

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

March 25, 2015 - 6:40 p.m.
Administrative Offices

Presiding: Comm. Jonathan Hodges, President

Present:

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

Comm. Chrystal Cleaves
Comm. Christopher Irving
Comm. Errol Kerr
Comm. Manuel Martinez

Comm. Lilisa Mimms
*Comm. Flavio Rivera
*Comm. Kenneth Simmons, Vice President

Absent:

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:

**Special Meeting
March 25, 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.

DISCUSSION ON THE 2015-2016 SCHOOL YEAR BUDGET

Dr. Evans: I'm going to first make some introductory remarks that may be in some ways a repeat of some things I've said before just to remind particularly anybody in the audience who was not present in previous meetings to hear some of these comments. I'll be brief. Then I'll bring you up to date as to activity that has occurred since we last met regarding the budget and additional work that my staff and I have subjected the

budget to before we finally submitted it a couple of days ago. Tonight's workshop is for the purpose of giving the Board an opportunity to continue to query us, ask us questions about the budget, and to inform me and my staff of any issues or concerns you have as well as any additional areas that you would desire that we consider in terms of including in the budget that we may not have or to reconsider something that we've put in that you'd like for us to consider taking out or reprioritizing. As a result, we plan to proceed as follows. Again, I will make a few comments as I've already begun to do, and then I'll ask Ms. Ayala to come to the mike and make any additional comments to fill in where I may have left off in terms of activity that has occurred in recent days regarding the budget as we've ultimately revised it and resubmitted it in a very different form. The form was the same, but the numbers were different. It is a balanced budget. It accomplishes the goal. We are required to prepare and to submit a balanced budget. I wish to remind everyone that one of the big areas that we've been working on now for two years has been the avoidance of a fiscal cliff. While we face ongoing continuing challenges as it relates to flat funding over the past few years, we've also been challenged in a greater way by the fiscal cliff that we saw coming about three years ago. That cliff was brought on by the district's overdependence on its fund balance to balance its budget from year to year. I'll repeat the example that I've used over time as we've talked about the budget. If we think of our own household budgets, we seek to ensure that we have enough income coming in from whatever sources to pay our obligations and not have to depend on other sources beyond our income to pay those obligations. That's what we seek to achieve with our school district. For decades our district has done the opposite. Our district has depended heavily on funds in its fund balance to balance the budget from year to year to year. If you do that, over time eventually you're going to find yourself as we have facing the possibility of a fiscal cliff, particularly when there are increasing amounts from year to year of utilization of the fund balance. We've had more or less challenges from year to year. Some years we depend on it more heavily than we have in others. The bottom line is that our goal should be to seek to secure enough funding to ensure that as we look from year to year that we're able to balance our budget without having to depend on the fund balance. So we sought two years ago to begin to engage in a number of activities to avoid it and we were successful. We actually pushed it back two years ago when it was thought then that we would be confronted with it in a nearer or shorter timeline that would be seriously problematic for us. We were successful. We put together a community-based steering committee chaired by Irene Sterling that is currently still working. I see Rosie Grant sitting in the audience. She's a member of that committee. Jamie Dykes on the Chamber of Commerce is a member. The deans of the College of Education at William Paterson University and Montclair State University are on it. A number of other key influential people in our community are on that committee. The committee still meets. It meets four times a year to address a number of issues and one of them is the continuing possibility of a fiscal cliff. They've made recommendations to us, particularly as it relates to cliff planning, some of which have been integrated into our plans and have helped us. Others will be integrated because not only do we want to address this issue for the short run, we want to address it for the long run. There were some strategies that were recommended through that committee that have been integrated in a plan that we are putting in final form to bring forward to the Board to get some feedback that really goes beyond this year in terms of being able to continue to push back the fiscal cliff. We also took some additional steps that you know about. We implemented a number of hiring freezes over the years either at the district office or within our schools that have helped us tremendously. This year we created the timeline sooner than we normally do to stop spending in the current year and stop additional purchases assuming that principals and district office staff have purchased what they really needed. If they had something that was not going to occur until late in the year they were given the opportunity to encumber those funds. But then as of March 2, the

books were closed to any new encumbrances to our budget. This was helpful in helping us to establish an additional find balance. As I mentioned previously, we cut significant numbers of staff totaling \$4.5 million from the district office and we continue to reduce at the district office level as well. There are some more things that we did. The point is we've been working on this now for two years to continue to push back the cliff and we have been successful up until this point to do that. The long-range plan that Ms. Shafer and I have been working on attempts to continue to do that. But again, that's for a future discussion and you may want to ask us about it tonight. I would ask that when Ms. Shafer comes that would be the opportune time to do that because I charged her with actually developing the plan. We've met and talked about it and she should be here after the community forum ends tonight, which is shortly before 8:00. If you recall in the last meeting a number of questions were asked and we were feverishly preparing revisions to the preliminary budget that we had submitted previously. We did complete that process and that budget has been submitted. It is a balanced budget. As I've said before, our aim was to do it in a way that did not require any additional local taxes for educational purposes and we have accomplished that. We're not officially asking for any increase in taxes for education for our community. To accomplish that, we've also looked at the reductions that we've already made and made some further adjustments there. There were two different areas that helped us with balancing, funds that we didn't expect from some other sources. Ms. Ayala is better schooled at talking about what those one or two areas are than I. In the meantime, she and I continue to reduce the budget. For those who aren't familiar with this process, it starts in the fall. It starts usually in October/November when principals, district office directors, and others who are responsible for budgets are told to begin to establish their budget priorities, determine any changes they may want to make that have fiscal implications, any new programs they might want to implement that has fiscal implications, and be prepared then to represent that in their budget requests, which were due in December. Typically it's mid to late December when those figures are first due. Then our business office puts them together in the first iteration or draft of the budget. That did occur this year. As we worked into early January trying to put that in final form unfortunately we had a change in leadership in the business office which slowed us significantly. I have to at this point express deep appreciation to Ms. Ayala for stepping forward and taking the lead, having to do a significant amount of research to find things that she had not been involved in as it relates to the initial work with the budget and come up to speed very quickly with the help of Henry Lee and help us to get a budget to submit in early March. What that meant was that we had to continue to work on it after that period later than we normally would into March. But we have, and principals and district office staff responded to our calls to reduce their budgets. That's not unusual. They typically will ask for everything the first time they submit their budget. They'll ask for the world. We ultimately then tell them they have to reduce it. We send it back to them and then they make some additional reductions, whether it's principals, district directors, assistant superintendents, and division chiefs. They did, it came back, and some of the reductions were not enough. In fact, some didn't make the reductions and we sent it back again after giving them more specific instructions.

*Comm. Rivera enters the meeting at 6:52 p.m.

Dr. Evans: That happens typically annually as we go through this process. Some additional reductions were made by the division heads and principals and it came back for one final time to Ms. Ayala and I. We still had not met our objectives in terms of the bottom line and that's when I step in and I look at each one of the budgets. Then I make the final determination in terms of what we're going to reduce. That's what happened in this case. Ms. Ayala and I spent one Saturday out here doing just that to ultimately create the budget in its current form that we finally did submit. That budget

has been submitted. That's the second submission that I'm talking about, not the first. The second submission went in very recently. That's the copy you have, the second submission. There are some figures there that are different in that we made some adjustments to make sure we could cover \$5 million that we had suggested as a possibility for the taxes and we covered that. There were some other areas that we needed to cover as well and made adjustments to cover those areas. The bottom line is what you have is the final iteration that has been submitted. The executive county superintendent is reviewing it and then we have between now and... Is it the 30th or the 31st that we must submit it?

Ms. Daisy Ayala: He did approve it.

Dr. Evans: So the county executive superintendent has reviewed and approved it, but the final submission goes to the State at the end of the month. At this point there's still a window of opportunity if the Board sees something that they want to suggest that we do differently. There's still time to do that. At the end of the month we can accomplish. Then we'll wait until late spring when we find out what the final appropriations are from the state and then make any adjustments based on what those final appropriations are. So what you have tonight are those final figures. As usual, this is the time where if you have questions, comments, suggestions, priorities, things you want us to reconsider, or look at differently this is the opportunity to do that.

Comm. Irving: Just to make sure I'm clear, if hypothetically speaking we make a change or recommendation tonight, doesn't it have to go back to the county superintendent before it goes back to the State?

Ms. Ayala: Good evening. That is correct. If we make any changes it has to go back to the county superintendent for this approval and justification for the changes as well.

Comm. Hodges: If there are no changes in the overall amount of money, does that still apply?

Ms. Ayala: Yes, that is correct.

Comm. Hodges: He has to approve all the different categories?

Ms. Ayala: That's right.

Comm. Hodges: Dr. Evans, when did you submit the budget?

Ms. Ayala: Saturday at 2:00.

Comm. Irving: The inherent concern I have is just the timeframe associated with us being able to do that, you all being able to adjust it, and get it to the county superintendent so that we can get an answer back by the 30th.

Comm. Hodges: This is not a new process. We've done it this way for the last two or three years. As I've mentioned before, the appropriate time to do this is in May when you're establishing the priorities and then again in late September/October when people are submitting their initial budget requests. That's when the Board should be talking about what curricular imperatives are going to be driving the ultimate numbers, not in March. In March the numbers are hard and fast and there's not much you can do about it. This whole process of reviewing the budget is largely academic in terms of moving a

few pennies around at the last moment. It is not something where you can have a major restructuring, which is why you don't do it in March.

Dr. Evans: You're right. There are changes that can be made now, but it can't be major restructuring of the budget. That's correct.

Comm. Irving: The point I'm trying to make is we did make changes in years past. Prior to the budget being submitted the Board had an opportunity to shift money around. I know because I made sure that the timeline reflected that. Again, this is that opportunity. I just wish we could have had time to have that conversation prior to you all submitting that budget so that we wouldn't have to have this exercise post-facto. That's the only point I'm trying to make.

Comm. Mimms: Just looking through the budget I noticed that there are a lot of reductions in salaries going through the line items. Do we have a definitive number as to how many cuts we're making in reductions in staff? How will it affect the learning process for our children?

Dr. Evans: Let me give you two sets of numbers, one for program and one for personnel. Coming around is a memo you've seen before. Attached to it is an updated spreadsheet that reflects program cuts. You've seen this in different ways. What I asked Ms. Ayala to do was to group together all of the budgets within a particular division, let's say academic services where we have language arts, social studies, and the various departments. Group those together and all of what's in Ms. Ayala's unit, the business office, so that you can see how much a division was impacted. Recognizing that within a division department heads can shift funds if they'd like from one category to another. That's why we did it that way. If there's a desire to put more money in a particular program than in another, then money can be moved from one program to another within that budget without necessarily making adjustments that would impact accounting. That's what you have there. You've seen an earlier version of this form. This is a short version of that form. It's the original budget requested and then the revised budget represents the latest iteration, the revised budget, and the 116 that you see at the bottom of that particular page, which is in effect a \$9 million reduction from this year's budget. The other information I'll share with you. It's not in a form yet where we're ready to distribute it. You asked about the number of personnel reductions. At this point in time there are 15 district office administrators who are on the cut list that we will be reducing. Also, there are a number of secretaries here. I'm not sure if it's between the school and the district office. There are 19. Ms. Ayala, do you know if it's a combination of school-based and district office?

Ms. Ayala: Yes, it is. It's by title, not whether they're at district office.

Dr. Evans: The 15 administrators that I mentioned are all the way from senior staff on the cabinet to supervisors, managers, executive directors, and so on. It's a total of 15 that are combined. Instructional assistants looking across the board are a total of 72 that have been identified. There are potentially 197 teachers. Teachers are a broad category. It could be other categories that are called teacher but aren't necessarily classroom teachers. Those are the figures that we have.

Comm. Hodges: You said 72 IAs?

Dr. Evans: Aides. All of them aren't instructional aides. We have different categories of aides. I'm calling them reductions because some we will take care of through attrition. Keep in mind we typically have 150 to 200 people who leave us in any given year. So

as many as we can absorb through attrition we will and those that we can't then it will be RIF. When we get to the specific school positions, and the instructional positions are school-based, and we get a good fix on how many we will have to RIF after attrition, then there's a process in place for that. Ms. Shafer will be meeting with a group of assistant superintendents and they will be meeting one-on-one with principals to look at their individual needs in their schools. Principals will be key to determining which positions in their schools might be reduced, depending on what the situation is within their school. Instead of saying we're going to cut all the personnel in this or that category, principals are going to be the primary informants with the assistant superintendents in determining that. So it may be a different position from school to school based on that principal's view on what they need for their school.

*Comm. Simmons enters the meeting at 7:03 p.m.

Comm. Cleaves: To piggyback off Comm. Mimms' question, you gave her a number of 197 instructional positions. All of the numbers you gave us total up to 303 people.

Dr. Evans: That's correct. Then I left some out because the total is actually 363. I see. Here are some additional aides that I did not include as well. We have 400 to 500 aides in various categories. One category here is mentioning 57 and another 72.

Comm. Irving: My first question is a follow-up to what we asked last week about the new Choice Schools. Where are they in here?

Dr. Evans: If it's personnel, they're in the personnel lines. They've been added into the personnel lines. If it's supplies and materials, I'll have to ask Ms. Ayala or Mr. Johnson perhaps to respond to that.

Comm. Irving: I asked specifically to see that.

Dr. Evans: You most certainly did.

Ms. Ayala: They are. For example, the Single Gender transportation is in the transportation budget, which is in that document that you have. The \$18 million is incorporated in that number. Supplies are in the supplies line. Everything else is in the salary lines because it's mostly teachers and we already have them in the budget.

Comm. Irving: Is there a budget created for the program already?

Dr. Evans: There is a separate budget. In fact, it was in the proposal that Mr. Johnson brought forward.

Ms. Ayala: It's been funded by NCLB as well, not just local funds. NCLB will be contributing to that program as well.

Comm. Irving: Can we just see the budget for it? This is exactly what we needed. Thank you. The Parent Resource Center is being budgeted at zero. How and why?

Dr. Evans: The parent engagement unit reports directly to her. Unless Ms. Ayala knows the answer to that question, I would defer to Ms. Shafer when she comes in.

Ms. Ayala: NCLB.

Dr. Evans: It's funded from NCLB. This is all state.

Ms. Ayala: Right. When we reviewed the budget we talked about parents. It's mostly funded under NCLB. We put all the expenditures in NCLB's budget.

Comm. Irving: What's the Parent Resource Center getting from NCLB, \$54,000?

Ms. Ayala: No. In addition to what they have they're going to get an additional \$54,000.

Comm. Irving: So they're getting \$108,000?

Ms. Ayala: I don't have the NCLB in front of me.

Comm. Irving: They asked for \$54,000 and in our budget it's allocated at nothing. How's it reflected? What's their actual allocation for NCLB?

Ms. Ayala: We're going to transfer that into the NCLB budget.

Comm. Irving: So they're getting all \$54,000.

Ms. Ayala: Yes.

Comm. Mimms: We're in agreement with that, but where is it identified in the line items? He's asking the question and we're just trying to find it here. It wasn't really a sidebar. We're just trying to find it here in the budget.

Comm. Irving: Do you know what page it is?

Comm. Rivera: It should be here in the budget under NCLB.

Dr. Evans: This budget does not include NCLB, does it? NCLB is a separate budget that's submitted during the summer. Their fiscal year started out September through August and just changed to July 1. It's a different submission to the federal government and it's actually an entitlement grant. We do a proposal, submit it to the state, and then ultimately to the US Department of Education. They review it, determine whether or not they're going to approve it or if we need to modify, and then it comes back to us and it's not until late summer or early fall when we know what the final budget is going to be. That's a different budget exercise. The state and federal submissions are different.

Comm. Mimms: Because that's a different budget, are we a part of that budgeting process?

Dr. Evans: Yes. It will come to you as a Board agenda item for discussion. If Ms. Peron would explain the process I would appreciate it.

Ms. Susana Peron: Good evening. The NCLB budget does come to the Board through a Board action. It comes twice because when we have carryover money from NCLB we tell you what money is left and in the areas where it's left. So it always comes as a Board agenda item to the Board for approval. You see exactly what lines will be used for what in terms of what we budget in Title. Title III is usually for immigrant and bilingual programs for children of that nature. Title I has a lot to do with parent engagement activities and other activities such as after-school programs, enrichment programs, and programs of the like.

Comm. Mimms: The other piece to that is we're a part of the process. If we are not given that grant are we making provisions for the \$54,000 in this budget so that parent engagement piece is cared for? That's my concern. I heard Dr. Evans say that we have to be approved. So what is the what-if scenario? Parent engagement is something that we want to make sure we have high importance for our parents to be engaged and the community. If we're getting \$54,000 and we're relying on this grant, if it's not approved are we going to reallocate this budget to make sure that's funded?

Dr. Evans: NCLB used to be called Title I and it's still Title I within NCLB. It's an entitlement grant, which means we're entitled to the funds. Our proposal is how we're going to spend the funds. We are assured by federal law of the funds. The amounts may vary from year to year just like the state budget may vary from year to year, but the funds are ours. Then we send first to the state and then to the federal government a budget just like we do for this one saying we want to spend this much for parent and community engagement. They don't necessarily get into micromanaging the lines unless we stray from the parameters. They establish the parameters, the things you can't spend it for. As long as we stay within that, it's our call to determine what we're going to use those monies for. Parent and community engagement is a high priority at the federal level for that grant. I don't know of a situation where it's ever been denied since it was enacted in the late 1960's and early 1970's.

Comm. Irving: The Arabic program comes out of that budget as well. I just want to make sure that within the provisions for that program in particular NCLB will allow us to fund a program specific to certain cultural groups.

Dr. Evans: NCLB will enable that, but it's our decision. That's one of the things we'll be discussing with the Board. Shall we or shall we not? Quite frankly, there have been some questions that have surfaced during the year that are causing us to ask ourselves some hard questions about how much and when. We'll be engaging the Board on that as we approach that time when we review the NCLB budget.

Comm. Irving: Related to this budget for the Single Gender School, I don't see a line item for an administrator here. I see the staffing, but I don't see anything for...

Ms. Peron: Oversight.

Mr. Aubrey Johnson: Initially when the budget was created it was the school-within-a-school model. But now that we're moving it into its own location we will take a look at that and we need to include that.

Comm. Irving: Is there a fixed number associated to the budget for this? You still have custodians and security to be determined. If I'm to believe that this is indeed in the budget, I then have to understand that what has been shared with us now has been reflected as a hard cost in the budget. When we say custodians and security to be determined and there is no mention of any administration, where do those administrators end up in the budget for this?

Dr. Evans: I'm actually glad you brought it up because now we need to make sure it's in there.

Comm. Irving: At least we know we're looking at this administrative cost. Do we have a breakdown of the other two programs and of the cost in particular as well?

Ms. Peron: You should have received an early childhood budget where we stated where the instructional materials were coming from. In terms of staffing we had said that it is going to be a part of the school-within-a-school. So it's under an administrator and it's a part of an existing school. We're still under proposal and discussion about where it's going to be. The teacher will be a transfer, someone who is dually certified and interested in that position. We will interview for that. There are two grade levels, pre-k and kindergarten, so it's fully funded in that way.

Comm. Irving: What's the other program we're doing?

Ms. Peron: The fine and performing arts.

Comm. Irving: Where's the budget for that one?

Ms. Peron: That one is within the schools I guess as well. It's one grade level. It sits in C&I because it's coming out of...

Comm. Irving: But is there a line item budget for the program?

Ms. Peron: Yes.

Comm. Irving: Can we get a copy of it?

Ms. Peron: Yes.

Comm. Irving: Is there any way to get it tonight?

Ms. Peron: I have to look through my documents and see. I have to go upstairs.

Comm. Kerr: Dr. Evans, I need to know where the adult extended learning school is that we just established a couple of months ago.

Dr. Evans: It's in the high school budget. There is a line in the budget under Dr. Cavanna's division that has actually a broad category that includes a Twilight Program and all of the after-school graduation enhancement programs. It's included there.

Comm. Kerr: It's just difficult for us. I wish it was more defined so we can tell the boundaries, what the cost for the program really is.

Comm. Hodges: Mr. Kerr, a wise old man a few years ago said that there would be a day when you would be forced to look at some very difficult cuts and to establish some priorities and you would need budgetary information. I don't know who the guy was, but you would need budgetary information so that you could make complete and thorough assessments and not have to go through what Comm. Irving is asking for right now. I don't know who that guy is.

Comm. Cleaves: I think I remember.

Comm. Hodges: Do you remember that? He was here and he was screaming every meeting about that time. I think that time is now. Now you understand exactly what that old man was talking about, whoever he is. He was a visionary.

Dr. Evans: About the budget you're inquiring about, Mr. Kerr, Dr. Cavanna is not here tonight, but I can get that for you.

Comm. Kerr: I see a budget line here, line 815. It's captioned 'Adult Basic Education.' I just need to know what we have under that line item. What falls under that line item?

Dr. Evans: If it's Adult Education it's just that.

Ms. Ayala: It's the GED program. That line is Fund 20, which is a grant that they got.

Comm. Kerr: Okay.

Comm. Mimms: I see that a lot of our cuts are in the after school programs.

Dr. Evans: Unfortunately, a lot of them are, for secondary as well as elementary. We didn't cut them completely out, but we did cut them back.

Comm. Mimms: The concern I have is that we're very programmatic when it comes to trying to resolve issues when it comes to the school district. We see a concern and we introduce another program and we're easy to find money within the budget, whether it's shifting general supplies and different monies to be able to introduce a new program. A perfect example is the Single Gender School. Then we look at a number which is huge of 363 personnel that we're looking to reduce but we're presenting three different schools that will eat into the budget. Why not utilize those monies to keep some of our teachers to be able to provide instructional time or after-school and before-school programs so that our children can continue the learning process and there is that interaction with the community and the parents and push back some of these new programs that we're trying to introduce? The new programs are great, but we need to fix some of the stuff that we already have going on. I think some of this money that we're allocating to present new programs we need to really focus on some of the programs we have that are not working and allocate some of those funds into some of our instructional time or keeping some of the jobs for some of these teachers, instructional aides, and secretaries that are really needed to keep these programs afloat and push back on some of these new IB programs, Single Gender School, and fine arts. They're great programs. I'm not saying they're not. But I just think that some of the things we have in our school district have some good solid teeth to them and we need to take another look at some of those programs that we have and put some more funds with some of them. These new programs we can push those out maybe two years or whatever timeframe we can talk about and reallocate that money to some of these programs making sure we have social workers that are in place to make sure the IEPs are reviewed and responded within 20 days and those types of things. I think that we should look to reallocate and push these programs out. These three programs are well over \$1 million and we can use that money for something else in the district that we see that is working or something that we can fine-tune by shifting and keeping some of the jobs for some of these teachers.

Dr. Evans: Great suggestions. But let me suggest to you that regardless of where a kid sits, he or she will need a teacher. Whether they are in school A or in a special program in school B, they still need a teacher. Principals are assigned teachers based on their enrollment. Their enrollment using a divisor depending on the grades that they have determines how many teachers they need. If their population reduces because some kids left and went to a different program, the number of teachers in school A is reduced, which provides the venue then through which to assign that teacher to school B, whether they're in a special program or not. That's the premise on which we establish programs. Can we offset that by taking a teacher away from where the kids are coming from? Sometimes it's not that clean, unfortunately. Kids don't always come in in sets of

20 for a particular program for a particular school, but that's the aim. But your suggestion is actually a good one and a very good point. One of our Board members has suggested in the past that we provide more programs for advanced level students, students who are performing above the norm, whether they're gifted or have a talent in science or those areas. We need to challenge them as well. An unfortunate reality is that when you have a relatively homogenous group of 20-25 kids the teachers aren't always able to give attention to students on the fringes, whether they're on the high end or the low end. That's really how special programs came about, both for gifted kids as well as youngsters who need additional help, whether they're disabled or not. That's what we've attempted to do. That's been a priority that's been established in the past. Provide more programs for high-functioning kids to really push them and challenge them the way they need to be pushed.

Comm. Hodges: Additionally, we used to have a program called Operation Link-Up. Many of you are familiar with that. Operation Link-Up got our children into Penn State, Syracuse, Ramapo, and Notre Dame. Some of the features of that program such as mentorships, an individual who really spent time working with the students and lifting their understanding of the importance of education and focusing on their ability to perform in the classroom, that program did wonders. While it was in place the Paterson cohort of students who were on Syracuse University had the highest GPA and graduation rate of any group in Syracuse University. The president of the University came here, gave the graduation speech at Kennedy, and announced that. The programs, depending on how they function, do provide a benefit. I was and still am unhappy with the academy system and the current iteration of the academy system, but I've muted my comments because the graduation rate at Kennedy has gone up. I'm not altogether in favor of the selection of academies that we have there, but they have performed that particular function of providing a course of instruction that children are attracted to. I guess the premise was that if they're attracted to it they'll spend more time there, work harder, and you'll get them to complete the course of instruction. That's one of the reasons I sort of support the program option. The other thing is there are groups of students who you're going to have to address their needs in a particularized fashion. An example is the Newcomers. Those students are not just immigrants who come to this country. They're immigrants who come here without formal training. Therefore, it's hard to put them in a classroom even close to their requisite age group because they haven't had the educational background in their sending countries to enable them to function the way you'd want to in a regular school setting. That's the whole reason for the Newcomers program, to help lift their competencies early and in a separate setting so that they can then be mainstreamed throughout the rest of the approach. Without that it makes it harder for them to perform. Those are the reasons why you have some of those programs in place.

Comm. Mimms: I'm not debating the programs. I'm very familiar with Operation-Link Up. I know many students who went through the program. I'm very familiar with Ms. Jenkins. There are many programs that have done great things. I'm not questioning or debating programs. My concern is that we keep creating programs to fix issues. We're saying charter schools are coming so let's create this IB program. Are we creating them for them to be locally competitive? Or are they going to be competitive globally? If we're only preparing them on a local level, we're going to have an issue with our children and that's the concern. These programs are helping them locally, but when they get to a global environment they're going to struggle. There's nothing wrong with programming, but when we create programs we have to create them from a global mindset so we're preparing our children for the real world, not a localized environment. That's what I'm saying. I know you've heard me say it, not just because I'm a female, but why are we introducing single gender males but not females? We're going to push

these two out. You're going to have a concern with the women. They're going to ask who made the choice to choose men first. We see statistics and records, but why are we pushing that first? You're going to have these different concerns. We're trying to resolve concerns and provide a cohesive environment. These programs, which are great, are pulling away from the things that we're trying to create, healthy environments and building morale. We just created a new department for morale, culture and climate. Then we go and introduce a program called Single Gender School for boys and that goes against the culture we're trying to create. Operation Link-Up is good. We've identified that model as great. Has that become a model for other programs that we put in place? Do we use that as a gauge or a meter to say this program has worked well? These are new programs we want to present. Do we utilize the same engagement that these programs have had to make sure they work? Is there mentorship in there? Is there internship? Can we partner with the businesses or local entities in the community? We have the steering committees, and that's great. I went to some of the steering committees, but sometimes we miss individuals in those committees because we pick based on what this person or that person has said, but some of them don't have a pulse on the real heartbeat of the community. It's based on their own local agenda. That's one of the issues. We can't keep creating stuff expecting different results. We have to think from a different perspective. We have to be open to hear everything that's being said. These are things that we miss and we'll come back next year with the budget and say what did we miss? It's the same thing we presented last year. Do you understand what I'm saying, Dr. Evans? We have to get our children ready. I came out of Corporate America. When I look at these programs, I'm thinking to myself are the children coming out of the school district ready to be a marketing specialist and a human resource analyst? Are they ready for these things based on the programs? These programs that we have, such as IB and Single Gender, what are they going to do for them if they want to work in Corporate America? What is that going to really provide the day-to-day logistics and hands-on approach? There are so many different things. I hear you Dr. Hodges, but I really want to hear Dr. Evans. He's the Superintendent and I really would love to hear his logic. These are just extra things. It's not taking away, but we need to really think. We want our children to do study abroad programs. We want them to go to Hong Kong. We want them to be in China. We want them to be in Spain. We don't want them to just go to an IB program at International High School. That's great, but we want our children to be able to be great violinists and travel abroad. We want to see our children do those types of things. That's my concern with the programs that we're introducing. They're similar to what we've had in the past and I just want to see us do something a little different.

Dr. Evans: There are two drivers, in answer to your question. Number one, those who were on the Board five or six years ago when we restructured alternative education heard me say we want to create a place for every child in our district to be successful regardless of what their needs are, what grade level they're in, or what their challenges are. We want a place for every child. If the traditional school isn't the place for them and they've not been successful there for whatever reason, an alternative program that may focus not just on discipline but social/emotional development outside of a special education context then we created an alternative program to address that. If it was discipline, then we created an alternative school for that. In that same vein, IB is an International Baccalaureate program. It is an international curriculum. It's based in England. Where is it based, Ms. Peron?

Ms. Peron: Actually, all over the world.

Dr. Evans: In England. It is an international program to do exactly what you just described a moment ago, to prepare our students to be successful anywhere in the

world, to take on any challenge and perform at very high levels professionally. That's what it's designed for. We have students who are ready for it, but we don't have a program of that caliber in place in our district. I don't want to give them an out to go to another school in another district or up the hill. I don't. I want them to stay here in Paterson. Therefore, we create a program for them to help them to be successful and go on. Once you get an IB degree acceptance in a college is a foregone conclusion. Not just in the United States, by the way, anywhere in the world. It's that caliber of program and that's what we're creating. The gifted program we just created was the same thought behind it. We have youngsters who are high performers and we want to challenge them. Therefore, we created the gifted program and it's a nice program to prepare students for International Baccalaureate and for the AP placements in our high schools to be more successful. One of the disappointments for me is when I look at the performance on AP tests. There is a standardized AP test. The passing rate is far lower than what it should be. That should change as this gifted program grows along with what's happening in some of our schools. STEM is coming along very well. I have to say I'm very proud of what I see happening in STEM, PANTHER, and some of the other schools to get our students ready. But making sure there's a program for every child to prepare them to compete internationally actually. That's exactly what this is about.

Comm. Simmons: He didn't really speak to the reason why we have a Single Gender program for boys. Our boys are the lowest performing. There is a plan for a Single Gender school for girls as well, but that will be pushed out later. Because they are low performing the focus was to start with the boys' program first. As I've spoken to Mr. Johnson, and Comm. Martinez can also speak to it, we did talk about the things that they need to help them perform globally, not just locally. But we do have to deal with the local issues because there are some social/emotional issues that have to be dealt with and the only way to truly do that is to put them in their own environment.

Dr. Evans: I was going to follow up Comm. Simmons. The research is very clear. There are some very effective programs out there that address the issues that Comm. Simmons just mentioned. We didn't decide this would be good to do. No, it was researched. Actually, several Board members and Mr. Johnson went to a conference and learned a lot. Mr. Johnson, did you go visit some schools elsewhere in the state to look at effective programs? This is designed to meet a specific need.

Comm. Irving: I just have a recommendation. Comm. Mimms has a good point about how resources are allocated and how we determine and define how resources get allocated and when. When is it imperative to institute a boys program versus an after-school program? When is it imperative to implement an SAT program versus a pre-college prep program? The point she's making is an issue that I'd like to see adopted in the budget. That's the creation of an institutional advancement department for our district. If you look at most institutions of higher learning there are typically departments that are employed by full-time staff members whose sole job is to connect with and find external resources and funding sources outside of local appropriation and state and federal appropriations. In order for us to truly get to a point where Comm. Mimms is speaking to we've got to put good money in front of good money. Sometimes you have to put resources upfront to be able to find additional funding sources. I'm going through the same exercise in my office right now. I've had to hire someone to go out and find additional grants and funding sources for our workforce development for the county. To that point, I've already brought back \$1.2 million and I'm paying the person \$50,000 for their job. I think there are individuals at the collegiate level who are probably associate directors for institutional advancement or the assistant director for institutional advancement who would love the opportunity to take a directorship in some capacity.

I'm thinking either we begin with one person to hire for next year to scope out what an institutional advancement strategy would look like for the district and then see in the next budget cycle what resources they'll need. You hire someone for the purposes of crafting a long-range plan for funding and giving. That's not just about looking for grants because I know we've had this conversation. I'm not talking about a grant writer. I'm talking about someone who strategically leverages dollars from foundations, philanthropists, and alumni. I look at Eastside and at the reunions that Eastside High School has and people from the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s that still come back to Paterson to the Brownstone. I'm amazed at how many individuals, people who don't look like us, still love Eastside High School.

Comm. Martinez: Leonard Sachs.

Comm. Irving: My dad was one of only three African Americans who went to Eastside when he went. I think that if we're going to readjust the budget that's one thing that I would love to see us do and I would love to have feedback. I think it's imperative and it would only be fiscally responsible for even the state to look at us and say we are looking at other ways to attract ourselves so that when Mark Zuckerberg comes in and he wants to give another \$100 million endowment somewhere it's going to Paterson and not Newark. But we have to have the apparatus in place to be able to receive that. So Comm. Mimms, when the conversations come up about different programs they're not coming necessarily out of the instructional budget but from the capital improvement budget because it might be a four-year pilot funded by the capital campaign or the institutional dollars that we have. It's just a right way of being able to find that out. I'm just putting that out there.

Comm. Hodges: One of the things that you don't have the benefit of are all the back conversations about, in the first case, the Single Gender and looking at those test scores year after year after year and trailing early and tailing off in the third and fourth grade, which is where the program is trying to put some additional emphasis to try to stop that drop-off. In fact, part of the May discussions around the budget will be, I hope, to look at just the rationale behind programs like this as we talk about where we're going to go next year and what kinds of priorities we have to look at. This versus another program, cuts, or whatever, so that we're all part of that planning and deciding where this district is going to go, in what direction next year. We have not been engaged in that kind of conversation recently. Your question would help inform the discussions of how the budget is crafted based on what are the priorities, what are the needs, what are the directions, what are the needs for this program or another program. You mentioned in supervision. We're talking about efficiency of programs and existing practices as opposed to discussions of whether this works or not. That's under the guise of efficiency more so than whether the program works, how it's being managed. All those discussions need to occur at that particular point in time.

Comm. Mimms: It's not that I'm not familiar because the information is on the website. I know I'm new to this Board, but I'm not new to the information. It's not that I don't have the statistics. The information is on the website. We have all the data. I'm not saying it's not needed. That's not my discussion. My discussion is to the point that Comm. Irving just made, about the allocation of funding. It was a great idea he had to create this department for philanthropy. It was a perfect idea. It was exactly what I was talking about. I'm not saying we don't need these programs. We live in this community. We know we have needs for our children and all types of things, which is great. I was just worried about the money. When I hear a number like 363 personnel and then I see these new programs coming up, that's a big concern. We have 363 personnel that are being attritioned, cut, or taken out of the workforce and now we're introducing some new

program. It's not about the program itself. The program may be great, but that wasn't my concern. My question was about money allocation and making sure that we're not putting money to something for five years as a pilot that does not work. Then we're ready to say it doesn't work and we pull money away five years later. If we're going to put our money there, let's make sure that we're getting a return on our investment. Every time we introduce a program, whether we went to the schools, make sure if we know Operation Link-Up has worked use that as a model to gauge the other programs to say this worked and why did it work. We can talk to Mr. Jenkins. We can talk to former students. Those are ways of identifying so that we're not wasting money.

Comm. Hodges: That's an excellent point. What I'm suggesting in May is looking at the cost benefit analysis of the existing programs. As we decide what we're going to do moving forward have we done just those things that you've mentioned in evaluation of where these programs are? As we look forward to next year are there other things that we can do better?

Comm. Mimms: I hear you, but that's not what I'm saying. We're discussing the budget tonight. So we have an opportunity tonight to see what we can reallocate and shift so this can be represented to the county. I'm not waiting until May. We're here tonight. This is March.

Comm. Hodges: I'm talking about the whole process.

Comm. Mimms: We're here tonight. I'm talking about what we're sitting here looking at, this big packet, to identify. Our goal is the betterment of our children so that they can be the greatest. That's our goal. That's why we're sitting here. I'm not going to wait until May to bring this up when the budget has been approved, confirmed, and now we're in May talking about something different. We're here tonight, that's why we're here, to identify different approaches and ways that we can help be of assistance with the budgeting process. That's what we're doing. We identified these are programs we're introducing to the district. Great, but the thing is we want to make sure these programs are going to work. Do we know that now? We don't know. We're testing them. We don't. This is a beta test period. We don't know if they're going to work. We went to other schools and conferences, but we don't know if these programs will work in our district. They worked elsewhere, but we don't know if they're going to work here. I want to make sure that when we introduce something and we allocate funds from other places from this budget that we're making sure that what we introduce is working and if doesn't work that we pull it immediately. We can use that money to give instructional time, after-school programs, parent engagement, and all those areas. It's one thing if we didn't know it, but we've identified. It was stated. That's why I asked. We didn't have this packet before today. If we had it before today, I probably would have 50 million questions. But because we got it tonight in comparison to what I've already researched, because I went line by line just looking to see, when I saw a huge number in salary I knew it was going to be a high number. That's why I asked you, because I went based on the numbers and I said this is over the original number of 125. I knew that number had to double almost like 60% more. Now it's 363. That's why I'm asking the question, because we're presenting programs which are great, but we're getting rid of some of our teachers. That's an issue. We're creating programs that require teachers, but we're getting rid of teachers. That's a concern.

Comm. Irving: The point she's making is very valid. I want to make it very clear given the recommendation that I have that it's my expectation that a way to get to what Lilisa is talking about is to create some institutional advancement position in the next budget. I'm making it very clear by the time we get back on the 30th something related to that

level of position should be included in the budget if we're going to be serious about diversifying our revenue stream. We can't go back to the taxpayers and ask them to help foot the bill if we know the resources exist for us not to necessarily have to go back and dig in the pockets of taxpayers.

Comm. Hodges: Will that address your issue tonight?

Comm. Mimms: That's exactly what I was looking for. Yes.

Comm. Hodges: Okay. Tonight what further do we do to...

Comm. Mimms: I'm still looking through the line items.

Comm. Irving: Ms. Peron just gave us the art school. What I don't see are the line items for the staff, principals, and the actual faculty in this budget.

Ms. Ayala: What Ms. Peron gave you are non-salaries. The salaries are residing with me until I get the full approval from the Commissioner. I have it upload it into the ALIO system. When it's okay for me to upload, then I'll do that.

Comm. Irving: Are the positions being budgeted for?

Dr. Evans: You want to know how many and what the costs are?

Comm. Irving: Correct.

Dr. Evans: We can get that.

Ms. Ayala: He only has the operating piece because the other piece is residing somewhere else. He doesn't have the staffing. It's not in ALIO yet.

Comm. Irving: Again, if we are to approve the budget and I assume that the budget will have...

Ms. Ayala: The DOE has it.

Comm. Irving: Right. But the budget we're going to submit will have the staffing positions within them.

Ms. Ayala: The DOE one has it. That's the in-house.

Comm. Irving: Right. But there's no way for us to see that in this incarnation.

Ms. Ayala: But that's the art budget. The art budget doesn't have a principal or staffing.

Comm. Irving: What about faculty?

Ms. Ayala: Yes, it has.

Comm. Irving: We have to see that. We're talking about the arts. We're not just talking about math. You need a horn teacher. You need a drama teacher. I want to make sure these positions are reflected in this budget. Unless these questions are answered about this and the other program, I'm not comfortable saying yes to this on Monday without us having that information.

Dr. Evans: I will see that you have it by midday tomorrow.

Comm. Irving: The way Aubrey broke down the line item I think it makes sense. It's pretty clear. It's just good to have in particular information about is there staffing. Is there is, what will that look like? I can see that for the art school that's probably going to be a school-within-a-school model. That's great, but you still have major professor teachers that have to be a part of that program. Are you getting drama? Are you getting vocal? Are you getting dance? How are we planning on paying for people?

Comm. Hodges: Dr. Evans, in these 197 teachers, is there a sense of how many classroom teachers we could lose?

Dr. Evans: There is, but until Ms. Shafer and the assistant superintendents sit with principals one-on-one and the question for them is what is it that you would like to give up, that number won't be final. They may give up positions different from a classroom teacher. Principals are closest to it, so they're the best people to inform that decision. I have a hypothetical, but if I gave you that now it may change once they sit and have those conversations with principals.

Comm. Hodges: Are science and math teachers...

Dr. Evans: Off the table - science, math, special education, and ELL. Ms. Peron, is there another critical shortage area or problematic area other than science, math, ELL, and special education that are off the table?

Ms. Peron: That's it.

Comm. Hodges: I'm aware of a school where a parent came down to a meeting and was concerned about their child not having a language arts teacher.

Dr. Evans: I was concerned too and I've since investigated it. That problem has been fixed, but there's an institutional fix coming to not let that happen again. We know what the problem was and the permanent fix is in the works, but that particular case has been fixed.

Comm. Hodges: That particular school had a number of vacancies.

Dr. Evans: That was very disturbing.

Comm. Hodges: If we lose these teachers are we going to be in a position where if another set of illnesses occur, which is what happened here, you will be without a language arts teacher?

Dr. Evans: No.

Comm. Hodges: Okay.

Comm. Mimms: I don't know how much detail we'll get on these 363 personnel. This number is so scary I can't even say it. Can we identify where they're coming from?

Dr. Evans: We don't know that yet. Again, principals have to help make that decision. If I'm the assistant superintendent and I'm talking to the principal of school A, he knows

his or her situation better. That's why we ask them what they can afford least to lose and let them make that call.

Comm. Rivera: From what I was told, given the way that we did budgeting in previous years and maybe this year also we allocate the revenues to those schools and then they build the budget from there. That's what I was told. If this year we're saying to the schools that they're getting \$8 million for revenue based on their per-pupil count, now they're building a budget based on \$8 million. The next year we give them \$9 million based on per-pupil count and they build a budget. You keep saying we're going to reduce staffing through attrition. I noticed that you guys did exactly what I was saying before. I notice that some budgets for some schools have been reduced. I'm just a little concerned that we're putting that out there that we're reducing staff. I don't think they're actual staff. I don't think so. Maybe it's just budgeted amounts.

Dr. Evans: There were some vacancies that have already been removed. What you were told was incorrect. We don't give you \$8 million and say, "What do you need?" That's not how it's done. Remember the process I went through earlier. In fall they're asked to look at their schools. They know what they got the current year because they got that last spring. They know the current year's budget. They are asked to look into next year and determine your priorities for your school, department, or division. Based on that then they submit their requests. That's how it comes. We don't give them money upfront for next year and then tell them to start whittling away at it.

Comm. Rivera: Let me rephrase. Let me give you an exact example. Like I said before, let's say in 2014 that school budgeted \$8 million and they only spent \$7.5 million. The next year we give them \$9 million. We increased their original \$8 million and gave them \$8.5 million, another \$500,000. The previous year they didn't spend \$500,000. Now you increase their budget, if you base it on what you expended, by \$1 million. That's the example I gave you with School 9 and several schools. Every year we've been increasing their budgets although they have never been close to spending all their money. That's the example I'm giving you. For example, if you look at the budget and somebody doesn't see the actual money expended, you're going to say we cut that school's budget by \$1 million. You didn't because last year they didn't spend \$1.5 million. We didn't reduce. We didn't cut services in that school by \$1.5 million. That's what I'm trying to say.

Dr. Evans: If they received an increase from one year to the next, it was because they established a priority or a need that their assistant superintendent supported. It was a legitimate need. It may have been a state requirement that we implement something or do something different or whatever it was. That need had to be established first. It went through several filters, including the business administrator and myself in the end. We're the last to make adjustments after everyone else does. But they had to establish that upfront. It just wasn't arbitrarily given to them. It really wasn't. The need had to be clearly established and documented.

Comm. Mimms: I would love to see some type of community listening ear or feedback. We present programs. I know I'm all about programs tonight. I would love to hear what the parents feel that the children need. Even though we have charter schools, and that's great, have we ever asked the parents what will intrigue them to stay in the district? What will intrigue our children to stay in the district? We need to do that in the community. Then we can have some anonymous boxes or locations where if they don't want to be seen to say it. Then we have some locations with drop boxes where they can drop their ideas. The best people to ask who and what will intrigue them to stay in the district are parents and children.

Dr. Evans: I know we've done that at least once and I see my assistants nodding maybe more than once. One of you should come to the mike and explain, but I know we've done it since I've been here. We did ask them that.

Ms. Maria Santa: Good evening. It would be best for Dr. Newell to share this information with you. We have had community forums in which this has been done, but also when we have had our parent and community department meet with parents on Saturdays at Eastside. The most recent one was at the beginning of the year, perhaps September or October. We had a Saturday in which quite a significant number of parents came out for workshops. It was sponsored, organized, and coordinated by Mr. McDowell's department. At that time, Dr. Newell and her team had prepared questionnaires for parents on the areas of interest. That precisely was one of the questions, what would be the programs that would entice you as a parent to want your child to remain in our district. There was a selection and a long menu of alternatives and programs and parents had a check-off exercise with that and also a section where they could write comments if in that menu there was a choice that they didn't see that they would want. I don't know if we all remember, but Dr. Newell shared some of that information with the Board at one point in terms of the results and how many parents selected items from the menu of choices and the interests that they showed in specific areas. One of the ones that come to mind is the arts. That's one that the parents really were very interested in having their children participate in a school whose theme was the arts. Also STEM, engineering, and environmental sciences, those are some that come to mind right now. Dr. Newell has all the information and the results from the surveys that have been given. I believe it's more than once already. I think we've done that maybe two or three times.

Comm. Mimms: Okay. I know what the program can be called, the retention program. How do we retain our children in the school district? Maybe there's an incentive in place outside of this program because I'm not sure what the percentage of the population is. We know parents' attendance is not that great at these events so it doesn't really represent the majority of the population of our children in the district. That's one issue. Possibly doing that again and making sure we get a greater percentage, but really having a retention program in place for parents who are considering it. Before they leave the district they've already considered it way before they've left. We can get to them before that happens through retention to find out what are the reasons, did something happen, or whatever. Maybe that can be a part of parent engagement to find out what's happening and why they are leaving. Is it something that we can resolve? Maybe they're not familiar with what we have in the district. They don't know. No one has talked to them. So they're just at wits end and they make a decision based on that. I know a few parents that recently are coming back to the district. They left. It was new. People are excited when things are new and they left the district, but they're coming back because they're finding out that what they really need is here in the district. So we really need to have some type of retention program in place.

Dr. Evans: We followed that process much in the way that Ms. Santa just outlined for the restructuring of our high schools. That's exactly what we did. In fact, we asked parents what they and their child would be interested in in high school with the express reason being to keep them here. Interestingly, the numbers of youngsters who left our high schools to go to other schools in other places has gone down significantly. Actually, it dropped from 2,300 to 1,700. It's dropping. That's across 7-9. What we're doing at our high schools is helping because our high school enrollment has gone up.

Comm. Mimms: Have we ever done a feedback survey to the parents of the children that have left to let them send back to us? They can put anonymous. They don't have to put any information. It's just to bring it back to us to find out why they left. Even though 1,700 is lower, it's still high. We need to identify through a feedback survey why they left and what they have that we don't have. Then perhaps we can bring them back in or it could be a conversation for other people. We can still do that. They're not here anymore, but you can still reach out to them through a feedback survey to find out.

Dr. Evans: We'll do that.

Comm. Kerr: I just want to go back a little. I listened to the discussion regarding the parental piece. When the question was asked about the family engagement program that is funded out of NCLB, the fact is that in our Bright Futures strategic plan the parental engagement occupies a very important place in that strategic plan. I believe that is worthy enough to occupy a straight line in our budget. It should not be left open in a general way under NCLB funding. We should establish a clear line because it's important to us and we have it as part of our strategic plan. We should give it that respect and make sure that proper resources are allocated for the operation of that program. It's not here now. I don't think we can do it because this budget is passed already. Our argument now is a matter of academic exercise, as it were. We're not getting anywhere. I would just like to see us make sure that going forward we establish a clear line for that program. It is a vitally important piece of what we do to get the parents engaged. If we don't get them engaged ultimately we're not going to do the job that we need to do with their kids. We need to address that in an organizational way and we also have to address it in a financial way so we get maximum results.

Dr. Evans: There was a question earlier that someone asked and I suggested that we wait until Ms. Shafer came. Maybe it was in line with your comment.

Comm. Kerr: It was in line with that.

Dr. Evans: Okay.

Comm. Hodges: Is there another question on the floor?

Comm. Mimms: I know I asked for the cost benefit analysis of the programs. Do we have a date for receiving that?

Dr. Evans: Ms. Jones and I met with Dr. Elaine Walker who's doing that. Ms. Jones, the question is about the timeline that Dr. Walker is going to complete the cost benefit analysis that we talked to her about today. I know it's going to take some time because we're talking about a lot of programs and she mentioned how she would go about doing it. But then I left the conversation to go to another appointment. Did she leave with a specific timeline by which she could complete it?

Ms. Jacqueline Jones: Tomorrow morning I will come and share portions of the additional conversation she and I had one-on-one. It's going to take her several months to get that done. There is some guidance and direction I'm going to need to get from you and perhaps the President of the Board and well as Board members if that's the route you want to go. It's going to take her some time. It's going to take more time than people realize because of the kind of work she's going to have to do. We can start with setting some priorities and that's going to impact the timeline to get some things more quickly, but you can't do all of the programs in the short period of time that I think people are going to be looking for.

Comm. Hodges: Isn't there some sort of ongoing assessment of the programs internally?

Dr. Evans: There is and we do one to two per year. In fact, I brought copies to one of our meetings. I think we've done six so far.

Comm. Hodges: If you're running a program the assumption is that you're evaluating it for possible improvements or efficiencies at the very least. Is that analysis not across the board?

Dr. Evans: I didn't see that analysis as being in-depth enough to answer the questions that you all have asked about the cost benefit analysis. It's a difference between looking at whether or not a program is on target and meeting its objectives. It takes typical two to three years for a program to fully actualize and realize all of the benefits that you expect. But on a short-term timeline we can look for certain things and tell whether or not you're making progress. I didn't think that's what you wanted. I thought you wanted a more in-depth analysis.

Comm. Hodges: I do. There are two levels of data. There's comprehensive, which is what you're talking about and the entire Board would benefit from. You need that, but short-term I need some information.

Dr. Evans: Okay. Just know that short-term is just that. It's short-term and wouldn't be in-depth as a full-blown extensive review. We can get short-term information. In fact, you and I talked about some things I know you need within the next one to two days. That we can satisfy. But that's not a full cost benefit analysis. I just want to be clear about that.

Comm. Kerr: I just want to direct my question to Dr. Evans. As I said before, I know this budget has already reached the county superintendent and he has actually approved this already. I know we can talk until the cows come home. He's going to send it back to the Superintendent. If we disagree we're going to vote it down and the Superintendent is going to veto our vote and send it. What I'm interested in right now is we're talking about a long-term fix. We have had this conversation when we had the joint Board meeting with the City Council and before that. What can we do to fix this thing? There were some recommendations made. We talked about the charters and we asked that those views be represented at the state level. Has that been done? If it has not been done, it is going to be done and when?

Dr. Evans: In the specific example that you gave, the Board's views of charters have been shared. Yes. In fact, annually they're shared. I'm asked typically where is the Board and where I am on certain things. When I'm asked, I respond. There are a number of other things that I perhaps have not asked that your question would suggest that the Board has some challenges with. Unless I know what they are I can't respond. I know the charter question comes up all the time.

Comm. Kerr: I'm just wondering if it was done in a formal way on record to indicate the seriousness of our proposal. We've been talking about the attendance piece also because we're punished for attendance when there are certain things that are happening in the district that are not locally created. There are pressures from the state level that cause some kids not to want to go to school. Why punish us further for them not showing up at school? I'm just interested in finding out where we are because that represents a big chunk of money, \$19 million, \$36 million and climbing. I think we need

to get some definite from them on what they can do to help us there. If they can help us there then we can tweak this as best as we can. But there is a certain point which you cannot go below. You start damaging the nerves. You can't go below there. We need to know what they are planning on doing.

Comm. Hodges: I have not hidden my feelings on this and it sort of frames my response to this budget discussion. As I mentioned earlier, we're nipping around the edges of something that has already been done. To me it's problematic to try to make adjustments tonight when it's already been submitted to the county on Saturday. I know there are a lot of questions and people are making suggestions and things. But from my point of view, the time to make suggestions is when there's something I can actually do. What I want to do is put the Board in the position to do that, which is their responsibility, to be in a position to make these judgments that are being made now when there's flexibility. I want the Board to be in the position to do that when there's the maximum time to make those judgments. That's my conversation.

*Comm. Martinez leaves the meeting at 8:20 p.m.

Dr. Evans: Can I make a suggestion? As I indicated earlier, the budget development process starts in the fall, when principals, directors, and senior staff are advised to begin to think about their priorities that ultimately translate into their first budget requests that occur in December. I would suggest in the fall we add a step. Maybe even the first step might be a Board discussion in the fall on what the Board's priorities are, before staff even gets their charge to begin developing the budgets.

Comm. Hodges: That's precisely what I'm talking about, but not just in the fall. You're going to have test results come back from PARCC. When is it?

Dr. Evans: This time they won't come back until the fall, but then after this year it should come in late spring.

Comm. Hodges: Right. Every spring is when the discussions should begin. In fact, as I mentioned before, I want a discussion in May and June to begin to talk about how we shape where the Board is headed, where the district is headed educationally, and what kinds of concerns. Then as we move into the fall we talk about the actual curricular imperatives that help to drive the budget. That's our proper role, to say we need this, we don't need that, this community is suffering from a lack of this, or an overabundance of that. That's when it should take place, as we're determining those curricular imperatives. To me this is late and we can't do that much. To answer your question, the reason that we went before the council was not this budget. It was the next two that we will be responsible for. Our primary role is to put forth a thorough and efficient education for students. That's what the Supreme Court said. It doesn't matter what the Governor says or the Commissioner of Education says. That's what the Supreme Court says. We're supposed to craft a budget based on our needs. That's the law. It's not what they want to give us or what they say they can give us. It's based on needs. So I'm not personally interested in talking about cuts for this and cuts for that because the law asks what your needs are. If you have students that can't read then you should be developing educational programs to assist their reading and you should be funded appropriately to address those priorities. That's what the law says. That's indisputable. That's what the law says. That's not how the funding formula is currently working. That's my problem. We can get through this budget. You can take the tax money off the levy to do all that. But two years down the line in 2016 or 2017 Tech is opening up 1,000 seats. That's \$10 million. If you're flat funded two years from now you're under the water. You have to cut deeply into existing programs. Not the music, not arts, but

programs that are going to hurt academically. Dr. Evans has to say we can make those cuts and we can find a way to do that, but realistically if you could do that we would be doing it right now. I'm not afraid of this budget. I knew this was going to be done. But two years from now you're not going to have the leeway to make those cuts. Friday morning Mr. Simmons and I are meeting with the Commissioner to discuss this issue. We have a joint resolution that's being crafted by the City Council and the Board to talk about just those very things. It's around the funding problem. We could conceivably have local control in fiscal this or next year. If we get local control in fiscal, what happens to us two years down the line when we don't have any money? The story will be they gave us local control and we couldn't handle the fiscal part of it. So we're setting up for failure and that's what you have to protect against, not today, but tomorrow, making sure that there's some stability in our funding mechanism we can rely on to provide what we're supposed to provide, which is a thorough and efficient education.

Comm. Kerr: I understand that point, but we are hemorrhaging from those two things that I mentioned. We need to look at that and we also need to look at our programs and make our demands to the state in terms of our T&E. We have to oars down at the same time.

Comm. Hodges: That's exactly the information I asked for in advance so I can present that case to the Commissioner on Friday. They're not giving us any more money, perhaps, but I can at least make it understood that these issues are before us. That's what I'm trying to accomplish.

Comm. Kerr: I think the Superintendent needs to address Comm. Rivera's question regarding how we go about creating the school-based budget. He has an opinion as to how it's done. I think the process needs to be explained so he knows exactly how it's done.

Comm. Rivera: I want to ask two questions. I only had one before that comment was made. If we go to page 122 of the budget, this is just a question regarding need. What are we going to do regarding those services that are there called behavioral disabilities? At School 20 I noticed that we at one time budgeted...

Comm. Hodges: What page is that?

Comm. Rivera: 122.

Comm. Hodges: Do you want to ask your question again?

Comm. Rivera: I want to ask the administration what is the plan to provide those services.

Comm. Kerr: What line are we talking about?

Comm. Rivera: You have to go to 600 and 6160 is the total. Are we outsourcing those services or are we not going to provide those services?

Comm. Hodges: What line?

Comm. Rivera: 6000.

Comm. Hodges: Salaries of teachers?

Dr. Evans: We provide the services at School 20 and Martin Luther King.

Comm. Rivera: You provided the service?

Dr. Evans: Yes. We have BD classes at School 20.

Comm. Rivera: So we just reclassify where the funds are going to be expended from? How come we're not budgeting almost anything for those categories?

Dr. Evans: I don't think I understand the question.

Comm. Rivera: Just go straight to line 6160 on page 122.

Dr. Evans: I'm familiar with the line.

Comm. Rivera: Total behavioral disabilities. In 2013-2014 we spent \$577,000 and in 2014-2015 we budgeted \$766,000. Now we're budgeting \$76,000. When I look at the salary lines they're at zero right now for all those categories. Are we outsourcing? Are we just charging those salaries to different lines? Are we not providing those services?

Dr. Evans: We're providing salaries, services, and some are contracted out. Ms. Peron and Ms. Ayala are going to delineate which.

Ms. Ayala: That was one of the questions that Bob Davis had asked, that we don't have students categorized as BD. What we need to do is take a look at that.

Dr. Evans: I'm not sure I understand what Bob Davis is asking for.

Ms. Ayala: When we met with Bob Davis he talked about visual impaired.

Dr. Evans: This line is the BD line.

Ms. Ayala: I'm going to have to take a look at that.

Ms. Peron: We have students that are classified. We have grade levels. We have k-4 at School 20 and 5-8 at Martin Luther King.

Comm. Rivera: I'm sure we do have it, but that's the issue with us getting the budget a little late. Again, these are the services that we're going to provide for our kids. I just wish we had a little time to go line by line or just look at amount increases and decreases just to see what we're planning to do during the year.

Ms. Ayala: We'll take a look at that because it could just be miscoding. We'll look at the population in School 20.

Ms. Shafer: If you remember, we brought over the BD classes to School 20 and that's why last year and the year before it was so high.

Comm. Rivera: But right now the salaries are zero. By reading this budget it's basically saying we don't have any teachers to provide that service.

Ms. Shafer: I don't see zero.

Comm. Kerr: \$6,000. What line are we looking at?

Comm. Rivera: Page 122.

Comm. Kerr: \$6,000.

Comm. Rivera: Salaries of teachers.

Ms. Shafer: Unless they're captured up above. Depending on the grade they could be captured in that salary line.

Comm. Rivera: It could be, but even that line was reduced tremendously. I wouldn't look at last year's budget because I have personal feelings. Some people might say it's my opinion, but I'm just looking at numbers. Regarding what Comm. Kerr said, that I'm basing my comments on opinion, we both serve on the finance committee and this is information that I have obtained by asking the administration. To emphasize that point, do you mind going to page 112? Maybe they put this in a different category, but if you look at 2100, which grades 1-5 salaries of teachers, in 2013-2014 we spent almost \$1.6 million. In 2014 we budgeted \$2 million and now we're down to \$1.5 million. Let's not go line by line because they might have reclassified and charged to other areas. Let's go to the end of it. Go to page 115. On top of that, I know we did a lot of reductions during the year. But a lot of school budgets have been reduced minimally compared to last year. Let's go to page 115, general fund grand total. In 2013-2014 we spent \$7.5 million. This is what I'm basing my opinion on. We looked at the revised budget that we're currently on and it's almost \$9.4 million. That's almost \$2 million increase from what was spent the year before to what we budgeted this year. In 2015 anticipated is more in line to what we spent in 2014, which is \$7.5 million. I'm basing it on numbers. Again, the administration has more detail of what they're doing in every school. They might be shifting. They might be doing whatever they're doing. But all I have is a document to interpret.

Comm. Kerr: I've seen a lot of that.

Comm. Rivera: I know a lot of costs go up yearly. You can't control salaries. But people do retire. We have teachers that retire that were making close to \$100,000 or more. Then you hire them and replace them with new staff. You have health insurance and a list of things that go up. This is more in line now compared to what we spent in 2014-2015 and the current budget that we're budgeting now for next year. It's more in line.

Dr. Evans: In the past some of these discussions have taken place either in the fiscal committee or with the program people. The only way to answer some of these questions you asked is at that level, to be able to ask why this figure is changing when a program person can say because we moved this group of kids to this school and the teacher went with them. So the salary went up in one school and went down in another. Inevitably that's the explanation, but that's not information we have in front of us right now to be able to say that.

Comm. Kerr: If you go into the revenue appropriation page look at line 430. You see the same kind of scenario like he just mentioned. I don't know what was happening last year, but those numbers are so skewed from last year. I really don't pay much attention to the numbers there as being authentic. I've gone through a lot of those numbers and they are way off. I really try to look at the year prior to last year and it gives me a fairer

balance of what the numbers should be for this year. I don't know what was happening last year, but something happened last year.

Dr. Evans: Something happened and we can trace it back to figure out what happened.

Comm. Hodges: Is this a good point to halt temporarily and allow the public portion and then resume?

Comm. Kerr: Sure.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

It was moved by Comm. Kerr, 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. Rosie Grant: Good evening Mr. President, Commissioners, Dr. Evans, staff, and audience. This was a good discussion this evening. I don't have the numbers that you're looking at, but it's good to hear the kind of discourse that is thinking about what kids need and what children need rather than how we are going to cut the budget some more. I understand that it has been cut. We're working on our school budget report and the preliminary budget indicated that all but four schools had gone down in the amount that was budgeted in their school-based budgets. Some of the decreases are significant. I'm concerned about the number of staff members that we'll lose, especially the number of instructional staff members. I can't see how that won't impact our kids negatively and so I'd like to hear some more about that at some point. I'm also concerned about what programs will be cut. So I do want to request that the district work with members of the community as we pursue our advocacy campaign so that we can give some details to our legislators and to court if and when we get to that point about exactly what needs are not being met in Paterson Public Schools. I commend you for doing the best you can with what we have, but there are certainly some needs that are still unmet and I ask your cooperation in helping us to identify those and bring those to the state level. We expect to have an "Understanding Your School Based Budget" report for the community ready tomorrow. We'll put it up on our website and I'll be sure to email it to all the Board of Education Commissioners. It's just an easier way. It doesn't have all the details that you have in front of you, but it's an easier way to look at what is happening from one year to the next at the school budgets and how the school budgets are being allocated at the building site. We'll get that to you tomorrow. Thank you.

Comm. Hodges: It would be helpful if you also put the true projection of what we're supposed to have and explain it to the public. That way it gives them a better sense of where we are and what this actually means.

Ms. Grant: Absolutely, will do. Thank you.

Ms. Greta Mills: Hello, my name is Greta Mills. I'm a teacher at School 26. Listening and saying that you're getting rid of a good amount of teachers I know at School 26 the fourth grade teachers have almost 40 kids in a classroom. I don't see how that would be something that you're looking at. I know you're saying it wasn't science and it's not going to be math. But these fourth grade students are getting ready to come to fifth grade. Where in the budget are they saying we're going to help to thin out that number of students in the classroom? That is really difficult for my colleagues this year dealing with that amount of students with the behavior issues, IEPs, and all this other stuff that

needed to be addressed. My initial was just to come here and listen to the budget and everything that's going on. But to hear that you're having cuts is a sad thing to hear, especially when we're struggling in that school and I'm sure at other schools also.

Dr. Evans: First of all, I've been to School 26 four times so far this year. I've been in every classroom. I haven't seen that number of students in a class.

Ms. Mills: At fourth grade there are 38 in one class and 39 in another.

Dr. Evans: They were absent the day I was there. In every classroom I visit I count heads and I have not seen that many in any classrooms.

Ms. Mills: It's a very large class because I see the line and the teachers. I ask the teachers how many kids they have and they tell me 38 and 39. They tell me to get ready.

Dr. Evans: I will visit again tomorrow and I will visit every classroom again. That will be my fifth visit this year. Like I said, I haven't seen it.

Ms. Mills: I know we've had a discussion too on the facilities because they had the little meeting at the school about the facilities. What are they going to do about electricity and being able to have computers in the classroom? In my classroom if you put on too much the power goes out. How are things like that going to be addressed? With the PARCC situation where they have kids working in the library on these small screens I thought that was truly unfair. Since I'm up here I want to speak on the size of the screens. In some schools they had the nice size computers and in some classrooms you had these small screens and the kids are sitting like this trying to see the screen. I don't think that's fair.

Ms. Shafer: As far as the electricity goes, our facilities director was here but left. He has been upgrading as we go along in order for us to have PARCC. If you have specifics, give that to Aubrey Johnson and then we'll get it to our facilities director to address that. As far as PARCC and the computers, all of our students in the district were using either laptops or...

Ms. Mills: They're small. That particular one that was in the library was small.

Ms. Shafer: We'll have to check that because all of the laptops were the same size. We're going to have to look into that as well. If you would give Mr. Johnson the information we'll have someone out there tomorrow to check that out.

Ms. Mills: No problem. Thank you for that time.

It was moved by Comm. Kerr, 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.

DISCUSSION ON THE 2015-2016 SCHOOL YEAR BUDGET

Comm. Hodges: Mr. Kerr, I cut you off. I think you were about to ask another question.

Comm. Kerr: The point I was making regarding Comm. Rivera is that on the school-based budget how does the district decide what is the appropriate money to be given to that school for operations is predicated upon the previous year's budget and the

recommendations of the principal. What we are missing here is that sometimes some of those schools are devoid of things that they're supposed to have but because the principal is preconditioned knowing very well that they can just come to Dr. Evans with real needs they give him something that will probably increase their budget just for the cost of living adjustment. You don't see real change or real programs at that level. It's not happening. That's the reason why a lot of our schools at that level struggle so much, because the programs that they have do not fulfill all the requirements of what our district is supposed to have. As a result, we have that situation. We can back flip and go back there and take our knives into that budget, but we're not going to solve the real problems that our district faces.

Comm. Rivera: I agree with you 100%, but now is when the administrator needs to kick in. They need to go quarterly and analyze people's budgets. If a school spent \$7.5 million last year and for this year you're giving them \$9 million, that's an increase of \$1.5 million. It is the job of the administration to make sure that whatever they put in this document is being enforced. I agree with you. A lot of the schools have needs. We're providing the resources. This is the plan we have here. If this plan is not executed then what good does it do to put the monies in those categories? In that case we can put it somewhere else. That is my point. You have to analyze. We have to make an assumption when we look at this document that what they spent is what they needed for that year.

Comm. Kerr: We know that this district operates in a budget to carry over money to meet the next year's budget. This is something that we have established. This is almost like a principle we have established in this district. I have said it before. This is it. We create in our budget these surpluses to help for the next year's budget when in fact real hardcore needs go unmet in the district. That's a real problem because if we were addressing the real needs of these kids in our district the same way Hawthorne, Elmwood Park, and Wayne does then we would be crawling over the Department of Education to get more funds to deal with those programs in the district. We're not doing that. What we're doing is we're shortchanging the kids in order to accommodate the Department of Education.

Comm. Rivera: I agree 100%, but the issue with what we did last year is that it brings the morale of the personnel down. If we're trying to recruit people from outside and we see in the newspaper that we're reducing staff by over 100, do you think I want to come work for the City of Paterson? Or if I'm a teacher here and have an administrative position, if I'm not sure about my position don't you think I'm going to start looking outside?

Comm. Kerr: Of course.

Comm. Rivera: So the issue with that is I don't work here, but I still don't feel that we're going to reduce. What I mean by reduce is that we're not going to let go of any current staff. I don't know what the number is, but we're just reducing a budget that was overstated last year. I didn't want to say this, but I'm just going to say it. I'm going to be the bad guy. Last year's budget was overstated. Period! That you can say is my opinion. The other things were based on what I see here.

Comm. Kerr: Mr. President, permit me to ask Comm. Rivera to clarify what overstated means. Does it speak to needs or does it speak to something else?

Comm. Hodges: Let me partially answer that question from my point of view. When I first came to this district in 2002 every September there used to be grants and programs

put together for after-school and Saturday morning programs. On the curriculum committee I would go and ask what takes place in these programs and I would get silence. Nobody knew. We would also notice that the same teacher that was teaching after school was teaching Saturday and these are supposed to be remedial programs for kids who weren't learning during the week. The very same people who were unable to teach them during the week were then teaching them in the evenings and on Saturdays. Nobody knew what. There was no curriculum that they could ask. So I asked the first time and I didn't get any answers. I asked the second year and I didn't get any answers. I asked the third year and I didn't get any answers. Then my reply was dramatically less than polite. You are in charge of this and all this money is being placed here and nobody seems to know how this is functioning. That's what I was talking about the efficiencies and whether or not these programs were being placed. We're in a somewhat different place. We went through a period when you weren't allowed to check what the program was doing. With the SCS models you couldn't do that then, which made absolutely no sense to me. The state was checking them so you didn't need to, to make sure that they were performing in your district, which was absolutely ridiculous. That kind of thing was going on and on. That's where the whole idea about a compendium came from. There should be a list of all the programs that you have, what they do, who's utilizing them, and some sense that they make any sense and that there's some economic basis for having them in the first place. If you don't have that listing and evaluation every year, then how do you decide whether you want this program versus that other program for the dollars? How do you do it? What's your judgment? Is this math program more important than that math program? How do you know? Who makes that determination? School 6 uses math by Friday and School 4 uses Errol Kerr's math program. Whose is better? If you have to cut those programs, is Errol's program more important than math by Friday? Is it more effective? Where does that information come from? That wasn't being done and I hope that the compendium will give the Board members a tool with which to ask those questions. How many math programs do we have? How many reading programs do we have? Who's utilizing them? How many students are in those programs? That was the entire purpose. You could then sit down and say School 5 says it needs three math programs, are they of any value? What has been the result of those math programs being there? We can't do that. What you have are budget numbers and I don't know what they tell you, which is part of my problem. Number two, it is my firm belief that – and I'm not an educator – you need to teach kids how to write cursively. Why? If you're going to ask them at some point to take notes they have to be able to do it in the most efficient way possible. That's not necessarily going to be typing on whatever, it's writing in a cursive fashion. If you want them to take notes and then go home and study those notes, which is what they're going to have to learn to do, you need to be able to put those practices in place. If you don't do that, then you can't be surprised that the kids aren't overwhelmingly performing well. The Gifted & Talented program came and presented to the curriculum committee. They said that the first marking period they were adjusting the kids to the level of rigor that would be required of them. They come in used to what they were doing before, but by the end of that marking period they realized they had to take notes, go home and study, and go home and work. They have to teach those kids those skills, which they do. So if the Gifted & Talented program knows that, then why doesn't every else? Those things are not in place across the Board. If they're not in place and you know you need them, then that's a need that's not being reflected in the budget. Music and art, you have one or the other. Studies have shown that both of them enhance your learning. As a matter of fact, so does language. Language is a tremendous aid to enhancing student performance. If I'm wrong somebody let me know. That's what the literature is saying. We don't have those things going on. There's computer programming. This week Friday on Channel 23 at 2:00 in the afternoon MSNBC is going to Detroit to look at their coding program. I can't wait to see

it. It would be nice to see what someone is doing with coding. In a bankrupt, penniless school district they're doing coding. They recognize that there's a need for that and they have to find in their bankrupt district a way to teach their kids. That's not in our budget. You have programs here and you have budget items. The schools may have put these things together, but they're not capturing all the things that our kids need. I have maintained that since the first day I stepped foot up here. Because we are in this situation currently with our budget and we're not getting the money that we need we're forced to cut. But don't think for a second that we're cutting because it's just waste. We're cutting because people have not delivered the programs that our children should have. They haven't been put in place. I agree with you 100%. In terms of procedure you're absolutely right. But in terms of programs and what we're offering versus what we're supposed to offer, it's not there. Therefore, the cutting simply undermines the ability to do that down the road. That's my concern.

Comm. Mimms: That's why a cost benefit analysis is so appropriate. I'm new, but if you have not had that available in the past you're going to have these same discussions. You need to see what programs you have, what you're introducing, determine the needs assessment to them, how effective have they been, and then make shifts to make sure the programs we do need are in the district and those that we don't need we can bring back at a later time. Doing budgeting without having that data readily available is a disservice to our children and to our community. Number two, looking at these line items, as Comm. Rivera was stating, without having the actual details hurts us too because we're looking at all these variances and all these different things. We don't know what the variables were because it's not identified here. So in order for us to really have a real picture and to make a decision we need to have those things in place between now and Monday. I don't know how much time it will take to have it and that's up to administration. We need to see those things because looking at these line items we're seeing them and we can go through. This is not going to be a monument in my house. I'm going through each of them line by line. But we don't know if something is skewed or shifted in our own private time because we don't have the other data. It's always good when this is given that every piece of material is included, such as cost benefit analysis and the reason why these are the variables, all those things. Tonight we have to make sure that we have all those pieces so that we can really do a good assessment of what programs to present. We can say some things that we see, but it's hard to give a true definition to that without having all that information. We see testing scores. We have the dropout rates and the graduation rates. We see the IB program. We talk about it from a high school level, but I don't want our kids just on the high school level to compete globally. I want our junior kids and grammar school level to be able to compete. So where's the IB for grammar school? That's my conversation, not just for high school. We have a lot of stuff that we're doing in the high school with the academies and all that, but what about our children? We're grateful for the pre-k and a lot of parents are really excited about that and we're looking at all these. But those are some things like the cursive writing and instruments. I remember when I was in grammar school we had a program where we were able to come to Kennedy High School. Our parents would have to sign off a consent form, but we came to Kennedy and there was a band. We were excited about that. We were able to take home instruments and all those types of things. Then that opened the door for me to be on Eastside's band and Paterson Catholic's band too and be on those types of extracurricular activities. We have other programs that we definitely need, but in order to really make true definitions to those things we need every piece of information. We need actuals, not skewed and like this has been cushioned. We need actual factual information, the ones who have readily available and then the comprehensive will be really something we can use for next time. We need something immediate to determine what we need to do now.

Comm. Hodges: That material should be online so you can access it as you need to. If you can refer to it online then you can get the complementary information that you're looking for. That's what we were pushing in part to get, exactly that. The May discussion will be about just those kinds of things, what do we have to do given a look at the cost benefits, what do we have to plan to do better next fall, and what curricular imperatives are we going to establish in the fall that's going to drive how we compose the budget. Those are the discussion we're going to have because from my point of view it's too late. You have a week to sniff around on small change, but they're not making major changes in the budget.

Comm. Mimms: I hear you say that, but to me it's never too late. If there's something that we can identify that's going to help our district while we're here... I hear you saying it's too late, but I also heard Dr. Evans say in the very beginning of our discussion tonight that if it's something that we can look into that he can edit the budget and represent it, that's what he said. I'm hearing you, but I heard Dr. Evans say that clearly in the beginning to Comm. Irving. I'm not going to believe for one moment that we're going to sit here and not allow that to happen. If that's the case, we're just sitting here and looking at something that's already done. That's not our role here. If we have something that will benefit the district I believe that Dr. Evans will take a look at it, he will reassess this budget and present it back to us and it will be given to our children so that they can get what they deserve to get. It's not too late. I don't know Dr. Evans that well, but I just don't believe that his character is that messed up that he would sit here tonight and say to us that he can do what's needed to this budget as the programs we present to him and then it not happen. I just don't believe that. I saw him writing. If it was something he wasn't concerned about he would not have written anything. He wrote some things down so he's taking it into consideration. So we're sitting here tonight. They tried to make the pilot to go to the community. They tried it. They didn't keep it going, but they tried it. Because it was mentioned tonight I'm quite sure it's going back on the radar. Now that it's mentioned the community hears it. So if it's not done they're going to make sure that it happens. We're here as a voice for the community of this city for all of our children in this district for whatever needs to be done. We sit here as a Board of nine to make sure we voice that to Dr. Evans. So it is not too late. I refuse to receive that it's too late. There are some things we need to do sitting on this Board and we're presenting them to Dr. Evans. We're not pushing them down his throat, but we're presenting them in a way to make him say, "I didn't think of that. That is something we need to look at." Then if he looks into it and it can't be done, he'll present it back to us to say yes, no, or that's it. But until he says no to me tonight I'm saying it's going to happen.

Comm. Hodges: What I said was for me, not for you or for the Board. For me, the kinds of things that I was just discussing, that kind of analysis and approach, for me, that's not going to be done between now and the 30th. That's what I'm saying. It's not too late for what you're trying to do. But the entire comprehensive approach that I laid out for me is too late to do right now. That's what I meant.

Comm. Mimms: I thought you said we couldn't do anything with this budget.

Comm. Hodges: The whole package that I just laid out, that's what I'm saying.

Comm. Mimms: We know that's not going to happen.

Comm. Hodges: That's what I'm saying.

Comm. Mimms: I know the whole idea and how to develop it. I know that's going to take time. You said that the budget is done.

Comm. Hodges: For me it's done.

Comm. Mimms: For me it's not done.

Dr. Evans: It's not too late to make adjustments to the budget.

Comm. Hodges: Last year we gave him four pages worth of ideas. He came back to us and said I'll do these over time. I think I have the list in my bag.

Dr. Evans: Some we put in right then and others we phased in.

Comm. Hodges: That's right. I'm going to be very clear. I'm not opposed to what you're saying. But in terms of the whole comprehensive approach, that for me won't go on tonight or in the next couple of days because the information we're looking for we don't have.

Comm. Kerr: We asked for arts and music last year and we're still waiting to have that piece of it. It's not developed and nothing was done on that track.

Comm. Hodges: And now we have a major challenge in terms of the finances. That's what really worries me. I wasn't initially anxious to speak to the Commissioner of Education. After the City Council meeting, the joint meeting, and the meeting of the Board and establishing their willingness to push back on the funding that's when I agreed to meet with the Commissioner of Education. I think the Board can best say how it feels about those items as opposed to the Superintendent of Schools. Is there any further discussion?

OTHER BUSINESS

Comm. Hodges: There's one item that has to be brought up. I have been on this Board for 13 years and when I arrived here there were some people who were here and gave me a lot of assistance. Many of them are still here and one is leaving. I would be remiss if I didn't give the Board an opportunity to publicly thank Lucy Rodriguez for her many years of service and her putting up with me in particular and my rants and craziness. I lost paperwork and all the other things that we had to get through those many years. I understand tonight will be your last night and I wanted to thank you. I wanted to give the Board an opportunity to thank you and to say job well done. We wish you the very best in your future endeavors.

Comm. Cleaves: I tried to get here earlier today but I am a little under the weather. I'm actually supposed to be home. My doctor told me that I needed to rest. But I knew you were going to be here this evening so I pushed on to get here so that I could see you. I just want to say to you thanks for being that ray of sunshine on the other end of the phone when we call being the people that we can be and not always remembering that there is a human being on the other side of that phone that's taking that message or request or demand from us. The years that I've been here on the Board you've been nothing but sunshine for me and I am going to miss coming upstairs, standing at your desk, talking to you, getting information from you, and you just being efficient. Thank you. People don't tell us often, but I just want to say to you thank you for making my time here on the Board not so hard when I'm trying to get information or trying to get a

call back from someone. You continue to be that ray of sunshine that you are and god is going to continue to bless you.

Comm. Kerr: I've been on the Board now for nine years or so and since I've been here or before I was here Lucy was. I must say she has served this Board well. She has executed her job in the most professional way possible. I can say just as Dr. Hodges said. I don't know how you put up with him. Certainly you have been a wonderful person for anyone to have dealt with. I trust that wherever you end up you will carry with you the same qualities. Gold never changes its quality. It's always there. A good diamond shines. I know you're a diamond. You're beautiful and my personal experience working with you has been really pleasant. On a personal level I'm going to miss you. I trust that you will go in grace, peace, and love. We love you here and we'll always love you. Thank you so much.

Comm. Simmons: I want to say thank you. It has been a pleasure working with you. Now I don't have anyone to ask why you're calling me about yet another meeting. I have no one to say, "No, I'm not coming," to. Thank you. You have made my experience here thus far great. You're always helpful, efficient, and I'm going to miss you. I wish you well on whatever you're embarking on.

Comm. Mimms: What can you say about Lucy? I wrote some things down. Just being new to the Board coming in, you made my transition very smooth and very easy. You didn't mind me calling three or four times a day only asking for you. The words that I wrote down are that you truly operate in the spirit of excellence. You're very energetic. You're very efficient. You're very effective. You do your job effortlessly. My prayer for you is that you'll continue to do great things and I'm quite confident in whatever you embark upon, even if it's just to be home, that you'll do it in the same spirit of excellence. Enjoy your journey. It's been great getting to meet you and know you and I'm quite sure I'll see you some time in the future.

Comm. Rivera: Lucy, we're going to miss you. I've only been here a few months but my experience with you is that you have always been welcoming since day one. You're very helpful. You have always welcomed me with a smile, at least in front of me. I don't know what happens behind me. We're going to miss you. I don't know what plans the administration has, but if there is ever a person that will fill your shoes I just hope that person could do half of what you do for us. I really appreciate what you do sincerely. Thank you.

Ms. Lucy Rodriguez: Thank you all. I love you all too.

Comm. Hodges: Thank you very much personally for scheduling all the trips and all the other things that you've done, like managing our voluminous mass of paper that I know I personally gave you. Thank you for doing it with a smile. I'm going to try to overlook how you turned me into Errol. Be happy, do well, and best of luck moving forward. There are two more items before we close out. Does anyone want to be on the New Jersey School Boards Association Legislative Committee? It meets quarterly or monthly. I can't tell you for sure. It's a minor thing. It's Trenton. I'll post the dates for these meetings. We've maintained a presence at the School Boards Association for at least 10 years. Paterson has been very prominent down there and it's been helpful to get our issues out, particularly at the Board of Directors meeting, which I'm not allowed back to within a year or two. People only know about us what they read in the paper. When you get out there and begin to discuss the issues that are really confronting you and help them to understand it's not what you just read, then it really helps give people a better understanding and better view of the school district. You also get a lot of

information that you can bring back to the Board. The committee looks at some of the legislation that people are proposing, some of which is detrimental to all school districts, but certainly this one. Some of them have been very problematic and you have an opportunity to give feedback directly to the legislators beyond ours. You help give them a better sense of what we need and what shouldn't happen from their point of view. They don't know anything. They don't spend a lot of time investigating school districts before they make legislation. Number two, we have committees that are not meeting and that has got to change. Parent and community, government, technology, and QSAC are not meeting. We're hoping to get a newsletter this year and all those things out. So I'm going to be pushing. I always start off nice, but I don't end there.

Comm. Mimms: So what happens if our chair has not been in?

Comm. Hodges: I'll have to host the first meeting and then...

Comm. Cleaves: Dr. Hodges, I'll work with the parent and community.

Comm. Hodges: Okay. That's fine. There's a newsletter that we're trying to get out and there were some other things that have to be talked about. That's it.

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

The meeting was adjourned at 9:23 p.m.