even students who are willing to come with us on these surveys at each school for grades k-8 and that can give us more information and tell us what's going on around there. We call these walkability audits. These audits come into reports that we call School Travel Plans. When these School Travel Plans come together, when a Safe Routes to School grant solicitation is open the district can work with the municipality and they can apply for Safe Routes to School money to do things like fix those sidewalks, fix the pedestrian signals that aren't working, and fix the lighting at night. We have a lot of data showing that there are crashes for all ages when it comes to people who are walking and biking in Paterson. I'm sure a lot of you know about Javier, the 16-year-old child that was struck last month by a car. Bicycle education is something we also do with schools, community, and local police. This is also something we want to bring to your community and it's something that can be valuable and yield a lot of results. A lot of other cities right now are putting a lot of investments into more walkable and bikable cities, and we know that Paterson is eventually going to get there. My organization is also providing consultation for the planners involved with the Great Falls area and the bike show that they're thinking of piloting there, maybe not this year but a couple of years forward.

Comm. Hodges: Could you begin to conclude your remarks? Do you have information that you can leave?

Mr. Gonda: I do have a little bit of information and business cards. I just wanted to tell you what we're all about and if I had someone to contact me to follow up that would be great.

Dr. Evans: There's actually a process that involves our assessment folks to take a look at the methodology you're going to use to collect the data. We're particularly interested in who's going to be interacting with our kids and what that interaction looks like and parental permission. Dr. Newell will take your information.

Ms. Rosie Grant: Good evening Dr. Hodges, Dr. Evans, Commissioners, staff, and community. I came here from an open house at School 15 this evening. They had a

wonderful amount of parents turn out to this open house that was even before the first day of school. That was good to see. I'm sure it was about 100 degrees in that auditorium and I'm concerned about whether any measures are being put in place to make sure that kids are hydrated because next week promises to be hotter than this week. Please be mindful of that. This morning I started my day at the State Board of Education meeting where the Standards Review Board shared what they're doing so far. As you know, we're no longer participating in Common Core and this Board has been charged with developing new standards for New Jersey. They expect that the standards won't be too much different from the Common Core because they don't want people to have to change their curriculum again and reinvest in professional development. However, they are having a listening tour where they will put the standards out to people and there will be opportunity for professionals, parents, students, and community members to make recommendations to like or dislike particular standards and give feedback. The northern listening tour will be September 17 at the Public Safety Training Academy in Parsippany from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. I don't quite agree that's north, but that's the closest one to us. So I do want to encourage members of the Board and the staff in particular, people who know about what the standards are and what our kids need to be learning, to go to the listening session if they can. The second opportunity starts today. It's on a website. There's a survey. It lists all the standards. You can comment on one or all at your pleasure. That's found online at the njstandardsreview.statestandards.org. Again, I'd like to encourage as many people with the right knowledge to log on and participate in the survey. I was distressed at one thing that I heard this evening about no time for grammar lessons. I would be curious to see what the state standards say about teaching our children grammar. I'm sure even before seeing it that this is a requirement. I was pleased to see Safe Routes to School here. They partner with us through Paterson Reads in our effort to reduce chronic absenteeism and brought us the folks who do the Walking School Bus to make sure that kids get to school on time every day. If we can take advantage of that and get our kids to be safer and to get to school on time every day that would be awesome. Thank you for your attention. Happy New Year!

Comm. Cleaves: Can you give us that website again?

Ms. Grant: It's njstandardsreview.statestandards.org. If you go to the Department of Education's website there's a link to it there also.

Comm. Teague: With the State Board, have they found out what the Chinese feed their children yet?

Ms. Grant: That was awful. That was just awful.

Comm. Hodges: Mr. Teague, would you clarify that, please?

Ms. Grant: Allow me, please. At the state meeting today they were looking at performance results. We saw aggregate performance results for all the tests administered by the State of New Jersey and SAT and ACT tests. In all the results the Asian students outperformed everybody else. They outperformed the Whites, Blacks, and Latinos. One state school board member said, "We need to find out what these Asians are feeding their children." I was just incensed. That was laughed at and accepted by everybody else. I posted my anger on Facebook. We have to do better.

Comm. Hodges: Along with this, I'll just point out that several students are suing the State of New Jersey because of the graduation standards. They're departing from regulations and as part of the graduation profile you can either take the SAT, ACT, or

two PARCC tests. The ACT and the SAT you have to pay for. You can no longer use ASSA and NJASK and HSPA no longer exists. You have an appeal process where you must pass two PARCC tests or you have an opportunity to pay for the SAT and the ACT. None of this is captured in regulation so now you have some students who get paid to get tutorial services for the SAT, but you also have to pay for the SAT in some cases. That access is no longer equal and that's a problem. They're being taken to court to address that. The Education Law Center is representing some students.

Ms. Grant: Congratulations to Paterson Public Schools and the Full Service Community Schools team on the new Full Service Community Schools grant which I saw announced by the National Community Schools Organization today. It's \$2.49 million.

Ms. Marcella Simadiris: Peace and blessings. Welcome to the new school year. I just wanted to hit a little bit on the evaluation system, too. I wanted to mention the DEAC, which is an acronym for the District Evaluation Advisory Committee. We're entering our third year with this new evaluation system. Last March, I reached out to Ms. McKoy and I was requesting minutes and information on DEAC meetings. At that time she sent me what she had and there were only four meetings. Coming to the end of the second year of this new evaluation system and the DEAC had only met around four times. When I looked through the minutes they were very vague. Attendance was very poor. New Jersey Achieve actually has a document with recommendations and I'll email it to you all tonight. On that document it indicates that to be successful DEAC should be open to anyone who wants to attend. Presently if you go on the district website and you look at the DEAC, I don't see any Board members listed on there as a part of the DEAC. There are a couple of teachers, but when I was looking at the attendance I didn't see their presence at meetings. I'm just thinking if we're going to really be the leader in urban education we really should follow the best practices. There's a document and it says make DEAC meetings open to all and meet on a regular schedule. Four times in two years? I don't know if there are other meetings. I requested all the information and I only got information on four. And publish the meeting minutes. There should be someone taking minutes so this information can be shared. For over the last year I've been speaking about the schedule and the lack of quality. I've testified here. I've gone to Trenton. I want you all to know that my schedule is even worse. My voice and advocacy brought nothing but a bigger lack of quality. Yesterday the RAC supervisor of my principal introduced herself. She went over some of her job description, one of which was overlooking schedules and just helping support with the master teacher schedules. So I emailed her and I asked her what role she played in this year's schedule because this year's schedule is worse than what it was before. Before it was horrible and now it's even worse. Did she help create it? Did she approve it? She responded and wouldn't answer the question. She refused to answer the question. We have this woman requesting \$39 and then we're paying these people six-figure salaries. They go to Trenton and they say how they're coming to our communities and they're helping and doing all these things in our schools, but I don't see that. So I'm looking for someone to hold them accountable. Maybe even one of you Board members can email and find out if these RAC supervisors are helping in overseeing scheduling. These schedules are terrible. Thank you. I appreciate the time. Good luck with the school year. Thanks.

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

Dr. Evans: In the next meeting I'm very likely to come to you with some updated information regarding the RACs. I say likely because I'm not sure if I'll have everything I

need to bring to you by then, but I should. There are some changing expectations originating from the Commissioner's office, the Department of Education, with regards to the RACs, particularly in terms of where they're going to be located. There's an attempt for them to work more collaboratively with the districts and some other kinds of things that we're seeking clarity on. And I've included in at least one conversation the Board's request for the RAC Executive Director to come address the Board. That's been received positively. That will be a part of it as well.

Comm. Hodges: I had written it down here. I was going to say I really don't want you to give us the update. I prefer to have the RACs give us the update because we're due that. This is the fourth year and they've done it in other districts but not here and they have a bigger impact here. I'm having trouble accepting that.

Dr. Evans: I'm not going to speak for the RACs. I'm being asked to do some things and that's what I want to communicate with the Board. There were specific requests from the Department of Education and how we are preparing to respond to those requests.

Comm. Hodges: Again, we're paying the RACs and I have no idea what they're doing. That to me undermines oversight, which is our responsibility. If we're being charged to do that then it's not acceptable that we're not able to do that when we request it and this is not the first time. This is every year for the last four years. So I'm very anxious to speak to the RAC executive. I'd like the person's name. If they can't come to us, I'll go to them.

Dr. Evans: Ron Carson.

Comm. Hodges: I'd like to arrange a meeting with Mr. Carson and find out why they can't get here or help them find the way.

PRESENTATIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Alternative Education Restructuring

Dr. Evans: The next presentation is an overview of a restructuring plan for Alternative Education and Nicole Payne is going to come forward and provide you that overview.

Ms. Nicole Payne: Good evening Board members and Cabinet members. I'm Nicole Payne, Interim Director of Alternative Education. It is a pleasure to be before you once again. This year we have restructured alternative education. We've made some changes for the betterment of our students. This is a presentation. I will not read you the whole slide presentation. The purpose of alternative education, the vision, is to serve the students of Paterson who require a non-traditional approach in an environment that promotes academic achievement, therapeutic strategies for social and behavioral development, and transitional plans for the future. One of the approaches that we're looking more towards providing is to make sure that we're facilitating a more therapeutic environment for our students that will support the whole child not only through their educational journey, but the social and emotional journey that is supported by all the stakeholders. It's not just the students and the administration, but teachers, parents, and the community that are involved. The core components that we looked at centered around the vision would be pedagogy, the facilities that we have, and the personnel that actually service the schools. One of the things that we really want to explore this year more in-depth across the board consistently is what does our pedagogy look like at the schools. The Superintendent has brought in IFL from the University of Pittsburgh but centered around that we want to look at more non-traditional

approaches to instruction, which include project-based learning, structured learning experiences, problem-based learning, as well as service learning projects. We would like to provide the professional development to support teachers through that. We've done it in pockets. We've done it in instances at the schools, but it would be great to do it overall in a more consistent manner. There have been changes in personnel this year at the alternative programs. Some of the changes in administration are that Dr. Douge is now the Principal at YES Academy, Nora Hover and Tanya Green are the administrative team at Silk City, and new to the scene in alternative education are Cliff Thompson and Jamie Cangialosi. They are at Great Falls Academy. Returning personnel would be Ms. Mirva Rivera and she's at STRIVE Academy, which is also known as Alternative Middle School. The new shared position is the Coordination of Student Intervention Services that we posted for. This person that we're looking at is to work with students that require a more clinical supervision. The reason we called it Coordinator of Student Intervention Services is we didn't want to lock ourselves in to just a child psychologist or just a licensed clinical social worker. We're looking for them to have that certification to fulfill that position. If you're familiar with the RTI model this person will deal with the Tier 3 students that may have psychiatric and much more involved mental health issues. This position will be shared amongst the alternative schools. We'll prioritize the sessions within the students in the behavioral programs, such as STRIVE and Great Falls Academy. The personnel will also provide additional counseling for students with challenging behavior. In other words, this person will travel but we will prioritize their services at Great Falls Academy, STRIVE, and at the other locations as needed. In my experience these students are the ones that need more intense assistance. Part of the alternative school plan is to make sure that students do return back, if appropriate and if they have met the criteria. This year I sat with the teams at the alternative schools and we came up with a plan for those students that met criteria to transition back, either to their sending school or to a smaller academy. If a student had behavioral issues at, let's say, Great Falls Academy but they were able to get their behavior in place but maybe attendance was still an issue we transitioned them to Silk City or YES Academy because the component that got them to Great Falls has now been resolved but they still may have issues with attendance. All of this was covered with the parent. If a parent said, "No, Ms. Payne, I really want to keep my child at Great Falls," and that happened several times, we've allowed the parents to make that choice and have the student actually stay. We try to convince them as much as possible, but if parents are comfortable with the staff and the academic program that's there, why force them to change their student? We had no students that met the criteria for an out-of-district placement from the alternative schools. This is a quick overview of the results from those meetings that I had with the teams. This just gives a breakdown. We did not review senior files because most of them are graduating. We looked at the underclassmen in grades 9-11 and we base it upon criteria of attendance, academic performance, and behavioral issues. This is a breakdown. I know Great Falls is kind of small. There were 39 student files reviewed. 23 were recommended for exit and 16 students remained. This is what was done in May. As we're going through the numbers have changed a little bit because although 23 may have been recommended for exit, more than that decided that they would like to stay and continue on with the Great Falls program. We did the same thing at DESTINY and those are the numbers. We did the same at Silk City. A number of the students from Silk City actually returned back to JFK or Eastside. Again, I had parents that did not wish to return their students back there because they felt that the smaller environment, the academic program, and the support that the student was receiving was much more beneficial. The reason I don't have any statistics for YES is because the students are overage and under-credited. They typically are not going back because they're pursuing their high school diploma to graduate, unless we have an anomaly where a student was placed there because there was some extenuating circumstance, but 99.98 of those students just graduate from

YES Academy. At STRIVE with Ms. Rivera, there were about 15 eighth graders. They all went to the ninth grade. Out that remaining there were about 13 more students. Three were recommended for exit and the 10 students remained, but we will fill up at the middle school quickly. This is reviewing the criteria for student exit - again, attendance, disciplinary infractions, and academic achievement. On September 1, I met with Principals of Operations Zatiti Moody and David Cozart and their teams and we reviewed the students that were returning back. We sat in meetings with their teams, parents, guidance counselors, and the student to explain the expectations upon return and to also identify support staff that students could depend on. At those meetings they were assigned different support staff to work with them. Most of the time it was a TAP. Not only do some of those students have a behavior contract, there will be progress monitoring a minimum of eight times a year, which includes doing progress reports as well as when report cards come out. We're going to contact parents for the positive progress the students are making, not just the negative ones. Some school teams are implementing on top of the behavior contract, a daily progress sheet. So for those students that require more support as they finish each class they will have to get a report from their teachers. As I indicated, we are designating a point person for those returning students if they're having any issues. One detail that has been outlined in all of the behavior contracts is that students actually participate in the teen centers at both high schools. At Eastside and at JFK students will participate in those counseling services as a condition to return for support because the more support the better. If you're coming from an environment that had 60 students and you've made it and now you're transitioning back to 2000 we want to make sure that student is cared for. This slide basically just explains what I just said. Be aware of the resources that are available to them and make sure that we're making the connection. We want the students to remain successful in the sending school. There were facility changes, as we're all aware of. Where Great Falls was located in Prospect Park, STRIVE went there. Last year we explored having STRIVE and DESTINY in the same building and this year we're moving them to Prospect Park. It's providing more space for the students. They need a little bit more elbow room. Plus now we have adequate space to provide a much more cohesive program with ISS resource in the ROADS class. I'll come back to that in a moment. With the additional space we hope that we will be able to open a self-contained class, either LLD or behavioral disabilities, at the STRIVE location. I put in quotations the new GFA. It's the same school. There's a combination of DESTINY and GFA into one school. We're adequately pooling our resources so instead of having a few here and there now we can articulate our services more comprehensively, more space to provide those services, as well as a self-contained BD class. At this present time we do not have any self-contained classrooms at the alternative. A lot of it just had to do with facility issues. There's not a road to do that. Sometimes we run out of space so we're not able to run that with integrity. As you're well aware, YES is moving to 5 Colt Street. We will share space with HARP, but they will be on separate floors. There will be some shared space but not simultaneously. Students will not share classes together. The principals are currently working together, Dr. Dougé and Ms. White, to officially share the space. I do believe that's all been completed. In the future we want to accommodate the extended learning opportunity high school within that facility. Silk City didn't have too many changes for facilities, but we were able to reclassify some classroom space to open it up a little bit more to accommodate various programming. We're looking to open a self-contained LLD class but the process is a little bit more than we want to open a class. You have to apply. You have to talk to the county. We're projecting that may happen. This is a little cheat sheet if we could possibly open up self-contained classes. Sometimes what happens with the self-contained students is that they get placed out of district. This would be a cost benefit for the district and these are rough numbers. If we had an average per-pupil cost of out-of-district placement of \$45,000 then we have to pay for transportation

on top of it. Potentially we're spending about \$58,000 – and I think I'm on the low end – per pupil. If we can open up one classroom and there are 10 kids in that classroom, you can do the math. That's a half million dollars right there and we're looking to open three. At any rate, we're trying to project to do that. We're working on that. We would like to offer our services. Plus we keep the kids in and it's a less restrictive environment. They stay with us. It's recommended that the staff and students create a new name due to the merger of the school. They would talk about it themselves amongst the new school community. We have staff from two different locations. They will also participate in voting on school colors and a mascot. Staff will develop school motto along with the students. We want to reinforce the image and the branding of a therapeutic school environment. That just means what it says. We want to reinforce the branding of a therapeutic school environment so that when people hear Great Falls they don't think that's those kids with those ankle bracelets. That's just not the case solely. You will find that there are a lot of high school students, unfortunately, with ankle bracelets in the comprehensive schools. So I don't want that to become a deterrent for students who really need those services and really need to get that help therapeutically and behaviorally. At one time, ROADS was housed at the 47 State Street location. They had a high school classroom and middle school classroom. So instead of cohabitating and having a separate budget for that school because we had to have separate staff, there's a class at GFA and at the middle school. So now if you're in the ROADS, if the application comes through, it comes to me and then they will be placed at those sites separately. Again, we're keeping the kids separated from high school and middle school. I touched on the special education component that we'll be looking to do later on in the school year. This is the breakdown – self-contained LLD at Silk City, BD at GFA, and we're still up in the air if we're going to go an LLD or BD at STRIVE. There are strong arguments for both sides of that. All of the schools have been conducting this professional staff development. These are some of the areas that were covered during those staff professional development hours. We did team-building for the staff. It's really important when you merge staffs together we have to get the staff all on the same page as well as the students. So in about a week or two we're also going to do some team-building with the students to bring them together as well once everything settles. Mr. Brain Veal who works a lot with Mr. Moody brought the positive peer culture. He reintroduced and refreshed the staff members today and talked about some of the things that they need to do to be on the same page to deal with the students. Not that DESTINY and Great Falls staff members did not know, but a refresher is always great. Plus you have new people in the room. What does that look like and how do we articulate how we're going to provide services for our students? At YES Academy there was a tasting chat and it was voluntary for the new administrator to meet with the new staff, just an informal discussion about expectations, what do you want from the principal. That worked out well. For upcoming PD, we're looking at project-based and problem-based learning, structured learning experiences, and service learning projects as things that we can begin to do with more fidelity in the alternative school programs. Again, we've done it in instances that were successful but we want to do it more consistently across the programs. Are there any questions?

Comm. Irving: Out of the faculty that now exists in the three schools, how many of them are on caps?

Ms. Payne: I would have to get back to you about that information. I think there are probably only two and that would be at YES Academy. To my knowledge, Great Falls, DESTINY, nor Silk City had anyone placed on a cap for this school year.

Comm. Teague: There was a teacher that came up here earlier talking about the size of the building. Do you have extra room?

Ms. Payne: This is based upon when YES is in 5 Colt Street and Great Falls is in 47 State Street. Unfortunately, right now we know what the condition is and what we have to do in order to open up schools and have students. I saw the plan that they had put in place. Cliff Thompson and Dorothy Dougé came up with a solid plan to be able to open school so that students can go to class and begin with instruction despite the fact that, as Mr. Cohen indicated, materials are in other places. Also, Mr. Thompson has enough resources and books that he will be able to share those with. So it's not like they won't have anything to work with.

Comm. Teague: How does Jamie come into play?

Ms. Payne: Jaime is the Vice Principal.

Comm. Teague: Wasn't she over personnel or HR?

Dr. Evans: She was Personnel Director. I know that you and several other Board members have lots of questions and would like to probe much deeper into alternative education. However, it's 9:00 and I still would like at least three to five minutes to talk about the last presentation regarding special education and then charge you with reading the material. Then let's have a much lengthier conversation about the need to restructure special education and get specific about how we're doing that. There is a plan and the material you have represents the plan for that. My suggestion to you, and it's your call, Mr. President, is to take one or two more questions regarding alternate education and invite Nicole to come back again. At the same time that we have a lengthier discussion about special education we can deal with both. There is a special education dimension as well to alternative education, as she has already indicated. Again, I would briefly go through in three to five minutes and try to do an overview of what you have in that packet.

Comm. Hodges: Thank you, Dr. Evans. I mentioned I have several concerns and given the length of this evening, I really want to spend adequate time particularly in the area of special education.

Comm. Martinez: I was especially happy to hear you talk about the notion of perhaps cutting back on the money we're spending on out-of-district placements. That's very pleasing to me. You mentioned the three potential classrooms. What school would they be housed in?

Ms. Payne: One in each - one at Silk City, one at Great Falls, and one at the middle school.

Comm. Martinez: I would love to see some more teeth to that because that would be a fantastic way to keep the students in-district so we can see them and be more impactful on them, but the savings of that money would be phenomenal as well.

Ms. Payne: And put those best teachers in those classrooms with those students.

Comm. Martinez: Agreed.

Comm. Hodges: Thank you very much.

Restructuring the District's Special Education Programs

Dr. Evans: The next presentation, and I will be brief considering the time, is focusing on the restructuring of the district's special education programs. I have a PowerPoint that I was going to spend a little more time orienting you to. I'm going to ask Alan if he would go to page 2 and share with the Board that brief video upfront, which established context.

Comm. Hodges: Dr. Evans, I don't want to lose a comprehensive discussion on special education.

Dr. Evans: We'd come back. The memo you have basically says, I ask that you review the information during the coming days and weeks and inform me or Ms. Peron if you have any questions, but also coming back to you and engaging you because this begs for a much deeper discussion around the restructuring. I know you've gotten calls, you have concerns, and we really should discuss and ultimately orient you in terms of where we are. Then any issues and concerns you want us to address either through changing some of the additional practices that we have or whatever it is, you have the opportunity to do that, but that's going to require a lot more time. So that will occur. This PowerPoint, which includes the video, is the PowerPoint that I used a couple of weeks ago to train our principals, directors, supervisors, vice principals, and even the cabinet was a part of it on special education. We spent a full day in special education and what it requires focusing on the legal requirements and leadership and management practices specific to special education. Again, we will get there in our next conversation about it. For now, I really just want to orient you by way of the video that Alan is getting ready to turn on. Some of you may have already seen it. It takes a while, so I should continue talking. While it's taking a while, there's a folder that you have that I really would like you to read over the next couple of weeks. It includes a cover letter from me to you dated September 2. It provides an overview of what is in that packet, which includes that PowerPoint and the special education study.

Video Presentation

Dr. Evans: Those last comments I think sum it up. Kids find a way to make it work. But the major point of that video is that inclusion is a major undertaking in special education first introduced by Madeline Will in 1988 when she was Secretary of Education. School districts across this nation have been working to accomplish what you see in that video since then and we have come a long way as a school district as well. We still have a long way to go, however. The rest of this gets into how to make inclusion in many of the other effective practices in special education work, and what principals need to do to lead that. Again, I'll leave that for the longer presentation that I will give you. In this packet there is a copy of the Montclair study. Some of you received a copy of it about a year ago and we're giving it to you again. It's very comprehensive and I would advise you to read it. It not only includes the findings, the overview of the study, including methodology, but it gets into specific recommendations for significantly changing and making improvements in special education. So I would encourage you again to read through that. The second item that's here is the district's initiative. It's this item labeled 'draft', which is a work in progress. Actually, I met with many of the child study team folk that you all have had come and address the Board and express concerns. We have been meeting with them as well. I met with them twice last spring and this process grew out of those conversations. Once this is complete this will drive how we're going to implement those recommendations in the Montclair study. Third, you have an agenda for one of those two meetings that I had with the child study team that's included in the packet as well and then the training material that we used for the group

that I mentioned two weeks ago that involved the directors and others that I specifically mentioned. One of the recommendations in the Montclair study was to do that training, to train folk on special education, the needs of our kids, how to lead and manage them, and so on. Then you have included as well an agenda for the training that we did that goes beyond special education. You have the actual PowerPoint from Joanne Butler, who is one of our consulting attorneys and our resident expert in special education law. She represents us in a lot of special education cases. She actually did this training. I think she took three and a half hours to orient our principals to this and it was really good. The rest of the day, I and Elizabeth Caccavella led the entire group through this PowerPoint on leadership and management practices as it relates to special education to help us to do a much better job than what we've been doing in addressing special education issues. Again, I would encourage you to read through this and then let's engage and have a very meaningful discussion. Bring any questions or concerns you have. If there's something that requires research, if you want data or things like that, let us know that in advance so we can collect it and have it for you and we'll take it from there. If there are any quick questions now, obviously the Board can ask those questions, if that's your desire.

Comm. Teague: If you can reply to my email about Caccavella.

Dr. Evans: Yes. I actually have crafted a reply. I just haven't pushed send yet.

Comm. Hodges: Are there any further questions? Thank you, Dr. Evans.

REPORT OF STATE DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT

Transportation Update

Dr. Evans: You have a memorandum in front of you that provides a transportation update. Some of you have called me regarding transportation issues and actually many more parents have called us as well. We have been working very hard to make sure that we have transportation arrangements in place for our youngsters that require transportation tomorrow. Tomorrow is the first day of school. The first paragraph there provides background. You know that Essex Regional is the entity with which we've contracted to manage transportation. Then we have a small department that's responsible for facilitating data from our departments to Essex so they can go ahead and book the transportation. However, in recent days we've noticed that there were some things that were not a part of the contract with Essex that still needed to occur and that we needed to lead that effort. Then there were one or two glitches as it relates to Essex as well that we had to address. So we've had our staffs on the phone and doing everything possible to make sure that every child who is supposed to get transportation gets it tomorrow. You see a list of the things that have occurred in recent days and in fact may still be occurring upstairs as we make sure that we contact all kids. According to the latest information I have there were 27 students who just enrolled and we just got placement data for them that won't have transportation for tomorrow. Everybody else will and we will have transportation arranged for them by Friday. For those parents, if they want to bring them, we will pay them mileage to bring them to and from their homes. If they want to catch a cab, we will pay for the cab for them to take their kid to the school. The cab will take them back home and in the afternoon will pick them up. This is for those kids who just came in, registered and just enrolled in special education. We just got the information. Typically it takes 48 hours. Even with our system it took 48 to 72 hours to get them registered. Essex can get them on a bus by Friday rather than waiting 48 hours or longer. Nonetheless, that list below represents all the things that have happened in recent days to address the numerous phone calls and

you and I have received. I'm just going to go down this list. In that first bullet, I indicate that students are assigned to school buses by Essex, as everyone knows, and are being contacted in advance as noted on that list. District staff has contacted the homes of every student receiving transportation, roughly 2,200, by telephone advising them of their bus routes. People have been on the phones all day. Actually, some of these calls started yesterday. Calls will be repeated to ensure that there is a connection with an adult. In other words, sometimes when the call is made no one answered the phone because parents may not be home or at work. We leave a voice mail, but then when that happens we call them back. That's what that's telling you. The schools have been provided bus route information. The default for parents who either miss the phone call even though there was a voice mail message there telling them exactly what they need to know in terms of the times the buses are coming through and what the pickup is, they can also call their neighborhood schools. Principals have all the route information. They know exactly where Johnny Smith is going to be picked and what time they're going to be picked up. In addition, we have people here who have that same information. So they have options. They can call us or they can call the school. Information about who to call, if indeed you missed the call that we made to you, can be found by visiting our website. There's a number there to call and that call gets them to here. If they call here that's what the information on the website tells them. Facebook does the same and our TV Channel 76 has the same information. It directs parents as to what to do if indeed they miss that phone call, or multiple calls in some cases, that went to their homes. It gets into the telephone bank that's available here to be able to handle all those calls. It's not just one or two people sitting at phones. We have a number of people. At one point we were up to about eight people taking those calls and making sure that we communicate with parents. A parent link message has gone out to overflow students. If I remember correctly, I was told that all those parents have been contacted. They have their information. We just learned that we weren't able to operationalize this in the way that we want. The intent was to have a parent link message going out and we determined that the system could not do it the way we wanted it done. That's information that just came to Ms. Shafer and me. On the back you see additional bullet information with regards to special education. That's obviously a very sensitive area in terms of transportation because we don't want any missed connections or misinformation that leads to youngsters not having transportation in a way that's problematic for parents or not at all. Parents of out-of-district students have already been notified. They've received person-to-person calls. Charter, catholic, and private schools, we are responsible for providing transportation to those entities. They've already been provided information. Ms. Shafer contacted Passaic Tech and any of our students that go there we provide transportation for through a jointure agreement to be able to make things happen. They actually opened today and the information from Essex Education Services – and this was confirmed by a phone call that Ms. Shafer made today – was that it went relatively smoothly. I think there were one or two students who needed some additional support. Where school bus aides are required the district obviously is working with Essex to make sure that they are provided. In previous years we've had students transported by bus to the incorrect school. We decided to make sure that we had provisions just in case a kid found themselves in this circumstance where the bus picked them up and took them to the wrong school because at the last minute there may have been a change and somehow that change didn't catch up to that parent and student so they were picked up and taken to a school. We've said to principals don't send them anywhere else but just keep them there.

Ms. Shafer: Unless we contact the parent and they can take the child to the correct school or they need to take the cab or their own car and we repay them the mileage or get a receipt and we would pay for the cab, both ways.

Dr. Evans: The second bullet gets at those options as well. We will bear the expense any time a parent has to carry a youngster because of a miscue as it relates to the transportation piece. That's where we are.

Ms. Shafer: Let me just add we're making it very clear we don't want them putting the child in a cab by themselves nor do we want them having the child going on public transportation by themselves. We want the parent to go with them and then the parent will have a round trip back and we'll reimburse them for all of that.

Dr. Evans: If you have any questions regarding any of this or something I didn't address regarding transportation feel free to ask.

Comm. Teague: I listened to your answer because there were a lot of calls today.

Dr. Evans: We received a lot of calls.

Comm. Irving: There is a point which you may not have mentioned, Dr. Evans, which is the failure of Essex County Services to adequately notify parents which preceded all this. At no point in time in the memorandum that I'm looking at does it indicate that. Did we mention that?

Dr. Evans: There's a piece upfront where I indicated that our expectations exceeded what Essex usually does. Essex has contracts with Newark, Jersey City, and a number of districts and they all operate the same way. We learned that late in this engagement that they rely on the bus companies to inform parents of the routing information. We don't. We do it ourselves and that's part of what got our attention when parents called us and we began to call Essex. They basically said, "We did what we committed to do and what we normally do." Then we realized our expectations are higher than everybody else in terms of contacting parents.

Comm. Hodges: Mr. Irving, the real issue here is if we have a set of expectations it's incumbent upon us to make sure that our expectations are being met. So if an external agency is sending out information in our name to the parents in our community we have a responsibility to make sure that what is being sent out is appropriate and addresses the needs. That did not happen.

Comm. Irving: Can I finish? My point is that our expectation was that Essex County Services was going to reach out to the parents. They do not notify parents in any other district they work with of the times the children will be picked up?

Dr. Evans: That's exactly my understanding. The only problem with that is we learned that late in this process.

Comm. Kerr: When we were negotiating with them, was that a part of our specs?

Dr. Evans: I don't recall that it was. Do you, Ms. Shafer?

Comm. Kerr: If it was part of our specs, how can they say now that they have not been doing it?

Ms. Shafer: The expectation was that they were going to communicate with the parents. Were we specific to say to put the time? No. When we did that we assumed. We didn't think they were going to send a letter to say, "Parents call the vendor or

vendor call the parents.” With the special needs students door-to-door then the vendor calls the parent. They send a letter for all the other kids and they say for the parent to call the vendor. We operated differently in the past. We sent a letter with the time and then contacted the parent as well.

Comm. Kerr: The problem is that we were assuming when we should not be assuming.

Dr. Evans: That’s correct.

Comm. Kerr: An agreement is an agreement. A contract is a contract. You spell out within the boundaries of that contract what your needs are and if the other party agrees to it then everybody signs off on it. There is a common understanding of what is expected and the expectation is on both sides. We dropped the ball.

Comm. Irving: So we are paying them to set up the routes for us and to communicate to parents that their kids are being picked up and it’s incumbent on the parents, our customers, to reach out to the bus companies? Or are the bus companies to reach out to the parents to be able to figure out what times they’re getting picked up?

Dr. Evans: It’s the latter. The bus company is reaching out to the parents. Our expectation was higher than that.

Comm. Irving: How long is our contract with them?

Dr. Evans: One year.

Comm. Irving: So the next time we have negotiations that needs to be part of the conversation. Quite frankly, given the way we move this year this doesn’t need to go out for bid. I’m making this very clear. Transportation is under the auspices of this Board, under operations. The next time this happens, this needs to be bid out. The Board needs to see the bid specs. The Board needs to understand, interview, and speak with whomever the folks who are bidding and the Board needs to make the decision who the contractor will be moving forward. So we’re not the ones hearing from parents on the back end about the discrepancies, issues, problems, and concerns they have. But I also think it’s important for us on our end to make it very clear in the bid specs what we’re looking for and also what are the modes of control by which we will supervise that process. If that’s the case, will they send samples of correspondence to parents prior to disseminating that? That information should be approved. Again, there’s a contract. They’re beholden to us for how we set the bid specs. It’s incumbent upon us to decide how we want them to operate.

Comm. Hodges: Again, from my personal point of view nothing gets sent to your parents that you’re not aware of, particularly around the safety and transportation of your children. You have to know what’s being sent and you do not assume that your children are going to be safeguarded and that they’re going to send out the right information. Essex County does not live here. They don’t know about our traffic situations. They don’t know which streets you don’t come down certain times in the morning. They don’t know that.

Comm. Irving: That’s the other point. Were the routes approved by the district after they were set up by Essex County?

Comm. Hodges: That’s the issue.

Comm. Irving: I'm agreeing with you.

Comm. Hodges: In certain streets it's not feasible...

Comm. Irving: You have Main and Madison...

Comm. Hodges: Absolutely. In rush hour traffic you're not going to do it. You just can't do it. You have to know that what's being set up is reasonable. You have to monitor that. You have to make sure that the times make sense to you, not Essex County. We do that here and that did not take place. You just can't assume that they're going to do that.

Dr. Evans: Yes, we can. They do dry runs and have done dry runs at the times of normal pick-up and drop-off. That is a practice that any major provider or a school district typically does so that the drivers then are acquainted with the streets at the particular time that they are navigating those streets to pick up kids.

Comm. Hodges: Dr. Evans, what happens starting September is different than what happens in the summertime?

Comm. Irving: I was just going to say that's the fault. The dry run takes place in the summer when traffic is nowhere near what it is in the fall.

Comm. Hodges: Market and Park where you have School 15, NRC, Eastside High School. You have no idea what it means to come down that road. You just have no idea.

Comm. Irving: I think that point is well credited. I just think that when the routes are created there has to be a system by which the contractor, whoever they are, comes back to the district and says, "Here's our plan." Then staff and transportation goes through that plan and says this makes sense or you may not want to go down this street because this might be a problem. You may want to go back and check this out or look at this. There should be some level of correspondence between the two. It's not, "Folks, do this for us and come back when you're ready?" There has to be some level of quality control. But again, this is our first official year in figuring this out. I think this is a great learning process for us to understand that there has to be mechanisms in place in order to do so and in order to safeguard. We're having district staff two days before school starts that have other important stuff to do calling parents and telling them to pick their kids up. There are probably 10 other things that those folks could have been doing as opposed to calling parents, which is important. I don't want to soft-sell that point, but there are other things that those folks could be doing.

Dr. Evans: You're right.

Comm. Rivera: Based on what you said, if a parent has an issue with the pick-up of their child, they're going to have to contact the bus company?

Dr. Evans: No. They contact us.

Comm. Rivera: Okay. I thought that's what you said earlier.

Comm. Irving: They call the transportation office.

Ms. Shafer: Just so everybody knows, I would ask the Board if you get any calls tomorrow to call us as well. We have eight or ten phone lines set up with people just in a command center to man all the calls, including folks from special needs, so that if any questions come in we're able to address it immediately, get back to the parent, the principal, or whoever is calling. Just so everyone knows, we created the route descriptions from last year and gave it to Essex, but we need to do the follow-up.

Comm. Irving: Right. You benchmark it from years past, which is the standard practice, but it's just a matter of us going back in a timely fashion too and having them show us what they have. I just don't understand what the extra effort would have been for them to publish the pick-up times for the kids.

Comm. Rivera: So the parents call the district and the district calls Essex County? Is that how it's going to work if something goes wrong?

Ms. Shafer: No. We have enough people and all the information now from Essex so that if there is an issue that we will have at our fingertips all the rosters in the computer or whatever it is that we need to look up. We have access to all of that now so we should be able to resolve all the problems. If it's a new student or if they're taken to a wrong school that's something we need to call Essex about and tell them we need to have an addition or a deletion to an existing route or a new route, depending on the situation. But I would say 90% of the questions we'll be able to answer in-house.

Comm. Rivera: Are we able to call the bus companies directly or are we going to go through Essex?

Ms. Shafer: Us?

Comm. Rivera: Yes.

Ms. Shafer: Cheryl, do you want to come up. Cheryl has been working on this.

Comm. Rivera: The reason for this question is because I had an issue with transportation for my son. From my understanding earlier we tried to reach out to Essex and nobody was picking up over there. There was no answer. That's why I want to know what the process is going to be. Are we going to reach out to the independent contractor that Essex hired? Or are we going to contact Essex?

Dr. Evans: You should contact us.

Comm. Rivera: After they contact us, who are we contacting?

Ms. Cheryl Coy: If a parent needs to know, they contact us. We contact Essex, we contact the contractor, and then we call the parent back. We're not having the parent run around trying to get an answer. We just let them know we're going to respond to them. Just give us until the end of the day to get you an answer.

Comm. Rivera: The reason for this question is I just hope going forward that you keep us abreast if this happens again. If your office tries to contact Essex County and there's no answer during the whole day, please let us know because this is unacceptable. You understand this is people's lives you're dealing with here. Not everyone has a car. People have jobs. Imagine some of these parents that take their kids to the bus stop and they didn't make arrangements to leave their kids with someone else. This could cost someone their job, believe it or not. That's my concern.

Dr. Evans: The issue has been addressed with Dr. Young, who is the Superintendent for Essex. I had a conversation with her today and Ms. Shafer had multiple conversations with her today. That issue has been addressed.

Comm. Rivera: Thank you.

Ms. Coy: And we do have the cell phone numbers. If you can't get through on the landline we can reach Dr. Young. We can reach their whole team via cell phone. We have that communication with them.

Comm. Hodges: Thank you very much. Dr. Evans, I want to thank you for the presentation by the teachers' association. Obviously, they have a point of view, but there were a number of issues here that raise some concerns and I hope that the district will have an opportunity to give its perspective.

Dr. Evans: We are very anxious to have a follow-up discussion with you and tell you what the requirements are, what the law requires, and what we've done. What I'm about to say doesn't mean much to some of the people who were evaluated, but our system is a model for the state. The state is using our system with other school districts because they basically said we're doing it very well.

Comm. Hodges: The remarks went beyond just the evaluation system. There were some concerning aspects of that that I really would like to have cleared up in terms of consistency and things along those lines. But then there are descriptions of the equipment in schools and the 21st Century learning opportunities. I can't underscore my concern about grammar because in my conversation with other teachers that seems to be very problematic in how that's dispensed. We had a long conversation, which I appreciated, with the curriculum committee yesterday about that, but it did not allay my concerns only because there's no clear indication to me that it's taught consistently across the board. It's as it occurs. If a child supposedly uses improper grammar, the teacher is supposed to discuss it in the classroom, but that doesn't mean it happens consistently across the board and we have no way of monitoring or addressing that or making sure that the children come away with a firm foundation grammatically. We don't need to get into this right now. I just want to put that on the table and we can find a way to map a response to that in a comprehensive manner moving forward. But that is going to be an issue from what I'm hearing. They're the ones that are doing the classes, so if they're not doing it then...

Dr. Evans: For those who don't know what Dr. Hodges is talking about, our new instructional model includes grammar. It's done in a way though, as he's suggesting, that the teacher is in a position to make decisions about when, where, and in some cases if at all. You want that consistently required and them taking their judgment out of whether or not.

Comm. Hodges: That's exactly right, but in a quantifiable manner because you need to determine if every child is able to come away with that and that's clearly not happening.

RESOLUTIONS FOR A VOTE AT THE WORKSHOP MEETING:

Resolution No. 1

BE IT RESOLVED, that the list of bills and claims dated August 27, 2015, beginning with vendor number 183 and ending with vendor number 798884, in the amount of

\$9,142,840.41, and bills and claims beginning with check number 194559 and ending with check number 195040 that were approved on August 19, 2015, in the amount of \$18,932,559.57; 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. Simmons, seconded by Comm. Cleaves that Resolution No. 1 be adopted. On roll call all members voted in the affirmative, except Comm. Hodges who voted no, and Comm. Hodges who abstained on anything pertaining to himself, the YMCA, and Jumpstart, and Comm. Irving who abstained on anything pertaining to the Workforce Investment Board, and Comm. Rivera and Comm. Martinez who abstained on anything dealing with the NJCDC, if necessary. The motion carried.

Resolution No. 2

WHEREAS, the Paterson Public School District currently uses Kronos which provides computerized attendance solutions for Human Resources; and

WHEREAS, this order is subject to the terms and conditions of that certain Sales, Software License and Services Agreement between Kronos and District dated May 4, 2009; and

WHEREAS, the District has a need for maintenance and upgrades to the computerized attendance solutions currently provided by Kronos; and

WHEREAS, Kronos is a sole source vendor for maintenance and upgrades of this product; and

WHEREAS, the vendor has been notified that no goods or services will be provided to the District without first receiving a fully executed purchase order; that the terms on the purchase order will be honored completely; that if the vendor does not agree with the terms on the purchase order, the vendor will not provide any goods or services to the District until such time that a new purchase order is completed and delivered with terms the vendor will honor; and

WHEREAS, the services herein were in the original budget and funding for the same are available in the account listed below; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the State Operated School District of the City of Paterson authorizes entry into a contract with Kronos to provide services for a system upgrade for the amount not to exceed \$47,910.00.

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

Comm. Kerr: Does this have any bearing on ALIO? I thought we were supposed to be getting...

Dr. Evans: We're getting into an area where I don't consider myself the expert. I'll ask Ms. Corallo to come forward as I'm attempting to do this. What we're trying to do is expand the functionality of Kronos to create linkages and connect with ALIO and Infinite Campus in a more meaningful way to expand our options and functionality of Kronos.

Ms. Marnie McKoy: Good evening. For example, time-keeping, accrual of time, sick time, vacation time and personal time, this would work in conjunction with ALIO. It wouldn't be separate and apart.

Comm. Kerr: I just needed to know the relationship, if it's part of complementing what we're doing in ALIO. If it is, I'm good with that.

Comm. Hodges: I think at some point the technology committee is going to have to review the software packages and their compatibilities or lack of same and get a handle on just what we're using here and why. We seem to be spending a lot of money to create compatibility for different offline sections which actually can be, in some cases, done by one system. We can't do this tonight, but I think that we can at least start that conversation in the technology committee and then bring that back to the rest of the Board so you can understand or take a look what's being done. That way we can start to ask the administration to address that in some sort of meaningful manner.

Comm. Kerr: If ALIO were working the way it should we would not be in need to Kronos.

Dr. Evans: I wouldn't say that.

Ms. McKoy: Not necessarily.

Comm. Kerr: I'm just asking.

Ms. McKoy: The Kronos system is the time-keeping system. When we transition fully for the HR arm of ALIO it will be feeding all of that data into ALIO. So Kronos is where our teachers swipe in, where we record if they're out, and what type of time they're using. It will feed directly into payroll.

Ms. Daisy Ayala: We're moving out of paper timesheets and that's how we generate the payroll. We're moving from that to Kronos to feed staff by job numbers. That will load into payroll ALIO and that will generate a paycheck instead of having all these numerous timesheets. In order to do that, we need to upgrade Kronos.

Comm. Kerr: I'm perfectly educated in that now. Thank you very much.

Comm. Simmons: I'm assuming that this isn't the only piece of technology that we're trying to get to work with ALIO. If that's the case, what I would love to see is a project plan that outlines all the tasks, everything that needs to be done, and all of the costs associated with it so that we're not voting on these in piecemeal fashion and we can see what the overall cost of the project is.

Comm. Hodges: Part of the problem is there are so many pieces that are being connected. We need to have an overview.

Comm. Simmons: We need a project plan and who is actually doing it.

Comm. Hodges: For everything - comprehensive.

Ms. McKoy: We have that and we can forward that to you.

Ms. Terry Corallo: We are behind on the Kronos program. We need to do the upgrade. As someone who worked for ADP for 12 years, which is the largest HR payroll system, they use Kronos for their timekeeping as well. Just understand that it's not a functionality that ALIO is missing. That is just an extra piece that feeds into an HR and payroll system. I don't want you to feel like that is something that ALIO should cover. ADP doesn't cover it. They partnered with Kronos so that they have that timekeeping feature as well.

Comm. Simmons: I completely understand that. However, if we're feeding this into ALIO and this is actually an ALIO project, then I need to see the total cost of the project.

Ms. Corallo: I fully understand and I believe that is available. We can get that for you, but I just want you to understand what happened here is that in order to continue to move the ALIO project in the way we wanted to we needed to make sure we were up to the current version of Kronos and we were not. This is why Kronos is being voted on separately and at a unique time separate from the rest of the project.

Comm. Simmons: So what happens if we can't get another piece of technology to work with ALIO the way that we need it to work?

Ms. Corallo: What other piece of technology? I don't think that's even relevant.

Comm. Simmons: It absolutely is because if for whatever reason we need to move away from ALIO to get it to do exactly what we need it to do, then it is relevant.

Ms. McKoy: I shared with the technology committee when we met a couple of weeks ago and I'll just give a brief overview to the rest of the Commissioners just so everybody is functioning with the same body of information. The target date for full implementation of what we're discussing with you in terms of ALIO is July 2016. The reason it's July 2016 is so that we can allow ourselves exactly what you're describing, the time to really transition. Very briefly, we had a meeting with all of our vendors around the table. We had Kronos present. We had ALIO present. We had ASOP, who is our Subfinder vendor. All of those folks were present in the room at the same time along with Daisy and other staff members in the district. The reason we did that is because of what you just described. We don't want to continue to go down this road in June to discover that there's a mismatch somewhere. So we had white paper on the walls and were talking about this aligns with this here. Who's going to feed this information? That would be us. No, we can't do that. We're not naïve to think that that first meeting is the meeting. It was the first meeting to begin to have those conversations and to make sure that we can get people feeding into where they need to feed in. I do not profess by any means to be a techie. I can't tell you all of the nuances of how that works in the background. But from a systematic point of view in terms of planning it's part of the process for us. You'll see it when we forward to you the work plan, the stages of this project, and how it has worked and will work. You'll get a sense of what that looks like.

Dr. Evans: Let me also comment to Comm. Simmons' question, because it is a very important question. It was a question that I asked two years ago when we entered into the contract with ALIO. I asked for a list of what are we going to replace and what do we need to make sure that all of the data that we had doesn't get lost during that transition. They assured me, and I have it somewhere in writing, that it will replace almost everything that we have, the Edumet, ASOP, and a special program for special education. Everybody has their own unique program and we wanted to get rid of all those unique programs and have a central data warehouse for student data, human resources data, and finance data that ALIO and a student-based system like Infinite

Campus drew from. So your question is a very relevant question and that list is available.

Comm. Mimms: I was going to mention the same thing that Dr. Evans mentioned. The other concern is even with finding out what matches and with the phase and the project rollout there's always new things that come aboard even in us looking to roll out in 2016. So they may already have a heads up on what's new and what's coming that may be able to be a part of the package that we have. So we don't have to come back to the table to add some new charges that would be incurred. We want to be two or three steps up to include that in the packet so that if we need it in the future we will have it even if we don't utilize it now.

Comm. Hodges: Who's spearheading this planning?

Ms. McKoy: The implementation?

Comm. Hodges: Yes.

Ms. McKoy: That would be Mindy Proper.

Dr. Evans: She's the project manager.

Comm. Hodges: Are there any further questions on Resolution No. 2?

On roll call all members voted as follows:

Comm. Cleaves: Yes.

Comm. Irving: Yes.

Comm. Kerr: Yes.

Comm. Martinez: Yes.

Comm. Mimms: No.

Comm. Rivera: No.

Comm. Simmons: No.

Comm. Teague: No.

Comm. Hodges: I abstain.

Comm. Irving: Point of order. Let me also remind everyone around the table that technology falls under operations as well. So if Dr. Evans wants to appeal he has to do so to the Commissioner.

Dr. Evans: I would also say to you that we stalled for one full year because our staff clearly demonstrated they didn't have the capacity to move this project and in fact argued that we abandon ALIO. They wanted to keep EduMet, ASOP, and all these other programs and I said no.

Comm. Rivera: That's my concern, Dr. Evans. Based on what you said, every time one of your staff members is not capable of doing something we want to hire a consultant? That was the same issue we had before.

Dr. Evans: No, it's not that simple. The staff that they replaced sat in the same seats and said we need ALIO. When those seats were replaced the new staff said we don't want to keep it because they were married to the old system. If we want to take two steps back in time, that's exactly what you're voting to do.

Comm. Rivera: Could this consultant that we hire guarantee that this system is going to do what we purchased this system to do?

Dr. Evans: Yes. I will guarantee that.

Comm. Rivera: This year?

Dr. Evans: I and she will guarantee that.

Comm. Rivera: Is it in her contract?

Dr. Evans: Is a guarantee in her contract?

Comm. Rivera: Yes. If you're hired to perform a job, she has to perform that job.

Dr. Evans: Her contract is to serve me as project manager to make the system work where our staff couldn't.

Comm. Rivera: But the key is to make it work.

Dr. Evans: Yes.

Comm. Simmons: My concern with that is if I'm the project manager and I'm not actually doing the work, I can't guarantee it. I can't tell you if it's going to work. I can only manage the project and the funding. I can't tell you that it's going to work.

Dr. Evans: I'm getting some assurances that it's going to work.

Comm. Irving: I just think it's incumbent of staff, especially when resolutions like this come up, to have vetted this with the Board members. I don't know if that should have been done in an emergency technology committee. I'm content with what's here, but obviously the majority of the Board is not sold on this idea. So I think maybe a conversation needs to be had with the technology committee so that this gets broken down again so that it can come back up potentially at the next Board meeting if you all decide to do so.

Comm. Hodges: I don't want the vote count yet.

Comm. Kerr: We already have Kronos in the system here, right?

Dr. Evans: An earlier version.

Comm. Kerr: So what we're doing here is proprietary.

Dr. Evans: I'm not sure in what sense you mean that.

Comm. Kerr: You're updating Kronos. I don't see a problem with this, unless we're going to take Kronos and throw it out completely. My understanding of this is that for right now we should realize that we don't have an alternative to address the immediate need. We should not bring into this discussion the piece regarding the project manager. I think this is separate and apart from that question. I think we should concern ourselves with what's before us, this piece of it, and don't get derailed by the other piece. We can hurt ourselves by not really addressing the immediate problem.

Comm. Rivera: I agree with what you just said. If this is needed to do what the system needs to do, I don't have a problem supporting it. The problem I notice is that we're always reactive in the district instead of always being proactive. When we went to bid to purchase this system all this information should have been vetted. Again, they've been working with other districts for a long time. All this information should have been discussed. Just like Mr. Simmons asked a question, your question is very relevant. How about if another upgrade is needed from something else? We're going to just continue to put money into a system that we purchased last year that we were not able to make work. That's why I asked the question. It has nothing to do with the consultant. I already expressed my feelings at the last meeting about the consultant and the whole process. My issue is we had this system already for a year. Correct me if I'm wrong. Is it for one or two years?

Dr. Evans: ALIO or Kronos?

Comm. Rivera: ALIO.

Dr. Evans: Two years. And there was a discussion two years ago by the Board.

Comm. Rivera: To this day we've had it for two years. I wasn't around, but I heard that we spent a lot of money on it and we still haven't put it to full use. That's why my question came about. It has nothing to do with consultants. I just want to make sure that we're spending the funds responsibly here and we're not just buying things just to say that we're doing something but it's not benefitting our kids. That's my issue. Everything looks good on paper, but then it doesn't work. That's my concern.

Comm. Mimms: I heard Ms. McKoy talk about the different entities at the table, ASOP and all those. But I think we also need to have some product knowledge experts that are actually utilizing the systems to be a part of the vetting process. What happens is when you're trying to make changes or adjustments so that we can go into a more advanced technology phase sometimes you have the reluctance to change. So even though the system may be great that we will need to come out of the dinosaur age, so to speak, some of the staff working on it may not want to move with the advancement. So if we have some of the product knowledge experts at the table, while even ASOP and all these different entities are talking we can still find glitches before we roll out. I think it will benefit the district so we're not wasting.

Comm. Hodges: My problem here is I'm being told there's some sort of time-sensitivity with this project.

Dr. Evans: Ms. Ayala and Ms. McKoy can better explain that time issue. One of the obvious artifacts of not doing it is we continue to have a paper-driven system, which is fraught with errors in many cases and is problematic. But we've been doing it and correcting the errors when they surface. If that's what you want to happen, that's what you're voting to continue.

Comm. Hodges: Dr. Evans, that's not what we're voting to continue.

Dr. Evans: This item is only on Kronos.

Comm. Hodges: I think the problem is a more comprehensive issue in terms of all the software packages and how the software is being handled and managed over time. That's what the Board is concerned about. The Board does not have confidence that we are headed in the right direction. I don't want to speak for anybody, but they have a lot of issues, concerns, and questions about this entire rollout and how it's going. What I need to understand, because I'm holding my vote in abeyance, is how we can get a clear understanding of what this means in the short-term and then get a more comprehensive picture so the Board will feel more comfortable about what's happening with the software and the technology in general. We have all these other pieces that are coming here trying to fit into this package and we have some doubts. I don't know if I'm in speaking in isolation, but I have some doubts about whether or not this is all working. That's what the Board is hesitant about. That's what you're hearing.

Dr. Evans: Here's my suggestion...

Comm. Cleaves: We're in the middle of a vote and we had the opportunity to have all of this discussion. We're having all of this discussion in the middle of a vote.

Comm. Hodges: Only because I may be forced to change my vote if I have a compelling reason.

Comm. Cleaves: But you already had five no's.

Comm. Hodges: No, we do not. We have four. The count is 4-4.

Comm. Cleaves: We should have had this discussion prior to us taking the vote.

Comm. Hodges: You're absolutely right.

Comm. Cleaves: Now we're having this long discussion so you can determine what your vote is going to be. Make your vote and whatever it is from there then we have to deal with it from there. But we can't have all this discussion in a vote.

Comm. Rivera: I thought you voted already.

Comm. Cleaves: No. When he got ready to vote he said, "Hold up."

Comm. Rivera: He abstained.

Comm. Cleaves: He abstained and then he said, "Hold up."

Comm. Hodges: I said hold the vote. I'm going to end the discussion and I'm going to reverse my vote to yes. The vote has not been recorded yet, so I'm changing it to yes. You're absolutely right, Comm. Cleaves. I'm changing my vote to yes.

Comm. Irving: Point of order. We can't do this again. The discussion is great, but if staff does not agree with the Board's decision, tough. I voted yes for this, but tough. Do a better job at selling your arguments. That is only going to be very important as we move and gain other control areas. Whether you need to have sidebars like we just had

here before the meeting starts, folks may want to do that. This is government. This is how government happens. Sometimes people vote yes and vote no and you have to move the hell on. I'm sitting here freaking out because this is just the most absurd piece. Vote yes, vote no and move forward.

Comm. Hodges: I cannot argue with you at all. My lack of understanding of the issue is what caused me to hesitate.

Comm. Irving: But I think it's incumbent on those who are pushing the initiative to ensure that the Board members understand. Due to the lack of understanding folks are going to say I'm not comfortable with it.

Comm. Hodges: What I did not want to happen is that lack of understanding to inhibit something that was very serious, which is why I can't argue with what Comm. Cleaves' position was. She's absolutely right. But Dr. Evans, again, the issue is there is some lack of clarity. We don't know what's happening and that has to be addressed.

The motion carried.

Dr. Evans: First of all, let me say I agree 10,000 percent with what Comm. Irving just said. If we can't sell it, then you ought not buy it. That's really what it comes down to. That's what we did two and a half years ago. We sold it to the Board at that particular point in time and now it's two and a half years later and we're going back through that process again because it didn't evolve. What literally happened was that staff changed and the new staff decided they didn't want to embrace ALIO. After we had gone through this exercise over an entire year it was vetted and the Board voted to support it. Then staff changed and all of a sudden they changed their position. I'm going to suggest that we schedule a special Board meeting. It is so big that it should not be on an agenda with something else.

Comm. Hodges: Okay.

Dr. Evans: Let's schedule a special Board meeting and start from the beginning, two and a half years ago when you voted to support it, even going back a year before that because we looked at a lot of different companies over a period of a year. We ultimately brought a recommendation to the Board and they voted to support it. Then we would take you through the events of the past two and a half years and provide all of the information that Comm. Simmons asked for. He's right to ask for that information so you can see what all the working parts are, what we're trying to abandon, and ultimately end up with as a system.

Comm. Hodges: Thank you very much.

GENERAL BUSINESS

Items Requiring a Vote

Curriculum and Instruction

Comm. Hodges: The curriculum committee met on Monday night. In attendance were Mr. Kerr and myself. Mr. Martinez was absent. We focused on agenda items A-1 through A-38, principally A-13, which revealed that a number of the items in A-13 were dated for services to begin in July as opposed to August. So we're asking that the appropriate sheet which explains why we're being asked to vote on something put in

place. There was a presentation regarding the academic GPA tutoring program, which is now being revised. I guess there may be a more formal presentation to the Board at a later date. They're making sure students receive tutoring potentially at Kennedy and Eastside and they are trying to arrange for students who are not at Kennedy and Eastside to receive additional tutoring. That's all I want to cover right now. I'll give you a more formal report shortly. Are there any further questions about any of those items, A-1 through A-38?

Legal/Policy

Comm. Simmons: Legal and policy haven't met yet. We are meeting on the 10th of this month. I do have Resolutions B-1 and B-2 which are for approving the extension of leases. Are there any questions?

Fiscal

Comm. Kerr: The fiscal committee met on August 27. Present were Comm. Rivera, Comm. Teague, myself, and Ms. Ayala. We set our schedule to meet with all the heads of the departments having to do with matters dealing with fiscal. We also looked at the bills list. Those were two primary matters that were dealt with. Tonight we are presenting Resolutions C-1 through C-19. Is there any discussion?

Facilities

Comm. Hodges: Facilities met last night. In attendance were Comm. Cleaves, and Comm. Irving, and myself. Comm. Rivera was absent. There were a number of items of discussion. In terms of new facilities, Hazel/Marshall is proceeding rapidly. They are currently reinforcing the bridge at Hazel/Marshall. They are not providing us an opportunity yet for a walkthrough. They've been hesitating to do that. Numerous issues have come up leading to delays at Colt Street. The completion of the elevators, fire escape enhancement, PSE&G connection and the Verizon data packages for the internet all still remain to be done, as well as the inspection process after that. New work orders are 1,052, completion 119, and 610 are pending. Several are going out to vendors and a few of them are waiting for parts. They are putting together a package to list all of the preventative maintenance into a database so they can then follow through with extensive preventative maintenance procedures. That's not done yet. They hope to have that done in six months. We're having an energy audit for all our schools. 17 have been completed so far. Regarding some critical summer work, 27 schools were involved in the flooding with extensive damage which totaled something in excess of \$600,000. A good portion of that will be picked up by our insurance company. There are still some issues with floor tiles, but every single one of those classrooms will be back in operation for tomorrow. There has been a lot of damage regarding equipment, computers, and copy machines that we're going to be bringing back online over time. At School 10 there is the roof which has been a major concern. Little work was done expect for the design work during the summer. The actual physical work will begin September 14. They will be installing a rubberized roof and the expectation is that it should be in place in less than four to six weeks. We have two resolutions offered this month. D-1 is for the removal of six TCUs from School 1 at the cost of \$33,000. The other resolution is to name the gym in Eastside High School after Mr. Baker. Is there any discussion?

Comm. Kerr: Will Hazel/Marshall be open for this school year?

Comm. Hodges: No. It will be opened September 2016, not coincidentally with the election.

Comm. Kerr: So we'll have an official ribbon-cutting program.

Comm. Hodges: Shortly before the election. That's a total coincidence. Is there any further discussion on facilities?

Items Requiring Review and Comments

Personnel

Comm. Martinez: I'll defer to Comm. Cleaves. I was absent for both committee meetings that day. We were preparing our school for opening day. It was all hands on deck.

Comm. Cleaves: The personnel committee met on August 31 at 5:30. In attendance was myself. District staff was Marnie McKoy. We discussed four topics. The first one was the personnel report that was presented to us in our Board packets. We briefly skimmed through that. Number two was the updates on the new hires and recalls. As of date, there were 75 teachers recalled, seven new hires, and we have approximately an additional 46 recalls that are sitting in what is called a hopper group. The HR department is waiting to hear from the finance department to make sure that the funds are available to bring those additional 46 teachers back. We don't want to prematurely bring them back and be out of budget compliance. That's what they're waiting for from the finance department just to make sure. Number three, as you know the director in HR has taken on a new position. It was given to us previously already. She is taking on a new position, so she is in the process now of creating an SOP for a new director that will bid for that position. She's working on that now so that there will be a smooth transition once we rehire a new director in HR for that position. There was an addendum done to the teacher and principal manual. It was given to me, but I left mine in my car. If I can ask Ms. McKoy to make sure that all of the other Commissioners get a copy of the addendum to the teacher and principal manual. Normally what they do is they reprint the whole manual. This year they just printed the addendum, which are the changes and the upgrades to the manual which made a whole lot of sense. We also discussed a little bit in our meeting the ALIO and EduMet system. I was a little aware of what was going on already. That's why I was able to vote the way that I did. In personnel on Monday Ms. McKoy and I did speak a little bit about the system. The HR system right now uses EduMet and now they're in the process of looking at what needs to be done for HR to transition to the ALIO system. I had a little insight on that conversation prior to yours this evening. We concluded our meeting at 7:00 p.m.

Comm. Hodges: Thank you.

OTHER BUSINESS

Comm. Hodges: I'm going to call for a very short executive session on two items, personnel and legal. Both of them are primarily informational. You'll be out of here in five minutes.

Comm. Cleaves: At the end of the meeting?

Comm. Hodges: At the end of the meeting.

Comm. Martinez: Several months ago we did receive a donation of several thousand workbooks that were to be used in the district from Mr. McKoy. I haven't heard any updates about how we're intending to follow through and use these books. Do we have a plan for how we're going to implement the usage of these books? If we can get some clarity on that for the regular meeting I'd appreciate it. The hour is late and I don't want to get into that discussion now, but I do want to go on the record as requesting that information for the next regular meeting.

Comm. Hodges: Any further business?

**MOTION TO GO INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION TO
DISCUSS PERSONNEL AND LEGAL MATTERS**

It was moved by Comm. Martinez, seconded by Comm. Mimms that the Board goes into executive session to discuss personnel and legal matters. On roll call all members voted in the affirmative, except Commissioners Cleaves, Simmons and Teague who voted no. The motion carried.

Comm. Rivera: Chrystal, I want to put this on the record. I appreciate the format of your committee reporting.

The Board went into executive session at 10:28 p.m.

The Board reconvened the meeting at 10:49 p.m.

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

The meeting was adjourned at 10:50 p.m.