

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

December 3, 2014 – 6:47 p.m.  
Administrative Offices

Presiding: Comm. Christopher Irving, President

Present:

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

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

Comm. Manuel Martinez  
Comm. Flavio Rivera  
Comm. Kenneth Simmons

Absent:

Comm. Wendy Guzman  
Comm. Corey Teague

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

Comm. Martinez read the Open Public Meetings Act:

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

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

**Workshop Meeting  
December 3, 2014 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.

Comm. Irving: We have two Presentations and Communications. One will be done by Dr. Evans. The other will be done by our auditor.

## **PRESENTATIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS**

### **Comprehensive Annual Financial Report – June 30, 2014**

Dr. Evans: Thank you, Mr. President. The first report is a report of our Comprehensive Annual Financial Report, CAFR if you will. Mr. Kilpatrick will lead the presentation and introduce our guests who are very familiar to us.

Mr. Richard Kilpatrick: Good evening. I'm just going to give a very quick synopsis and then introduce our auditor. We have reduced the number of audit findings as we have been over the last several years. I want to thank this Board and our administration for that because if they were not on top of us requiring us to do the things that we need to do to focus on things that are important to make sure that problems and issues do not surface, then we would not be getting less and less findings. It's important for our administration. It's important from our Board's perspective that we concentrate on improving operations so that findings do not arise. It's because of that focus that allows us to continue having less and less audit findings. This year was not an easy year. We moved to a new financial management system that took a lot of time, effort, and energy on the part of the business office and the staff throughout the schools and the administration. That effort paid off handsomely when you look at this report and Jeff is going to talk about that. But I just wanted to thank the Board, the cabinet, the administration, and all the people that support doing things the way they're documented they're supposed to be done through policy and standard operating procedures. So, thank you to the business office and everyone that works on the operations because it's your audit report, it's our audit report, and it's good because you did your job well. Thank you and with that I'm going to introduce Jeff Bliss from Lerch, Vinci & Higgins who's done our audit a number of years, but they did re-up with us this year in an open bid process that we did to get the contract to extend for another three years.

Mr. Jeff Bliss: Thank you, Rich. Good evening Dr. Evans and Board members. It's a pleasure to be here again to present the annual audit report for the district. We did have a meeting with the finance committee and went through all the details of not only your fund balances at the end of the year but also the recommendations. I know you do have a busy schedule so I'm going to just give you a brief synopsis of where we ended the year with fund balance and where we look like we're going. When we ended the year on June 30, 2014 our overall fund balances actually increased \$4 million. We went from \$70 million to \$74 million. That's the good news. However, when you break that fund balance down of what you really used it for of that \$74 million we used \$53 million of it, or a little over 70%, \$53 million of the \$74 million we used to fund the 2014-2015 budget. That \$53 million is no longer available to you going forward because it's been used to finance and pay for your 2014-2015 expenses. That number of \$53 million is up \$10 million. The year before in this 2013-2014 audit we used \$43 million of our fund balance to finance that budget. In the year you're in now you used \$53 million. So even though your overall fund balances went up you used a greater amount to finance your current expenditures which means you have less available going forward. So we ended with the \$74 million. We put \$53 million in this year. That money's gone. You have to regenerate that out of the current year operations. That leaves us with \$21 million remaining. Of the \$21 million remaining \$12 million of those dollars are set aside and restricted for specific purposes. \$8 million of the \$12 million is for capital projects. It cannot be used to pay for operating costs. You can't use it for teacher salaries, health benefits, or tuition costs. It's put aside and restricted for capital projects. There was \$1 million of the \$12 million for emergency reserves. Those are funds that you put aside in case during the year there's a situation that arises that if you don't have funds in the budget you can go dip into this reserve and it gives you great flexibility in case you get

into a situation you need money that you don't have. Then there was another \$1 million of the \$12 million that was basically committed towards expenses, contracts that you awarded, and purchases that were made by the district. Those commitments were honored this year and therefore those funds are gone. So we started with \$74 million and we used \$53 million. Of the \$21 million left \$12 million has been put aside and is restricted. It can't be used as you see fit. It is set aside. That leaves us with \$9 million going forward compared to \$11 million the year before. So going forward we're using more of our fund balances to finance our budgets and we're leaving less behind for future use. This means to constantly regenerate this surplus or fund balance that you're using to finance the next year's budget you basically have to take it out of the current year's budget. So even though you're putting it in, in order to get it back if you don't get more aid you have to try to find it in the current budget and not spend it to regenerate it. It's kind of like you're on a wheel and you're running in place. It's regenerating and the number keeps getting bigger and it's putting bigger pressure on you to get more money out of your money and not spend it. You just have to be careful when you're doing the budget. You have to start to think of weaning yourself off the use of surpluses in the budget. It's getting to a significant number now. It's grown over the last several years by quite a bit. Unless you get revenue sources from outside through the state or through grants the pressure will continue to build to generate more and more. So even though you're up \$4 million you just have to look at trying to get yourself away from using what you keep putting in. That's where we are on fund balance. With respect to the audit report in general, our job is to give an opinion on the audit. Are the financial statements fairly stated? Are the books and records prepared in accordance with the rules and regulations of the State of New Jersey's generally accepted accounting principles? Are they consistent from year to year? Are there any scope limitations in the audit? When we test balances and we look at transactions is there supporting documentation to back up those balances and those transactions? Our opinion is unmodified with respect to the financial statements. This means it's a clean opinion. Yes, there is supporting documentation to back up your transactions. The accounts are fairly stated, meaning they have backup to them. There were no scope limitations in performing the audit. When we asked for information we got it. We checked it. It was all there. The financial statements are prepared in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles as well as the budgetary regulations of the State of New Jersey. We're also required to give you an opinion on your compliance with state and federal grants. You get a significant amount of your funds from state and federal grants. Our opinion on your compliance with those funds is also unmodified. In all material respects you complied with what those grants were for and the regulations of spending those funds. Those two things are an absolute must. You have to have an unmodified opinion on your financial statements and you have to have an unmodified opinion on your state and federal grants. Otherwise there is potential for refunds back to the state and federal government. With respect to the findings of the current year audit we had seven recommendations this year. I think it's down roughly two from the year before. There were no repeat recommendations, which is critical. It means that the items we recommended last year corrective action was taken and that corrective action worked. It was implemented, it was put in place, and it worked. We did have one recommendation that was a significant deficiency. A significant deficiency is not the same as a material weakness. A material weakness is something that means there is a good possibility that in the procedures that are being followed there's a good chance something can go wrong. You don't have that. A significant deficiency is something that basically doesn't rise to that level but we need to tell you it's something we need to improve on. Of the seven recommendations we had two under financial planning, accounting, and reporting. The first one was really a result of two things. It was a result of the new accounting system that was put in place, ALIO, as well as how the grant period now ends on June 30. They used to end on August 31. Our recommendation

there is that outstanding purchase orders be reviewed at year-end to determine the appropriateness of those orders and any overstated balances be cancelled accordingly. What we're saying is at the end of the year you have these open purchase orders. You have commitments to buy things. You awarded contracts. Some of those orders were overstated and should have been cancelled. What we're saying there is we have to do a better job at the end of the year reviewing those orders and making sure that they're canceled if they're not valid. Item two deals with your state and federal grant programs and our recommendation revolves around the salaries of employees that are charged to those programs. As a Board it should be an annual approval that a Board action is taken on all the individuals that are charged to your grant salaries. It just supports the fact that everyone agrees these people are working on those programs. These are the salaries that these people get paid. These are the programs they get charged against. So our recommendation there is that the allocation of employee salaries charged to federal grant programs be specifically presented by Board action and included in the official minutes on an annual basis. We're not saying the charges are improper. We're just saying we need to do this administrative action just so that it's in the minutes and clear-cut who they are. Under school purchasing program we had two recommendations. One deals with orders being placed and contracts being entered into prior to an approved purchase order being issued. It's commonly referred to as a confirming order. Confirming orders are when the item has been purchased or the contract has been awarded and the purchasing department or business department doesn't know that happens. There's not a purchase order issued and the money is not set aside for those purchases or services. That's critical to any good purchasing system. Purchases are not made until someone approves that it's an allowable purchase, that there's sufficient funds in the budget to pay for it, that it's charged to the right account, and all the requirements of bidding and purchasing are followed. Our recommendation there is that in all instances purchases and contracts be made in accordance with approved district purchasing procedures to ensure confirming orders do not occur. The second recommendation revolves around there were a couple of contracts that were awarded in the minutes for a certain amount but at the end of the year they were paid in excess of what was approved. The amounts are not large. It's not like you approved \$500 and the guy got paid \$2 million. It's more like someone got approved for \$350,000 and they did services that you ended up paying them for \$375,000 or \$380,000. The amount in the end is obviously important but the process of letting vendors exceed a purchase order without proper approval is not a good process. Those things have to come for Board action to approve to increase the original award that you have approved in the minutes. Our recommendation is that payments to vendors be monitored to ensure cumulative payments do not exceed the amounts approved in the contract award. On student body activities you have a lot of student accounts. In a lot of districts there are a lot of issues with the student accounts. Your student accounts are pretty well-maintained. We had one recommendation that we're making regarding the purchase of gift cards. Not that anything was done improper, but we probably think you need to address a policy regarding purchasing of gift cards so that it's in writing and everyone knows what the rules are and what they're allowed. Our recommendation is that the district reviews and revises its student activity policies and procedures with respect to purchases made with the use of gift cards. You just need to get some ground rules and some procedures in place so everyone knows exactly what the proper procedure is when you do purchase cards such as that. Application for state school aid is an application that is prepared by the district on October 15 of each year and it's basically a student count. It is a census of all your students by grade, by classification, by low income, LEP, and lots of information. There was certain supporting documentation to your private school for the disabled that didn't agree to what you reported to the state. You reported a number to the state but when we went and looked at the backup information the supporting documentation was less. Our

recommendation there is that internal controls over the preparation of the ASSA, which is the Application for State School Aid, be reviewed and enhanced to ensure that work papers are maintained to support the number of students reported as attending private school for the disabled. There is a report called a DRTS. Again, it's a census report of students who are transported by the district. It is broken down between regular, special education, and special needs. We had some issues with students that were classified as special needs students that did not meet the requirements of that classification. Special education and special needs transportation is a higher level of requirement which means you get more state aid for it. The number of students that reported in that classification either did not meet the remote mileage requirements or their IEP didn't say they needed special transportation. We need to button that up also. You can transport them if you want. You just can't claim them on the application. They have to be eligible. Our recommendation there is that only those special education students who meet the remote mileage requirement or whose IEP reflects transportation as a requirement be reported on the DTRS. Only those who are eligible and that can be supported. Those were the seven recommendations we had. Again, there was only one significant deficiency. There were no material weaknesses and there are no repeat recommendations from the prior year. If there are any questions, I would be more than happy to answer them.

Comm. Kerr: The point I just want to make is that we had extended discussion regarding the confirming orders situation. We realize that it's not a healthy process that we are using. We thought that at least we should have some policy guideline to help us in that direction. I don't believe this is the first time that we have been caught up with this situation. We just want it to be corrected.

Comm. Irving: I just missed the beginning. What situation, Comm. Kerr?

Comm. Kerr: There was a finding.

Comm. Irving: Which one?

Comm. Kerr: Confirming orders. This is not the first time we are going through this. I just want the Board to understand that we did have that discussion at the committee level and we did talk about that extensively.

Comm. Irving: I have two questions. The first is about the fund balance. Just going back, if I'm trying to follow the numbers that you've laid out for us, in the best case scenario, if the state gave the same appropriation they gave us in our current fiscal year, we have to find at least another \$60 million in the current budget to roll over for the next fiscal year? Am I correct?

Mr. Bliss: \$53 million.

Comm. Irving: But we have to find \$53 million in the current budget.

Comm. Kerr: If costs remain stable.

Comm. Irving: The point I'm trying to make here is as you go through the math you go through \$74 million to \$53 million to \$21 million to \$12 million and then \$9 million. There's going to come a year, maybe in the next year or two, where that \$9 million is going to be zero. Eventually that leftover money we're going to have is going to be nonexistent. Then we're going to completely have to function on just all surplus. Given

the numbers and projections we have here is there a realistic timeframe when that \$9 million goes to zero?

Mr. Bliss: We didn't do an analysis of that.

Comm. Irving: The bottom line is there are two realities and I think two main views of thought even on this dais about the State of New Jersey's duty and business to fund this district. Will they or won't they? At some level we've got to figure out two scenarios. One allows us to operate if we're fully funded, but also one that's in place if we're not. I'm going to err on the more pessimistic side and say that I think it's in our best interest. Last year when we had this same audit and we had our Board retreat we had this conversation. This is not sustainable and it's also not good business practice. It's not being fiscally responsible and I think that if we're not getting additional state aid and if we're not getting any additional tax revenue and we're just operating with what we've got there are some harsh decisions that have to be made in the next budget cycle that have to be a very realistic drilldown conversation. But I do think towards the end of this fiscal year we have to make a decision about how faculty and staff spend money in the last two months of the school year. What I don't want to see is a bills list come in April and May and folks are buying paper, pens, and markers when school closes three weeks thereafter. I think that in itself is irresponsible as well. I think if we're going to curtail and change spending that has to be a part of it as well. When the new year comes and we go right into the budget season we literally jump full speed into it. Cheryl, is the budget hearing in February or March? I know we talked about this the other day. We really need to see two projections, one with either flat or moderate increase in the state aid appropriation, but also one that seeks to curtail this \$53 million, which might be higher next year. I don't know how the hell we get there. That is not an easy feat to do, but it has to happen in the next budget cycle for sure. This can't happen again. We keep saying it every year and we keep putting it off for what to do, but it has to happen now. With all due respect Dr. Evans, just cutting a few positions in central office is not going to cut it. That is putting a Band-Aid on a very heaping wound. The other question I had was related to the transportation for special education. How many youngsters did you guys cite fell into that category?

Mr. Bliss: There were 300 kids reported. We sampled 276. 30 kids of the 276 were not eligible. So it's 10%.

Comm. Irving: How is that possible?

Mr. Bliss: What probably happened is the children are being transported and they're taken off the transportation bill. But when you go in to see if the child is being transported over the number of miles that he's required – I think it's two and a half miles – if they don't meet that remote mileage requirement they can't be put on the application. Then there are students who are below two and half miles that can be eligible if their IEP says this student has to be transported even if he lives three blocks away.

Comm. Irving: My follow-up is really not for you. It's really for our staff. Where's the disconnect? There's a clear disconnect. Clearly we're identifying that a child needs to be transported but that's not being reflected in the IEP. So clearly somebody in the child study team is saying this kid needs transportation, but how does that not get recorded into the child's IEP? I'd like an answer for that.

Ms. Gloria Bodker: Typically it's a separate document that's generated after the child has an IEP. They're connected but the system as it's set up right now teams can

generate the transportation form without it connecting to the IEP. There are certain things that the IEP draws from. In this particular instance it is possible that the team generated a document, a transportation form, and either it was not reviewed properly and that's why we are tightening our supervisory reviews of IEPs to make sure that these kinds of things do not happen in the future. I'm also working with TCG, our web-based IEP program, to make sure that there is a stop. The team will not be able to generate an IEP transportation form unless it is indicated under specialized transportation. That's probably what happened.

Comm. Irving: These 30 cases that the auditors found, were they specifically that scenario? Or were they just a mix?

Ms. Bodker: I don't believe that all 30 were special education students. I believe it was two students.

Mr. Bliss: It was 12 special education public, 11 special needs public, and only four regular placements.

Ms. Bodker: I thought it was less. We will have that changed.

Mr. Bliss: I have to stand corrected. We actually tested 300 and there were 30 errors. You report 4,100 kids. The sample was 300. I'm sorry.

Comm. Hodges: \$53 million is about 10% or 11% of our current budget or 9% of our overall expenditures. Does every school have art and music programs?

Dr. Evans: Are you asking me? Every school has music or art, one or the other. In many cases both.

Comm. Hodges: But they don't all have art.

Dr. Evans: They all don't have both.

Comm. Hodges: Studies have shown that there's a significant academic benefit from both of those to the academics. Does flat-funding cover all our increases that we incur?

Comm. Irving: Of course not.

Comm. Hodges: That does not cover all our increases in our expenses in terms of health benefits, salary increase, and tuition. That's not covered by flat funding.

Dr. Evans: We haven't done our budget yet so I'm answering in the future tense. It probably won't.

Comm. Hodges: So in other words, it will be inadequate.

Dr. Evans: There will have to be some reductions for that to happen.

Comm. Hodges: We don't have any SAT review courses presently.

Dr. Evans: I think we instituted some.

Comm. Hodges: We just started it?

Ms. Shafer: We're just getting ready to start this week.

Comm. Hodges: We're starting now.

Ms. Shafer: And we did it last year.

Comm. Hodges: We're going to have to punch that up just a little bit with our results. By the way, I understand that the SAT is going to be changing and it's going to look at how well students master the material in the classroom, which is not being looked at now. So we're going to have to spend some time and presumably money to retrain or redevelop that program, I'm assuming. It starts in 2016. The PSAT starts in October of 2015. That means that this year we're going to have to make some additional expenditures to address that, which we currently don't have in our budget.

Dr. Evans: For this year's budget.

Comm. Hodges: That's not there now.

Dr. Evans: There is some money for additional programs. We call them high-impact interventions. We could repurpose the money that's there for other interventions to be able to do that.

Comm. Hodges: But that will come out of our fund balance.

Dr. Evans: We could cut something else out.

Comm. Hodges: Holding things harmless...

Dr. Evans: I would not make the assumption that we're holding anything harmless.

Comm. Hodges: Okay. I guess that is my point. Do we have research partners for our students, either arrangements with universities or local companies?

Dr. Evans: I'm not sure I understand the question.

Comm. Hodges: I'll come back to that one. Do we need a significant technological overhaul of the system here in this district featuring bandwidth and email system?

Dr. Evans: Yes.

Comm. Hodges: Will that cost money?

Dr. Evans: I don't think anybody is going to do it free. I suspect it will cost.

Comm. Hodges: That's going to dig into what we already have and some of this fund balance.

Dr. Evans: It might.

Comm. Hodges: Should we have after-school programs and clubs that will further engage our students, which means paying teachers to work as advisors, which we don't already have in our budget?



Dr. Evans: We already have in our budget money for after-school programs. We provide after-school programs already. I wouldn't make the assumption that we wouldn't have it in the future.

Comm. Hodges: I'm simply saying can we expand what we currently have.

Dr. Evans: If we expand. I wouldn't assume we're going to expand anything until we know how much money is available.

Comm. Hodges: So the answer then is not. My point of ruling all those things out is we don't have what we need now. If we sit here and plan a budget that says it's okay to cut the money then what he's telling you is we're going to cut programs that we have now, programs that are producing 19 kids who can be considered to be college-ready. That's the issue. If you accept that as your approach, then that's a problem. The reason I'm bringing that up is that the fund balance just makes it very clear what the issues are going to be. You're going to have to cut what we're already doing if you agree to this budget. If you agree to that kind of planning you're going to have to shortchange our kids who are struggling now. We need to understand that. There was a 28-year battle for Abbott funding that took our kids from \$5,000 a year to where they were in 1997, which was about \$10,000. It was a 28-year battle for us to now turn around and say we're going to make planning that cuts our budget below what we're supposed to have. That's the issue I have and your fund balances are not going to get smaller. They're going to get bigger. The requirement for the fund balance is going to get bigger because as long as the budget is stable, you're not paying for the increases in health, medical, and all the energy you can't cover it. That's the realistic issue in front of you. That fund balance is going to be a problem. It's going to crush you unless we address revenue coming in or unless we significantly or radically change how we are spending money and teaching kids. If we don't have those new ideas and new approaches which are going to cost us less money in the table, then cutting is going to hurt us academically, which is the only reason we're supposed to be here.

Comm. Martinez: Dr. Hodges, I think your line of questioning can be boiled down to simply outside of having the state fully fund and avoiding cuts is there any other way to regenerate this \$54 million which will grow without having to cut programs that we need or to not be able to bring programs that we would need. That's the question.

Comm. Hodges: That puts two problems for Dr. Evans. My understanding is that the state has asked us to engage in budget planning that includes looking at flat funding, a 5% cut, a 10% cut, and a 20% cut. Can you imagine what a \$100 million cut is going to look like in your budget and trying to absorb that? Or even \$53 million? What are you going to do with that? That's the problem. So either he creates out of nowhere this wonderful education plan – and I don't have the exact difference between what our funding is going to be and the increases potentially at the end of the year from salaries, benefits, and all that stuff – how does he create an educational program that keeps us moving forward with less money? That's the one challenge. On the other side of it is you have to tell the state that we can't accept less money and you have to get out in front of it before it happens. Once they cut the budget numbers you can yell and scream all you want to, but it's too late.

Comm. Martinez: So the stark reality becomes that this cliff is coming closer and closer and getting steeper and steeper.

Comm. Hodges: We have to push back.

Comm. Kerr: The fact of the matter is we have funded this budget out of our fund balances. What is happening is that the cost to operate the district is moving upward. Today's \$53 million, tomorrow all things being equal, is going to be \$60 million or more. On top of that you're asked to look at your budget and take a further 10% out of that. If you really don't push back hard on that kind of scenario we're just going to be under the water. We're not going to be able to survive. The idea is Mr. Bliss just told us there is no money there unless you deliberately say we're prepared to fund this and that and make a determined effort not to fund it. You just put the numbers in your budget but you really don't provide the services. So you will have those resources to fund the next budget because you did not use the money. We've been in this practice and if we don't get out of it our kids will not be getting the kind of education they're supposed to be getting. As I mentioned to Dr. Evans, I've been to the School Boards Association meeting and I saw kids in a full orchestral band. How did they get that? Our district can't even provide pencils for the kids. It's not like we're operating in a way that we have everything and we are wasting the money. We have money in the budget because we don't spend it on the essential things. We are at a crossroads right now and we have to make a determination. Do we sacrifice our kids further? Or do we tell the state we need more?

Comm. Hodges: Your PARCC testing with science at 15% passage. You have other things coming online behind that. If that's our entry level how do we graduate these kids? The standard now isn't exposure it's mastery. That's a much greater standard. It's no longer, "I recognize this." It's, "I know this. I can use this. I can teach this." That's what mastery means. That's not where we are now. That's not how we are teaching. Clearly that's not how we're teaching because the SAT and even our HSPA scores truly identify that. That's the standard that they're looking to accomplish, mastery. And we have to do it with a reduced budget. The PARCC testing and other online programs coming on, I don't see how you can do it.

Comm. Rivera: I came on board a few months ago. I noticed some of the things you brought up and we had lengthy discussions in our finance committee regarding the purchase order issue that we have and some other things like lack of oversight with some of our grants from the finance office overseeing the fiscal aspect of the grants. Something that caught my attention when I started was the jump in the surplus. It's just a big concern because in every budget I've seen in all the years I've been in the business somewhere you have to use the fund balance to support and keep taxes down. In our case it's just to cover the amount that the state is not giving us to cover our expenses. But that sort of a jump is just unthinkable. I wasn't part of that budget process, but it's very disturbing. Also, the use of one-time revenue items, I brought up recently we had the sale of a property that we were supposed to sell which we've been including in the budget for a few years now and that revenue has not been realized. That's \$2 million that we have put in the budget as appropriation to spend because we have \$2 million as revenue that we didn't have, which reduces our surplus. Again, I've been in the municipal government for 10 years and some of these accounts just the names are a little different and also the restrictions. Something that caught my attention is a small thing, but you said the emergency reserve is in case something comes up that we didn't budget for. Correct? In your experience with all the audits that you do don't you think this is a little excessive? I'll tell you why I'm thinking that way. \$1 million is a small drop in the bucket when you have a budget our size. But the City of Paterson has a budget of \$200 million and we have a line called contingencies. It's basically for the same purpose. I'm sure you do audits also for municipalities. It's for the same purpose. I believe the amount is \$5,000. In the county we have a \$400 million budget. I believe ours is probably maybe \$25,000 to \$50,000. Here we have \$1 million. Maybe you're

going to have a great explanation, but I just don't feel comfortable leaving \$1 million in the budget in case something comes up that we didn't plan for.

Mr. Bliss: It's a little different only in the fact that it's not part of the budget. It's part of the fund balances. It hasn't been authorized to be used like the contingency lines. It's kind of on the side and no one has said you can use it yet.

Comm. Rivera: Can we use it for something else instead of having it there?

Mr. Bliss: To use it during the year after your budget is adopted you have to basically have no money in the budget. You have to say you're broke. There's no way you can pay for this because you can't transfer from this line to that line to cover it. What you can do is before you adopt the budget process you can appropriate it as revenue.

Comm. Rivera: That's where I'm heading. I just don't feel comfortable leaving \$1 million. We're using all this surplus and we have \$1 million that we haven't touched just lying there. It's basically surplus. I'm sure we should leave a little bit there, but not \$1 million.

Mr. Bliss: The law is you can put up to 1% of your budget, which in your case would be \$5 million. But it maxes out at \$1 million so you're at the max.

Comm. Rivera: That will be it for now.

Comm. Kerr: That's what the state requires, that you have the minimum of \$1 million.

Mr. Bliss: The maximum you're allowed to have. You can't have any more. The \$9 million you have is the maximum.

Comm. Rivera: Is there a minimum you can have? What would be a responsible amount in your opinion?

Mr. Bliss: You can't have anything less than zero.

Comm. Rivera: What's the responsible amount in your opinion?

Mr. Bliss: The responsible amount for any district is to keep the maximum amount of your 2% available for the future. 2% is \$9 million roughly. On a \$500 million budget it's not a lot of money. It used to be 10 years ago you could have had 6% and three times that money and still be at the maximum. Slowly year after year they cut it from 6% to 5% to 4% down to 2%. You obviously understand budgets and deal with them. 2% left behind on a half billion dollar budget is not a lot of money. When you have flat funding and situations where you could potentially have tuition costs that could run anywhere from \$50,000 to \$100,000 that are unbudgeted, it could put a lot of pressure on your budget.

Comm. Rivera: I know we had a salary wage adjustment to settle contracts. Are we projecting that for next year closing whatever balances there and throwing it into surplus? How much was left? I haven't gotten a chance to go through this in detail. Do you know off the top of your head how much money is left in that account after the contracts were settled?

Mr. Bliss: Zero. It's all in these numbers.

Comm. Rivera: Got it. It was all closed out.

Mr. Bliss: It was all closed out.

Comm. Rivera: Got it. That's what I wanted to know.

Comm. Hodges: All I really wanted to say is the Superintendent is going to certify whatever budget he has to as being thorough and efficient because he's required to. If we submit a budget that's inadequate and go through this planning the Governor will take our reduced budget and he will point to us saying even they believe that they have too much money. That's what's going to happen. I'm just letting you know. He has a huge budget problem down in Trenton and the educational budget is the biggest part of the state's budget.

Comm. Rivera: The problem we have here is that if we don't maintain or create the surplus that we've been using, it's inevitable. We have to reduce the budget. That's the first thing I said when I started here. My concern is we're playing with people's lives. When you start cutting you're playing with the kids' education and also people lose their jobs. We can't continue to sustain what we have. I know we have to send a message to the state that we need and we have to continue to send it. But a lot of times we have to be fiscally responsible and work with what we have at least. By continuing to maintain the level of expenses that we have it's not going to happen. It's just a matter of time. It's a ticking time bomb. It is.

Comm. Kerr: I understand what you're saying, Comm. Rivera, and I agree with you. But the argument that is being made here is simply that we need to be in a situation where our children here in Paterson get the full value of every dollar that's in the budget. you don't budget the money and because you know you're not going to get resources from the state to fund the next budget you save that money in your budget and just shift it over from year to year to fund the other year's budget. You need to spend the money and make sure that you have everything that the money can buy. We were at the meeting at JFK and the parents came there and said there were no uniforms for the marching band. Yet we're talking about a surplus here. These are the things that we're talking about. Make sure that every dollar that is in your budget the kids get the benefit of it.

Comm. Rivera: We can't go back to the past and correct whatever has already been done. But going forward we just need the cooperation of the administration. I wasn't around during the budget process so I don't know if you did this or not, but just from experience from seeing what happen in some municipalities we just have to make sure we analyze every line. We would like a detail of vacancies. A lot of times we budget for positions that haven't been filled. I'm not saying you do that, but in general in different organizations they have expressed the intent to the governing body of filling those positions and when you analyze their budget they go year after year without filling those positions with the intent of creating surplus. Here we keep creating surplus that we're using. Again, for every dollar that you budget as an appropriate you have to have a dollar of revenue. What's happening here is we're probably budgeting for things that we're not going to fulfill and that's why that \$54 million is so inflated. Maybe we didn't have a need to use \$54 million if we looked at this budget in detail. Maybe it was less. Just to finalize my comment, it's like the City of Paterson. I used to laugh all the time. I used to say how come the City of Paterson is always able to cut \$5 million from their budget without laying off one person? What does that tell you? I'm not saying it's the situation right now, but year after year I used to analyze the budget and the budget was inflated every year. For the sake of the staff, the kids, and everybody we have to work

with the administration here and put together a responsible budget. Again, I'm not saying this one is not a responsible budget, but I'd feel more comfortable just seeing the vacancies that we have.

Comm. Hodges: Nobody wants the monies directed to the classroom effectively more than I do. The real purpose is obviously to educate children, not to pay adults, not to buy things for consultants, on and on. The idea is to make sure that the monies are spent for the students. I was hoping to get your attention Mr. Rivera because I was trying to address your concerns. I wanted to address your comments, some of which I agree with. I'm trying to tell you that. The Supreme Court said that we were denied money for over 28 years. In addition to bringing us up to that funding level they also said that there were particularized needs because of the concentration of poverty that you have in this city. That's why you're getting extra money. Where I agree with you is that we have to make sure that money gets to where it's supposed to be and is most effectively distributed and used. There are some questions as to whether or not that's the case. But the Supreme Court's mandates are not being adhered to. That's the underlying problem. Their mandates aren't being adhered to, not mine. I don't want to be teaching remediation to students. I don't want kids to have to go to school four years without being able to read or four years below what their grade is. We need to fix that. But we also don't have to go through this cycle of being underfunded, which forces us to spend that kind of money in these remedial practices as opposed to being able to just teach. If we were able to just teach we would have no need for as much money as we're using. But we're not there and until we are there then we're going to have these extra expenditures and that's the problem that I'm looking at. If I tell the state that they're right and we don't need the money when we have test grades that are where they are now, those test grades aren't getting any better. That's all I'm going to say.

Comm. Kerr: Comm. Rivera, what I would recommend to the administration is we don't start from the premise that we have an inflated budget. That's where you're coming from and I want you to know that I'm not in agreement with that. The Paterson district is really a special needs district. We are carrying one of the largest populations of students who have special needs in the state. We are also an immigrant city. All of that brings with it special pressure on the resources of this district. There is more pressure on our dollar than there is from Ridgewood and some of the surrounding towns that are more homogenous in their composition. So if we were to seriously address all the particular needs that exist in our district and address them in the way that is required if we're talking about a thorough and efficient education, then what we have as a budget would be grossly insufficient. So I would caution you not to start from the point that our budget is inflated. What I would like us to look at is the way we construct how we go about addressing those needs in our district. Maybe that's where the problem comes in. We need to be a little bit more rational in our distribution and how we apply the resources. But we should never think at any time that this budget is inflated when our kids are going without so many basic things.

Comm. Rivera: Just to finalize, I'm going to keep it brief. The comment I passed is based on the things that I've seen since I've been here a few months. You have a situation where you're informed that the administration reduced \$5 million from the budget or whatever the amount may be in staff and they cannot provide. You and I have these discussions often. In theory a lot of the things you're saying I agree with you. But it's just a matter of dollars and cents. We're talking about numbers here. I'm not getting into the philosophy of what we need and don't need. A budget is a plan that you have to execute. Whatever you put in the plan is the only thing that they're able to execute. If we don't have money in the budget for art teachers, then there is no money for art teachers. What I'm saying is if you have a departmental budget for any

department, let's say your office, if we add up your salaries for your office with longevity and every else and they add up to let's say \$2 million, I also looked at last year's expenses and I noticed that last year you only spent let's say \$1.9 million and this year you come with a budget of \$2.5 million I'm going to ask you why you need another \$500,000. What happens is that a lot of people when they analyze budgets they look at the amount that was budgeted last year and the amount we're budgeting this year. You don't do that. You have to look at the amount that was spent last year versus what we're budgeting this year. That's how you have to approach it. It's a little tricky because they only line that you could actually get a good assessment of how much you actually spent is salaries and wages. You still have some expenses that come out to the year end. That's the first thing I look. The way I analyze the budget is that way. I look at the salaries and wages because the expenses are recorded as of June 30. That's what I'm trying to tell you. I'm not accusing the district of anything. I'm saying based on the comments...

Comm. Irving: It's about to be 8:00. I need you guys to understand we have another report and a whole bunch of action items to go through too.

Comm. Rivera: So you're basically telling me to stop? I'll stop.

Comm. Irving: I'm telling you that you guys are having a philosophical debate. It's a philosophical argument.

Comm. Kerr: No.

Comm. Irving: It is. You have your manner of thinking and you have yours. You guys are not going to convince each other of your different perspectives.

Comm. Kerr: You have to remember this is a serious issue. I understand where Comm. Rivera is coming from because he's a professional in that regard. I'm just asking him to step out of that and look at what we are dealing with in the district. I know he's looking at the budget. This is how it's supposed to be. But there's a wider field out here. I understand that.

Comm. Irving: I think in all fairness he's probably asking you to do the same.

Comm. Rivera: The issue I'm having here is we can talk about philosophy, but that doesn't help us at all. It helps us in the long-run. If Dr. Hodges was here I was going to ask him what was the time that this legislation was passed stating that our funding should be increased and my question was going to be has it been increased ever since. What I'm saying is we can only work with what we have. We can't continue to say, "The state, the state." The state needs to take care of our children but we can only work with what we have. We have to put our budget together with what we have or what we anticipate from the state.

Comm. Irving: Fair enough. Thank you.

### **Elementary School Choice**

Dr. Evans: In our last workshop in November, I provided the Board a copy of an initial draft of a plan for Elementary Choice in our school district. I indicated to you then that I would be coming back to you with a more detailed version of the plan. In fact, we gave you copies of the updated narrative and the PowerPoint that I'm about to go through very quickly to share with you the components of the plan. Hopefully you have had a

chance to review it and of course any questions that you have between myself and Dr. Newell we'll be happy to respond to. One of the first sections in the plan speaks to the research on School Choice. The research actually began to evolve in the late 1980's and early 1990's regarding School Choice and has continued ever since. What you see illustrated there was a reflection of an item that summarized the research on School Choice that appeared in Education Week in 2012. Basically what it says in a nutshell is that there are some positives associated with it including academic gains in reading and math as well as graduation rates. It also gets into what Choice options are available across the country. The second page gets into some of the assumptions. In the narrative I had six or seven and I mentioned four there in particular. The first one really is the only one that I want to highlight. I'm going through this rather quickly so if the Board has questions feel free to note them and we can go back and spend more time on any of these that you desire. The sole purpose of School Choice in the context in which we're discussing it and implementing it in our district is for school improvement purposes, to add to the array of strategies that we're implementing in our district to improve our academic and other outcomes for our students. There are some other things that we need to pay attention to like capacity and that's mentioned as well in the assumptions. But the major point I want to make here is that this is about improving student achievement and other outcomes. The plan has a number of components and you see a listing of them there. In fact, the next few slides takes a very brief snapshot of what those components entail when we look at planning and developing all the way through a focus on quality of education. First of all, we are assembling and have initially identified individuals to serve on a Choice work group to help us complete this process. We want this to be an inclusive process. We want to hear from our internal and external stakeholders from classroom teachers, principals, district level administrators, parents, community leaders. In fact, in the very next slide you'll see a listing of the groups that we seek to represent on this committee. The focus of this work is represented by the three bullets that you see there – assisting with the development of the components of the plan, critiquing and providing feedback as the plan evolves, and to advise the co-chairs – the co-chairs are Dr. Newell and I – on current and emergent implementation obstacles and challenges that we need to address both during the development process as well as initial implementation process. It also indicates that obviously informing the Board and the plan continues to evolve on a very regular basis is a part of what we intend to do. In the early stages of development we had a very brief discussion as you recall in November, we have tonight's discussion, and we plan to revisit with you just to update you very briefly in the workshop in January. In addition, the larger community will be given the opportunity to give input in community forums, the first of which is tomorrow night. I believe it's at 6:00 at International High School and we invite everyone to come out for that. We anticipate doing a second one in January. This next slide includes the various groups that we plan to represent and have already begun to identify individuals to serve. You see the list. Again, we're trying to represent all of our internal and external stakeholders in the district to give everyone an opportunity to tell us what they think to shape the plan in a way that's going to meet our needs. The next slide gets into the student assignment options. What do we mean by Choice is the answer to the question that is on everyone's mind. This slide in a nutshell does that. The student assignment options are to continue to go to their neighborhood schools. They don't have to do anything. They don't have to fill out an application if they're already enrolled as a student. All they need to do is attend the zone neighborhood school that they already are assigned to. Or Magnets - we have a limited number of Magnets and they will be mentioned in just a moment. We plan to expand the number of Magnets to give them more choices. Then there's something called Controlled Choice if they're not interested in Magnets but parents have a reason to want their children to go to another school. It may be that they live in the western part of the city and they work in the southern or southeastern part of the city and they want their child

to reassign to a school very near their place of employment, then Controlled Choice is the option they would exercise through completing an application process that we'll talk about in just a minute, or at least the beginning stages of that application process. Those are the three choices – attend your neighborhood school, attend a Magnet school, or attend a school outside your neighborhood that is not a Magnet but is closer to your work or satisfies whatever need you may have. As I alluded to earlier, we currently have some Magnets and this slide lists them from Alexander Hamilton to Norman S. Weir and the other schools that we have. Then we have two schools that are not Magnet but also have themes. School 6 and Dr. Frank Napier School have themes associated with it, but they're not Magnet schools in the traditional sense in that they don't necessarily have a district-wide draw. They serve their respective communities. We want to survey our community even though we have an initial list of potential topics or themes that we will address. But we want to continue to query the community on themes that our parents and students may be interested in. This is a sampling and this is not an all-inclusive list. It's not finite, but I can tell you that as we move forward our thinking right now is a two-stage process. To have a full-blown Controlled Choice program in the way that we're talking about requires that we have additional capacity and are not so tight in terms of capacity in many of our elementary schools. But there are some programs that we can start as a school-within-a-school type programs. The three that we are looking at now that are high-priority for us to implement for next fall and that we can design, in fact in one case some design work has already been done, is fine and performing arts, single gender, and the Board has asked for us to create single gender, and then dual language. Dual language is different from what we know that we currently have. Dual language is a school in which the classes are taught in two languages. This means the students when they complete their education in that school, when they leave eighth grade for example, they will leave speaking two languages fluently. That's what dual language is. Instead of taking youngsters who know only one language and teaching them a second everything is taught in two languages. It works exceptionally well. I'm personally familiar with that model and it is very effective in helping students to get commands of other languages. Part of our discussion is then what languages are we talking about and want to include in dual language. Again, I repeat the three that we are focusing on at this point in time, and no final decisions have been made and we want input from the parents and the Board to make the final determination in this first phase, are in elementary fine and performing arts, dual language, and then single gender. We would literally have individuals to develop the components of the program, share that with the Board, get feedback, and be ready to implement. Actually by late winter or early spring the design is complete and we're engaging students to actually be a part of the program to begin next fall. Again, I want to emphasize when you see this list again it's not the end-all. It's there for a reason because we're going to continue to ask what themes folk are interested in. Boundaries certainly are a major consideration here. All Magnet schools will have a district-wide draw, but non-Magnet schools will continue to have defined attendance areas. I'll repeat something I've already said because sometimes parents get confused. They think that for their youngsters to continue to attend their local neighborhood school they have to apply. They don't. They don't have to do anything. The default assignment is the school in your neighborhood that you already assigned to. You just continue to go to that school if that's what you want. Then obviously students who want to go to Magnet schools or non-Magnet schools outside their area would then have to apply, which is what Controlled Choice is about, giving them the opportunity to do as I've already indicated, to apply to a school outside their neighborhood that's a non-Magnet school. You'll note that this says for any reason parents can request it and the only limiting factor obviously is capacity. Looking at the schools that we have and anticipating the Controlled Choice piece to be a part of phase two the second year we expect particularly with School 16, the Hazel/Marshall School and soon to follow, I don't



know how soon, a new Don Bosco then we should have more capacity to be able to implement a Controlled Choice program two years from now. The student assignment process, except when Choice Schools require a mastery of prerequisite skills, they will be asked to simply fill out the application, tell us which school they're interested in, and then a neutral lottery process will assign students to the schools. Students will be asked during the application process to give us their first, second, and third choice. My experience is that, if it's done right, most students will get their first choice and those who don't typically get the second. Rarely do you have to go to third choices. Faculty and staff assignments – our union agreements include provisions that drive how faculty and staff are assigned. However, in a case where a unique skill set or a specific knowledge base is required, such as fine and performing arts, then obviously that prerequisite then trumps or presents an overlay or an additional set of expectations that applicants or teachers who are interested have to meet before they are assigned to the school. The transportation guidelines that we already have will be used to transport youngsters to Magnet schools and other unique circumstances. Controlled Choice would require that parents transport them. If a parent decided they want a child near where they work then they would transport the child as opposed to the district. But for Magnets the district would transport them. Resource allocation simply indicates that distribution of resources across all schools will be equitable. That's really the only point of that slide. Parents do, but we don't normally think in a Choice context about quality of education in the way that it's talked about here. But I will say to you that if we cannot assure parents that they're going to be a high-quality education Choice doesn't work. Parents will want to go for any school that they think was going to give them the best education. "That one school is better than that one," those discussions evolve and those are discussions that we want to minimize. We want to make sure that we're doing what we need to do to ensure that regardless of which school a parent chooses they're going to get a comparably high-quality education. So the onus is on us to make sure that is in existence across all our schools. Leadership and supervision – one of the responsibilities that my level will have is to report annually to the Board and give them status reports. Is it working or not and what kind of positive outcomes and negative outcomes, if we experience any, we're seeing. Of course, parents who are dissatisfied with the process in terms of the application process or anything associated with the Choice Program will have an appeal process if they choose to exercise it. That's a very brief overview of what this is about. Again, we're still working through some details. Dr. Newell and I as late as this morning spent some time together ultimately continuing to add to this and making sure that all of the components are developed on time and done in a way that when we get to spring registration or late winter registration everything is ready. We've communicated with parents. They know and if they have questions we've answered them. But they know what to expect, where to go, and how to apply. At this time if the Board has any questions.

Comm. Simmons: What is the difference between Magnet and Controlled Choice?

Dr. Evans: Magnets have a district-wide draw and they have themes. There's a theme associated with them such as fine and performing arts. That is the focus and that theme is to not only represent the primary focus of that school but it should permeate the curriculum. But the two major attributes are the theme and regardless of where you live in the city you're eligible to attend a Magnet school if you follow the application process and are accepted into that school. With Controlled Choice if a parent who has a child at School 27 works down the street and they want that child to attend School 25 on the hill here and there's capacity simply because it's closer to their work then they can fill out an application to go to School 26. That's the difference. Another difference is for Magnets the district will provide transportation. For Controlled Choice where parents

just want a kid closer to where they are, for example, they would have to provide transportation.

Comm. Kerr: Schools with themes naturally attract specialized instructions. How will we address that piece of it considering the cost that is associated with anything in terms of being special?

Dr. Evans: That depends on the theme. The program that will have the greater cost associated with it is going to be fine and performing arts because you're talking about instruments and those kinds of things that you don't normally have in an instructional program. The district would have to assume that cost. I would not want to say to a kid they can come to that school but they have to buy their own instrument. For our population that would be unfair. We would provide those instruments.

Comm. Kerr: That's the only school that would require special equipment?

Dr. Evans: Again, we haven't finished identifying all of the themes so it's possible that another theme could emerge that have additional costs beyond the normal costs associated with instruction.

Comm. Irving: The first question I have is about the Controlled Choice transportation piece. I'll defer to the fact that I'm sure you've done your due diligence. But just how is that legal if a child lives beyond the radius of a school? I was under the presumption that we have to provide them transportation.

Dr. Evans: Because the parents are choosing. They can go to that neighborhood school. That's their option. They don't have to exercise School Choice. They don't have to exercise the Magnet as well. But it's because it's a choice is the rationale. If we were requiring them to go we would be required to provide transportation.

Comm. Irving: So with the Magnet school we have to. Can you just find us the legal language that clarifies that point? I just want to make sure that we're in the clear on that and that we don't get caught off guard.

Dr. Evans: Let me say that's what this design calls for. If the Board says we want to provide transportation to students in Controlled Choice that's something certainly we can add. But just know that's an additional cost.

Comm. Irving: That's brings me to my next question. We just had conversation about the budget. When you got up, Jonathan, I did make a point that the reality is however we slice it there are different philosophies for how we see our fiscal picture. But I think everybody can agree with the fact that our fiscal picture is bleak if there are no additional funds coming in. That's without fail. So how do we then pay for the establishment of at least three new programs next year and then the rollout of additional ones? I'm sure some of them will be absorbed because they'll be taking over schools. But there are additional costs when you add performing arts and when you're talking about science and technology. What was the other one you mentioned, Dr. Evans?

Dr. Evans: There shouldn't be additional equipment costs and those kinds of things for dual language.

Comm. Irving: Additional curriculum and qualified staff to teach both.

Dr. Evans: We have folks who could write the curriculum or there is curriculum out there that you could actually purchase if you want. But the programs that I'm familiar with the staff actually wrote the curriculum during the development process so when the school opened the curriculum was ready.

Comm. Irving: We have struggled with getting appropriate staff to indeed write curriculum. Case in point, we were presented with a curriculum for the high schools two years after the school-within-a-school model was established. I just want to make sure that there has to be a budget included for this later on. I think it needs to be explained how that budget is imported into the district's fiscal reality move forward. That's just more of a comment than anything else. I have not seen the budget so I can only speculate as to what I think it may look like or what it may be.

Comm. Cleaves: You were talking about funding. Also, you mentioned in your statement, Dr. Evans, capacity. How are we funding the capacity? If we're providing a new science program we can't just put kids in regular classrooms now. We have to have labs. That all goes into funding and space. How is that going to be addressed when we don't have enough space now and we don't have this new science program?

Dr. Evans: Let me deal with space because there are two issues. There's funding and then there's space. For year one, which would be the 2015-2016 school year we would work with space in current buildings and have school-within-a-school programs instead of standalones. I don't see us emptying out any school. We don't have enough space to empty a school and repopulated it with a full-blown Magnet. I anticipate year two when School 16 and Hazel/Marshall come online and then ultimately when Don Bosco follows, a new elementary school there, then space is less of an issue. We will be able to create standalone Magnets to be able to address that particular provision within this agreement. So next year for the 2015-2016 it's to identify schools where we can have school-within-a-school programs and start with 200 or 300 kids where we could have that kind of space in our elementary schools.

Comm. Irving: I do want to just say to your point that that money could be funded with the \$12 million surplus that is earmarked for capital improvements as well. That money has to be spent at some point in time and that's the only time you can spend it if you're going to do any improvements to any infrastructure within the schools. If you're going to pull it from somewhere in the budget it probably should come from that \$12 million.

Comm. Martinez: That was restricted earlier in the year.

Comm. Irving: I think it would be helpful when you present this back to the Board that there is a map of some level created that seeks to group the schools in year one and year two and letting us know here is a school identified as a particular Magnet school in this area. I think a visual aid to accompany this would be really important. The next question I have goes back to cost and it is about transportation. I think that we're being very presumptuous at this point in time about putting together a program not knowing our transportation future and not having stated the appropriation for transportation given the issues we've had with transportation over the last few months. We can certainly put this program in place, but let's just say if we don't get that \$6 million that we screwed up on and presented to the county that automatically puts us in a hole. That's \$6 million of the \$74 million that we had now goes to \$80 million that we have to figure out.

Dr. Evans: That's a problem.

Comm. Irving: There are a lot of variables.

Dr. Evans: Exactly. There are. No question about it. That would be a problem.

Comm. Kerr: Under Controlled Choice the burden of transportation would not fall on the district.

Comm. Irving: For the Magnets in particular even if it's three different schools you're talking about bussing kids from all over the city to three different schools. I have no clue or idea at this stage what that may cost us. That might be the difference of an extra \$250,000 in transportation costs.

Dr. Evans: We could do some cost projections on that.

Comm. Irving: I think it's only responsible for us to do so.

Comm. Kerr: That needs to happen. I think you should also present the cost projections with the costs that you're expecting to go into that school also.

Comm. Irving: The other question I had was about the launch date. The expectation for this program, at least for the first three Magnets, is to roll in the next academic year. Correct?

Dr. Evans: Correct.

Comm. Irving: That means this plan would have to come back to this Board with a full program, curriculum, and budget for each school. Each school would have to be in next year's budget and then there would have to be additional documentation in your plan for what these schools would look like. I just want to be transparent about the fact that that is a tight window to squeeze. It's not our role and job to tell you how to squeeze that window, but it is our role and job to ensure that that window when it's completed is thorough and effective.

Dr. Evans: One the slides said we would report of the Board. When we come back to you in January that information will be there.

Comm. Irving: I want to go back to the budget because each time you mentioned a section it's ringing in my ear about impact to staff from the budget we really need to think about. This in some way will affect the operation in our central registration department and the work that they do. We will have to probably hire additional central registration staff. With three Magnets that may not bite the bullet, but if we expand beyond three and then go to Controlled Choice schools...

Comm. Kerr: I think you need to use the word 'reassign' some folks.

Comm. Irving: To me that would be the only fiscally responsible thing to do given the budget realities of where we are in hiring additional staff.

Comm. Kerr: I say we assign some folks to do the job. It's going to catch up with us, Chris. In my judgment we have enough people here that we can find to reassign them to do that central registration.

Comm. Irving: There are greater budget implications here than just having a school. There's impact on transportation, staffing in central registration, and the ability to hire and have quality faculty. Case in point, if you have a theater program at the school,

how many faculty members that we have in this district are certified in theater and arts? I have no clue. We may have to hire someone in order to fill that role. I just think the budget when it's presented to us has to be encompassing of how these schools are going to be funded, transportation costs, and the staffing in running central registration. We talked about the application process and that would clearly be run by the folks in central registration. I would just hope that we learn from our lessons in high school and follow that process as thoroughly as possible. I think that if you ask some parents about the first and second choice for high schools some would say they're a little more disappointed. I know many folks who didn't get their first choice and their second choice and ended up at Eastside and Kennedy and are pissed off. I just want to be very clear that we are in essence creating a system where we're creating competition in our district. I think it's good, but the fallback to that is if a school only fits 300 we have 400 kids to apply we're going to have a lot of pissed off parents who didn't get their baby into the school of their choice because of the lottery system. Again, that's inherent in the system. I talked about the breaking out of schools. This problem goes without saying, but I just want to make sure I'm clear. If a school is full in Controlled Choice and a parent wanted to move their child to that school they have to stay in their home school I assume.

Dr. Evans: Correct. Or they can request to be sent to a different school.

Comm. Irving: Don't we do that now?

Dr. Evans: On a very limited basis we do it now.

Comm. Hodges: I have a different set of issues. Dr. Evans, I don't want anything I'm about to say to imply that I don't like or am trying to discourage this program. In following up with the President's questioning, those are some major concerns of mine. Number one, cost projections should be presented to the Board before the program goes anywhere.

Dr. Evans: You'll get them in January.

Comm. Hodges: We need to have a clear idea of what the costs are and all aspects of proposed programs must be considered in the cost projections. That's particularly concerning given our fiscal cliff situation. I'm going to be very cautious because I don't want to see reallocation of resources that will diminish us in other areas. That's what I'm afraid may happen if we have stuck to a very finite budget. I want to see benchmarks toward progress. I don't want to see at the end of the year that we're here or we're not here. I really want to see some benchmarks that will cause me to allay my concerns about being where we need to be in the timeframe that's required for schools to open. We opened up high school themes that were not fully prepared. In fact, we still don't fully address their themes and I'm really concerned that we don't carry that out to the elementary level too. The themes of the Magnet schools in particular are going to have to be cross-curricular completely. There's going to be an attendant cost with that that I don't know whether we're prepared to bear. I'm expecting that the Magnet schools actually be Magnet schools and that their themes are fully immersed across the bigger content. I really want to be assured of that before we move forward. If these schools are effective, and I'm hoping that they are, my concern is what you're going to do with the high school level to keep those kids in the district. In recent discussions I recall that Tech is undergoing another expansion and I believe that Ascension is supposed to open up some charter schools in our town. They were already given the go-ahead. So we're going to have to present a product educationally that's competitive. We don't have that now. Since there doesn't appear to be any limits on what Tech can

do in terms of snatching our kids away – and I understand why parents make those choices – I need to see a plan on how we address and significantly improve our high schools so that they're far more competitive and how you plan to do that with reduced funding. I'm really interested in seeing that. You handed this out and what concerned me after I read this very carefully was the talk about vouchers and charter schools. All these authors are proponents of charter school programs and voucher programs. I was hoping that this was not a forerunner of what we're trying to... You presented this material as backing of what you plan to do and there is not a mixed group here that says there's a variety of thinking.

Dr. Evans: I'm familiar with them. I actually know some of them. That article actually summarizes a lot of other publications. That's why I chose that one. There are other publications, but I was looking for a synthesis of research on Choice. Everything I had read to update my knowledge with regards to Choice seem to come together in that one piece. That's the only reason I gave you that one piece.

Comm. Hodges: Almost all these people are linked and tied to the voucher and charter program, almost all of them. This was a concern for me. I'm going to stop there because I have more to say about the curriculum when we have our discussions on the curriculum. I am concerned about making sure that there is complete immersion of this themes throughout the curriculum and that they are at the standard in terms of teaching the Common Core model.

Comm. Irving: Are there any other questions?

## **REPORT OF STATE DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT**

Dr. Evans: I have no additional items to comment on or report.

## **PUBLIC COMMENTS AND SPECIAL SESSION ON POLICIES FOR SECOND READING**

**It was moved by Comm. Martinez, 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.**

No speakers.

**It was moved by Comm. Martinez, 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.**

## **RESOLUTIONS FOR A VOTE AT THE WORKSHOP MEETING**

### **Resolution No. 1**

BE IT RESOLVED, that the list of bills and claims dated November 25, 2014, beginning with vendor number 86 and ending with vendor number 799500, in the amount of \$9,637,876.61, to be approved for payment; and

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

**It was moved by Comm. Martinez, seconded by Comm. Cleaves that Resolution No. 1 be adopted. On roll call all members voted as follows:**

Comm. Cleaves: Yes, but I abstain from anything having to do with my name.

Comm. Hodges: I abstain from anything having to do with my name and no on everything else.

Comm. Kerr: Yes, but I abstain from anything having to do with my name.

Comm. Martinez: Yes, but I abstain from anything having to do with my name and anything pertaining to the NJCDC.

Comm. Rivera: Yes, but I recuse myself from anything having to do with the NJCDC.

Comm. Simmons: Yes.

Comm. Irving: Yes, but I abstain from anything having to do with my name or the County of Passaic.

**The motion carried.**

## **Resolution No. 2**

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

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

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

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

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

**Total Number of Conferences: 25**  
**Total Cost: \$14,422.89**

STAFF MEMBER	CONFERENCE	DATE	AMOUNT
*Marguerite Sullivan	NJAFPA Fall Training Institute	November 19, 2014	\$125.00 (registration)
Director of Federal Programs	Eatontown, NJ		
*Irene DelRosso	NJAFPA Fall Training Institute	November 19, 2014	\$149.00 (registration)
Supervisor of NCLB	Eatontown, NJ		
Jose Mantilla	The Detection of Fraudulent Purchasing Practices	December 3, 2014	\$152.67 (registration, transportation)
Purchasing Agent	Neptune, NJ		

Neville Williams	The Detection of Fraudulent Purchasing Practices	December 3, 2014	\$152.67 (registration, transportation)
Supervisor of Purchasing	Neptune, NJ		
Darryl Black	Rutgers University Behavioral Health Care The Traumatic Loss Coalition for Youth	December 4, 2014	\$95.00 (registration)
SAC/Don Bosco	Somerset, NJ		
Stephanie Roberts	Rutgers University Behavioral Health Care The Traumatic Loss Coalition for Youth	December 4, 2014	\$95.00 (registration)
SAC/Eastside High School	Somerset, NJ		
Amod Field	International Baccalaureate Orientation Seminar	December 6, 2014	\$487.04 (registration, transportation, lodging, meals)
Vice Principal/International H.S.	Edgewood, MD		
Catherine Forfia-Dion	International Baccalaureate Orientation Seminar	December 6, 2014	\$487.04 (registration, transportation, lodging, meals)
IB Coordinator/International H.S.	Edgewood, MD		
Susana Peron	International Baccalaureate Orientation Seminar	December 6, 2014	\$487.04 (registration, transportation, lodging, meals)
Assistant Superintendent	Edgewood, MD		
Robina Puryear-Castro	International Baccalaureate Orientation Seminar	December 6, 2014	\$487.04 (registration, transportation, lodging, meals)
Principal/International H.S.	Edgewood, MD		
Christopher Wirkmaa	International Baccalaureate Orientation Seminar	December 6, 2014	\$487.04 (registration, transportation, lodging, meals)
Teacher/International H.S.	Edgewood, MD		
W. Scott Durham	National Athletic Directors Conference	December 12-16, 2014	\$625.00 (registration)
Supervisor of Athletics/JFK	National Harbor, MD		
Laurie Newell	5 <sup>th</sup> Annual WPU Educational Technology Conference	December 12, 2014	\$195.00 (registration)
Chief Reform & Innovations Officer	Wayne, NJ		
Tyesha Hilbert	NJSIAA and Legal One	December 16, 2014	\$150.00 (registration)
Coordinator of Culture & Climate	Robbinsville, NJ		
Boris Zaydel	NJSIAA and Legal One	December 16, 2014	\$150.00 (registration)
Paralegal/Legal Department	Robbinsville, NJ		
Lisa Aaononsen	The Flipped Math Classroom: Practical Strategies to Successfully "Flip" Math Instruction	December 18, 2014	\$229.00 (registration)
Teacher/BTMF @ JFK	Newark, NJ		
Rahmann Brown	Handle With Care Training	January 12-14, 2015	\$690.00 (registration)
Teacher/Great Falls Academy	Totowa, NJ		
Anthony Cavanna	NJSBA Conference	January 29-30, 2015	\$715.80 (registration, transportation, lodging, meals)
Assistant Superintendent	Atlantic City, NJ		
Gregg Festa	NJASA Conference	January 29-30, 2015	\$715.80 (registration, transportation, lodging, meals)
Principal/PANTHER Academy	Atlantic City, NJ		



Vivian Gaines Principal/SOIT @ EHS	NJASA Conference Atlantic City, NJ	January 29-30, 2015	\$715.80 (registration, transportation, lodging, meals)
Pamela Powell Principal/BTMF @ JFK	NJASA Conference Atlantic City, NJ	January 29-30, 2015	\$607.00 (registration, lodging, meals)
Amod Field Vice Principal/International H.S.	International Baccalaureate Category I Workshop Pittsburgh, PA	March 13-16, 2015	\$1,855.65 (registration, transportation, lodging, meals)
Catherine Forfia-Dion IB Coordinator/International H.S.	International Baccalaureate Category I Workshop Pittsburgh, PA	March 13-16, 2015	\$1,855.65 (registration, transportation, lodging, meals)
Christopher Wirkmaa Teacher/International H.S.	International Baccalaureate Category I Workshop Pittsburgh, PA	March 13-16, 2015	\$1,855.65 (registration, transportation, lodging, meals)
Virginia Galizia Principal/Alexander Hamilton Acad.	ASCD Conference Nashville, TN	June 24-29, 2015	\$858.00 (registration)

**\*For Ratification**

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

**Resolution No. 3**

**Paterson Extended Learning Opportunity School**

WHEREAS, The Paterson Public School District's Mission is "To prepare each student to be successful in the institution of higher education of their choosing and in their chosen career", and;

WHEREAS, The Paterson Public School District is committed to addressing the high school drop-outs educational needs by implementing an academic program that will assist students to acquire a High School Diploma, and;

WHEREAS, The Paterson School District in accordance with State mandates, District policy, Bright Futures: The Strategic Plan for Paterson School District Priorities, Goals, & Strategies, Priority I: Effective Academic Programs: Goal I: To Increase Student Achievement, Extended learning opportunities, Goal 3: Improve Graduation Rate, Reduce Dropout Rate and;

WHEREAS, The Paterson Public School District is dedicated to building partnerships with the City of Paterson and the community at-large, Priority III: Family and Community Engagement, Goal 4: Partnerships with Community Organizations, Agencies and Institutions and;

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Paterson Board of Education approves the Paterson Public School District's creation of a Paterson Extended Learning Opportunity School, by

forming a partnership with the Mayor of the City of Paterson to increase the graduation rates for high school dropouts. The program will provide dropout students with the opportunity to complete the New Jersey State Department of Education and the Paterson Public School Districts course requirements for receiving a high school diploma and prepare students to attend a post-secondary educational school. The core elements of the Paterson Extended Learning Opportunity School will be the implementation of Plato Learning, an on line course accrual credit recovery program which provides instruction to adult learners, by on-site Highly Qualified Teachers, in a blended learning environment. Since the school will provide flexible and internet access, students will have multiple opportunities to take and complete required courses and, thereby, satisfy their graduation requirements. The total cost of the Paterson Extended Learning Opportunity School will be \$142,625.00. The program will be located at 77 Ellison Street, Paterson, New Jersey; a site provided by the Mayor of the City of Paterson, New Jersey and will begin providing services to the student drop out population during the 2014-2015 Academic School Year.

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

Comm. Irving: I was under the presumption that we were going to get this back when there was a much more expanded program. Correct me if I'm wrong, but the curriculum was supposed to be there and there was supposed to be a much more budget breakdown. Dr. Evans, the budget as I looked at it was vague by any stretch of the imagination.

Dr. Evans: There was an item that I left at the last meeting that should have provided additional information.

Comm. Irving: It's the same information that was in there before. The only additional information that has been provided is a narrative by Dr. Douge. The narrative is helpful, but when we had this conversation before I thought we agreed to...

Dr. Evans: To provide the additional information.

Comm. Irving: Somebody help me out.

Comm. Rivera: I'll help you out. It was very specific. What I asked and what other members agreed to was that you provided a budget that only listed personnel. When it came down to the other expenses you indicated to be determined. We wanted to know if we're planning to have a school we want to see a plan. It could be a little bit more or a little less, but at least we want to know the things that you need to buy. It's not an open checkbook.

Dr. Evans: I do remember that discussion.

Comm. Rivera: We were submitted the same budget. Nothing changed.

Comm. Irving: You can't say 'supplies and furniture to be determined.' It would just be irresponsible of us to approve this program. My perception is that this is still not vetted and ready even with the narrative that Dr. Douge presented.

Comm. Hodges: My concern was about the teachers and what the teacher would be doing. The state is monitoring the students' performance but it didn't really talk a great deal about what kind of instructions or elements they would be adding to this.

Otherwise it's still going to be a virtual school. So I need to make sure there's going to be some sort of classroom instruction that addresses the students' needs. It tells the students, "You're having problems with this point. Let's schedule some time to help work you through that issue." That's the issue I'm hung up on. You do have teachers in there. But other than monitoring, which was stated in there, what are they going to do to make sure the kids are progressing and getting through any educational hump that they're facing?

Comm. Irving: The narrative also was not clear on where we're finding the money in the budget. We've got to get tighter on our financial policies. I'm even surprised we could be allowed to go through without pressing everyone's hand on where this money is going to come from. This is a program that lets us expand with \$350,000, but from where?

Comm. Rivera: When he certified the funds it's right there.

Dr. Evans: The students would generate the funds. We get a per-student allocation for each student.

Comm. Irving: So we'd be reimbursed.

Comm. Rivera: Yes.

Dr. Anthony Cavanna: You covered a lot of areas. The first one is supplies and materials to be determined. We're in the budget process now for the year 2015-2016. The intent is to put together a detailed budget for the year 2015-2016. For this school year what we intended to do was work with our buildings and grounds people and identify furniture that we could use in the interim until we had money in the budget. NJCDC has offered 18 computers. I think they got them from Hewlett Packard. They were donated to NJCDC so we're in the process of evaluating them to see if we can use them. As far as furniture, materials, and supplies we probably won't need that this year because of the computers that we're getting and because we have some furniture in storage. That is a valid question but we may not need any funds this year. As far as Dr. Hodges' question about the curriculum, the curriculum, as it says in the Board action, is Plato, which is the credit recovery curriculum that we've used for years. All the students would take credit recovery and use that curriculum. That's what would be used in the virtual school. Dr. Evans referred to a rubric. If the Board didn't get that I'd be glad to provide that to the Board.

Dr. Evans: It's in there.

Dr. Cavanna: The rubric pretty much describes the number of contacts that the students will have. Remember, this is for students who have already dropped out for the most part and are close to graduating and would like to get a Paterson diploma rather than a GED. These students will be coming in to work with the teachers who we have not identified yet a number of times. When the students are online on the Plato system we're going to track their hours. So if we see that they're on track we may only meet with them a few times a week and for the students that are not on track those students may come four or five times a week. We're going to put out postings for the staff. A lot of it is going to be done on off hours, maybe on Saturday and maybe in the early evening because these students are not traditional students. We're going to identify teachers that can help them in the subject areas that they need help in. I think that the business administrator worked with us to identify the account numbers for the budget. The principal and the secretary were in the 2014 budget. The security is the

thing that was not budgeted for but we may not need the security depending on if we use the Ellison Avenue address. If we don't use the Ellison Avenue address this year and plan to do that next year then we won't need the security at all.

Comm. Irving: But all that is still so ambiguous. You can't expect us to okay that without you telling us we decided on this location and we have confirmed the NJCDC to donate these supplies. There are still some important pieces that are just up in the air. I just don't feel comfortable saying go for it and figure it out as you work through. Then I think we lose the opportunity to still provide essential oversight as we move forward.

Comm. Rivera: I hear a lot of maybe and we have to be sure of what we're doing. For example, I wasn't even aware that we're not sure about the facility that we're going to use. Even after we have the facility we need to know if we need to make any modifications to that facility to accommodate the kids. We need to have a plan in place. We need to analyze everything that we need. We cannot say we might need equipment or a desk or we may not. Even with the computers if they already said they were going to give us those computers let's get a letter from them and pass the resolution to accept those things. Let's do our due diligence to make sure that we're looking at everything. We approve this today and you guys come back and say you're going to spend \$400,000. I'm not saying that's going to happen, but let's say we're going to spend \$400,000. We're already in. Then you guys are going to have to approve \$400,000. We want to see a plan. Before we decided to do anything here we want to see a plan. It's just like everything you do in life.

Comm. Hodges: The questions I had written some of them have been covered. It says here on page two teachers under high school program design will monitor and support student progress online and course completion. It doesn't say they're going to teach. That's my issue. Is there a role to respond to students and say, "You're here, you're having problems with this, I will teach you x, y, and z." Does that mean that you're going to have to have a math teacher and a physics teacher? That's why I'm trying to understand. What happens if this child has a problem with one of the number of subjects? Do we have the certified staff to handle that subject? Or is it a teacher or body who's there to monitor the child's progress and acting more or less as a guidance counselor as opposed to being an instructor? That's what I'm looking for. I don't want to have this teacher online saying we're pushing kids through credit recovery programs and I want to make sure that's not true. I need to be given evidence that it's not true. I'd like to see this Plato program but the bottom line is at the end of the program can that student take an SAT test and read effectively? Whatever it is, what does that give me at the end of the program? I'm not interested in their self-test. I'm interested in what standardized evidence we have that this child can function at the next level, whatever that may be for them. That's what I'm looking for. What role is that teacher performing in that process other than just saying, "You're here. What areas of difficulty do you have? Can I address that with you?" Do you have a problem with mechanics or statics? Do you have a problem with optics? That's what I want to know.

Dr. Cavanna: The uniqueness of this program is that if a student just needs to have a computer terminal to work at there will be staff available to supervise the student. They can work at home too because it's a virtual school. But if the principal and the staff identify that the student needs help in language arts or math they'll make sure that the properly certified teacher is available to that student. They'll monitor the progress the student is making online. They'll monitor the number of hours the student spends online. Then individually they will create an individual plan for that student so that the student will then have a prescription. If it's identified the student will come in to meet with a math teacher for three hours on those three days and get the kind of help that

they need. If it's an English teacher it will be an English teacher that's there. It depends on the courses that the student needs in order to meet the requirements. In other words, it's what you were talking about before. You want the students to achieve mastery, not just spend the hours on the machine to get the credit.

Comm. Hodges: That's basically what I'm looking for, that kind of information that assures me that they will have math. I don't know whether they cover social studies and all that other stuff.

Dr. Cavanna: It depends where the student is deficient. Usually it's the core subjects, science, social studies, and math.

Comm. Hodges: I just need to be assured that complement of teachers is going to be available and they're going to be teaching at some point.

Dr. Cavanna: The posting we want to put out has all subject areas that way we have a pool to draw upon depending on what the students' needs are. We're not going to have all these teachers hanging around. We're going to invite the teachers in based on what the principal and the staff decides is best for the students in collaboration with the students.

Comm. Hodges: I need that kind of information. Again, I'm not interested in a virtual program. I really am not.

Dr. Cavanna: It's more of a blended approach.

Comm. Hodges: It would be blended if the teachers were actually giving regular instruction.

Dr. Cavanna: I think that's the uniqueness of it. Some of those students will get actual instruction because we want them to achieve mastery. If a student is having problems in science or mathematics they may have to come in and not use the machines and work with a teacher four times a week until they're on track. Then maybe the next week they go to three times a week and then the next week two times a week and more time on the computer. But Plato is the tool which the Board has already approved. That's the curriculum so that they can recover the credit.

Comm. Hodges: All I'm really looking for is for that to be spelled out.

Dr. Cavanna: I can write that up for you. Dr. Douge and I can do it.

Comm. Kerr: Dr. Cavanna, the total cost that will be borne by the district is \$142,625. Is that so?

Dr. Cavanna: Right, plus the principal salary, the secretary salary, and the security.

Comm. Kerr: So we have to change something on this because part of the action says the total cost of the Paterson extended learning opportunity school will be \$142,625. So if we were to vote on this it means that's what we would be voting on.

Dr. Cavanna: I know where you're going. This is based on 16 students. That's what we have registered right now. Once the program is up and running we might have 30 students. That number will change and there will be more revenue coming in. The

program is basically self-sustaining as long as we maintain a certain number of students.

Comm. Kerr: So this \$142,625 takes into account the full salaries of the program?

Dr. Cavanna: You're absolutely right. I didn't want to change the initial budget that I gave you. One of the questions from the curriculum meeting was what is the total cost? You're absolutely right. We added the principal salary, the secretary salary, and whatever the security would be. That would be the total cost for this year and then next year we're going to give you the full-blown budget because it will be different next year.

Comm. Kerr: I understand what you're saying, but for us to vote now we would be voting on \$142,625.

Dr. Cavanna: The action says plus the principal salary.

Comm. Martinez: I think for the sake of this evening this horse is dead. We don't need to beat it anymore. I think what we can perhaps do is ask to withdraw the motion and put together the components that the Commissioners are asking for. If you can get it to us hopefully a week before the regular meeting we'll review it and any questions we can do via email or if we need to gather. Then we can vote on it come the regular meeting. I will withdraw the motion.

Ms. Shafer: Let me just say that when we develop school budgets the personnel is never included in the school budget. Personnel is a separate item. When our schools have budgets it's all other items but not personnel. This isn't new additional personnel. This is existing personnel already budgeted for, already folks in the district. I just want to make that clarification.

Comm. Kerr: I understand that you're not going outside looking for new folks. But in reality it is a new structure. So we just need to be clear as to the cost that is associated with its operation, staffing, so on and so forth. That's all I'm asking for. I don't want to hold back the program. If I'm voting for something I need to be clear on what I'm voting for, the numbers are correct and I'm clear with the numbers.

Comm. Martinez: Correct. I think everyone feels the same way. I think the safe thing to do would be to ask for the information, get it in a timely manner, and we can vote it. This way we don't delay it at the upcoming meeting.

**PULLED**

#### **Resolution No. 4**

INTRODUCTION: The Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) consists of three section – Critical Reading, Mathematics, and Writing with a total maximum combined score of 2400 at 800 possible points per section. An SAT benchmark score of 1550 is used to determine the likelihood of college success as determined by students' initial enrollment in a 4-year college as well as their likelihood to achieve higher GPAs and remain in college past the first year; and

WHEREAS, the Paterson Public School District is committed to ensuring that students are ready for college and career; and

WHEREAS, the SAT is a predictor of student readiness for college-level work and remains one of the criteria used for college acceptance; and

WHEREAS, the 2014 SAT Performance Summary Reports indicate that even though students' mean scores in Critical Reading and Mathematics did increase by 3 points each, the scores for the Writing section decreased by 6 points and the combined 1120 mean score for Paterson Public School SAT takers remains significantly below recommended college readiness levels; and

WHEREAS, Kaplan Learning Services offers trained SAT instructors who provide content review and academic skill building in Language Arts and Math, as well as SAT strategy knowledge to enable students to perform their best on the SAT; and now therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Paterson Board of Education approves the hiring of Kaplan K12 Learning Services, LLC to offer SAT instruction to Class of 2015 and Class of 2016 students. The KAPLAN SAT program is to service six (6) classes (up to 25 students each, 150 students total) to be held at five (5) designated district high school sites (Eastside, Rosa Parks, and academy site (HARP or Panther), International/Garrett Morgan, and John F. Kennedy High School) for eight (8) days in December (dates TBD) at an amount not to exceed \$30,480.00 inclusive of the cost for SAT instructional resources for all participants.

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

Comm. Hodges: Is this in the budget?

Dr. Cavanna: We identified money in my budget to fund this. In my budget we have money for credit recovery and services to students beyond the school day. We identified money in that budget to pay for this.

Comm. Hodges: Was there a reallocation that took place?

Dr. Cavanna: If you remember last year we did this for the first time and it wasn't budgeted. During the budget process Unit 3 got separated. It was a new unit that was created so that money was put into a stipend account and that's where this money came from for the SAT program.

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

### **Resolution No. 5**

WHEREAS, creating and sustaining partnerships with community organizations, agencies and institutions is Goal 4, Priority 3 of the Bright Futures Strategic Plan for Paterson Public Schools; and

WHEREAS, the District seeks to create partnerships with community organizations that promote academic achievement while fostering the social, emotional, and cultural development of students; and

WHEREAS, the District has decided to partner with the American-Arab Civic Organization, Inc. in order to enrich students' understanding of Arabic language and culture through extra-curricular programming; and

WHEREAS, the enrichment program will operate at School 9 on Saturdays, from November 2014 through June 2015, and will serve up to 150 District students during the 2014-2015 school year; and

WHEREAS, only students who are enrolled in District schools will be eligible to participate in the program; and now therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, that the District approves the agreement with the American-Arab Civic Organization, Inc. to operate a Saturday enrichment program at School 9, for a total annual cost not to exceed \$12,380.00 during the 2014-2015 school year.

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

Comm. Kerr: I think we had a big discussion the last time regarding this and I did not get the resolution to our action. So it's kind of strange that it just popped up here. I just need to hear what we're going to do and how we're going to approach this because we did not have that discussion.

Comm. Hodges: There were a number of issues.

Comm. Kerr: There were a number of issues regarding this.

Comm. Hodges: Will there be other students besides Arab language students? There was this whole management structure. Was the conflict resolved? I know the principal didn't want to assume control of the program.

Comm. Irving: The other question I had was just about the background checks on all the staff and volunteers who are going to be there. I'm okay with everything until I know that all the background checks on staff and volunteers have been done. Just knowing the history of some folks in that organization I'm aware some people have a criminal history and if they do they can't be in the school. They cannot.

Mr. Kemper McDowell: As a condition of an initial opening attempt we told the organization that they have to have instructors and volunteers participate in background checks. At this point all the instructors have gone through a background check via the volunteer program. They fill out a volunteer packet and they are checked because of HR.

Comm. Irving: All the volunteers have done the same thing?

Mr. McDowell: As I'm aware of we're just dealing with the instructors. If there's someone at the door passing out something once we're aware of anyone that's going to do additional work they have to be background checked before they're allowed in the building.

Comm. Irving: But we also ask volunteers in our school programs to go through background checks. I love Teddy Martinez and he does amazing work. But Teddy can't do work in our schools because of his history. If we're going to be consistent we have to be consistent. That program in particular just doesn't have staff. They have lots of volunteers who come in and support the program as well and help supervise it. Those background checks have to be had.



Mr. McDowell: Our definition of volunteer is someone that's going to have access to the children on an ongoing basis without supervision. For example, a teacher that has access to a student with no supervisor around versus a guest speaker who may come in who's not background checked who's going to present a workshop or something like that. There will be a Paterson certified supervisor there. That's how we distinguish. But if there's someone at the front door who has constant access to children we're requiring that they're background checked.

Comm. Irving: Have they supplied that information to you all?

Mr. McDowell: They provided me with all the volunteers and I think they're mostly instructors and anyone who plays a role with teaching kids we walk them in and our staff walked them through the packet process.

Comm. Irving: I'm not comfortable approving this. I'm not voting for it until I see the background check report. I'm sorry.

Ms. Shafer: Let me clear up a couple of things. We have been meeting with them to go over its going to be very different. Instead of them getting \$32,000 they're getting \$12,000. They will pay the staff and that's all they will do. If they need supplies and materials, they'll tell us what they need and we'll put the requisitions in. They will not get that lump sum of money. We will have a certified Paterson employee administrator on staff every Saturday and they're on staff for oversight of the entire program. Everyone will sign in and if you sign in as an adult and we don't have a background check you will be escorted out. If you are not a Paterson student they will be checking Infinite Campus to see if they're Paterson students. If they're not Paterson students they cannot attend the program. So we have tightened it up. Everybody's going to sign in. The children will sign in. The volunteers will sign in. The instructors will sign in. Everyone will sign in and we will get all that information on Monday. On Saturday they will be checking folks who come to volunteer. If you're not on the list that we have the background checks you're not staying.

Comm. Irving: Do we have a roster of the kids they've signed up already?

Ms. Shafer: Yes.

Comm. Irving: And we've checked all those addresses and all those children?

Mr. McDowell: Yes.

Comm. Irving: Were there folks on the list that were not Paterson residents?

Mr. McDowell: There were a few. We went through the process of roster conversations. Maybe out of 150 students there were maybe eight that were not registered. So we did tell them that we would be checking to make sure that everyone that participates is registered in the Paterson Schools and in addition we will be monitoring the program over the series of weeks to make sure there's no ghosting where there's a roster of 150 students and there's only actually 50 students participating. Those are some of the things that's the on board administrator will manage to guarantee proper implementation.

Comm. Kerr: This \$12,000 is from January to June?

Ms. Shafer: Yes, January to June.

Comm. Kerr: Would this represent a reduction in their allocation? I think it was \$32,000.

Ms. Shafer: Yes, it is a reduction.

Comm. Kerr: Considering the scope of the program will this be adequate to fulfill all the requirements? Is it adequate enough?

Ms. Shafer: There are only 24 Saturdays from the time they're starting until when they're ending. If it's approved tonight they can start Saturday. If not, when it's approved they'll start that following Saturday.

Mr. McDowell: We've appropriated enough money to account for instructors, materials, and a couple of field trip options. They expressed interest in going to Ellis Island and stuff like that and some snacks. However, we're only going to allocate to them in pocket the \$12,000 similar to what we did in the past. All the other expenses are in-kind, but we did appropriate that amount of money. They'll give us the materials to be purchased and we'll requisition it out of our department and make the purchases ourselves. We're limiting the amount of money that is just passed over so we put greater controls in.

Comm. Kerr: I understand that, but because we're splitting the year into two and it's \$32,000 I would say...

Mr. McDowell: No, it doesn't come to \$32,000. We did properly adjust everything.

Comm. Kerr: Oh, you made some adjustment.

Mr. McDowell: That figure usually accounts for September to June.

Comm. Hodges: The issue with the two principals who don't want to work with each other, have they resolved their issue? Two principal groups were in conflict.

Ms. Shafer: Yes, they've resolved. We're having a meeting tomorrow with the district administrators. We met with them today to let them know what the expectation is and we're meeting tomorrow with the Arab Civic Organization to let them know what the expectations are and what these individuals are going to be responsible for.

Comm. Hodges: Part of this was supposed to be teaching the Arabic language. That's still going to be functional? Will there be some sort of measure of progress of the students?

Ms. Shafer: Yes. They have indicated that there will be oral exams and written exams. They have indicated benchmarks.

Comm. Kerr: Let me quickly ask both of you. Are you comfortable with the program where it's at right now and the structure that's built around it?

Ms. Shafer: Yes because I met with two administrators from the district who are going to be my eyes and ears every Saturday. They know to call me the minute there's a problem.

Comm. Kerr: You're comfortable, Mr. McDowell?

Mr. McDowell: I understand if there's any major moving away from the contract language then we'll have a problem with the program. With the addition of the administrative we're taking our managerial philosophy and we're putting it on top of the program so that should make it smoother.

Comm. Rivera: Did the award that we provided them last year include any in-kind contributions to them? Were they providing the lunches for the kids? Were they absorbing the expense for the field trips? The reason I'm asking you this question is because it's like we disguise it in a way. Physically we're only taking \$12,380 to give to them physically. We're cutting them a check for that amount. The concern here wasn't about money because we try to do what's best for the kids. We have other concerns. But for them to accept it I was just wondering how come they're going to take a cut from \$32,000 to \$12,380. I know it's half of the year, but if we're going to spend \$10,800 on lunches, which is just if the kids are going to be there, that's something they picked up when we used to give them the \$32,000. Is that correct?

Ms. Shafer: We used to give them the whole \$32,000 and they made the kids bring their lunch.

Comm. Rivera: Got it.

Ms. Shafer: But we gave them the whole \$32,000. What we're saying now is because we are concerned and we want to make sure that the finances are on the up-and-up then we are only giving them the \$12,000 and anything else they need they come to us. Before, we gave them \$32,000. I need accounting for that \$32,000 if I'm only giving them \$12,000. That's just for salaries.

Comm. Kerr: So we are prepared to do more than what you have listed here.

Comm. Irving: In the future you're talking about.

Mr. McDowell: You mean the \$12,000?

Ms. Shafer: More than the \$12,000? Yes. For the \$32,000 the kids are going to be able to get lunch from now until June and we've put in a couple of field trips.

Comm. Kerr: I understand that, but what we are voting on right now is a number of \$12,380 and it's for six months. Within the six months what if they need more than the \$12,000 in terms of services they provide? Is it okay for them to come to you and say, "Ms. Shafer, we need 'x' amount. We don't have the money but this is our need." What would you do with that?

Ms. Shafer: We have projected out the \$12,000 is only for the salary component. That's all we're giving them. If they want more money for salaries the answer is no.

Comm. Kerr: Not for salaries.

Dr. Evans: Mr. Kerr, let me try to explain what I think I understand you're saying. The \$12,000 is for salaries only, but there are other things they may need such as supplies or something else for the program that's not represented in that \$12,000. Even though we're not going to hand it to them, you want to see that figure included in the budget.

Comm. Kerr: Right.

Comm. Hodges: What's the limit?

Comm. Irving: May I interject. Flavio has brought up a really good point. I know the salaries that we have appropriated are \$12,380. But the in-kind contributions tally up to be about \$15,000 as well. The total program that we're expending in the district is \$27,000 and that's just for six months. If you double this number for next year and you go the full academic year they're going to go higher than the \$32,000 we've given them. That's the point he's making and that's a concern I have. Again, I think we're being extremely generous here and I think we need to be very careful of the precedent we're setting. Essentially in the full calendar they'll get more than what they got before. In a fiscal year we've identified at the beginning of this meeting that times are rough.

Mr. McDowell: It's not a one-to-one rollover every year. They understand that they have the allocation of \$32,000 and they made their decision for this year even given the shorter calendar that they want to provide certain services. So those services came up to the \$27,000.

Comm. Rivera: If we set the precedent of providing those other things for them next year they and the parents are going to expect the same thing. We're going to have to provide the \$32,000 plus the in-kind that we're providing them right now. I just want to make it clear. If you guys think that's alright then we vote on it. But what I'm saying is we just have to make that clear. Next year they're going to expect that also. They're probably going to want the \$32,000 that's allocated to them on a yearly basis plus the in-kind that we just added. Correct me if I'm wrong, it wasn't part of the award to them in the past.

Mr. McDowell: It was. It's not reflected in this document, but in the contract the line is at \$32,000. At the beginning of the year it started out that way. However, once we made the decision to not give them \$32,000 in cash and then say, "You guys and gals spend it how you feel and give us a budget and a spending plan." So we made the decision this year to minimize the amount of money that flowed. It was probably better for them to manage giving their teachers their weekly stipends. Then we felt that it would be in everyone's best interest if we managed the materials, snacks, and field trips. Therefore, there was no need to give them the money for that. What we asked them to do is to give us what they want to purchase, materials, vendors, requisitions, admissions and those kinds of things. The services are similar, if not the same, but we just minimized what we feel is any kind of risk to the district.

Comm. Irving: We're saying that in years past we would cut them a check for \$32,000 and then we'd also have in-kind services that added on to that. Am I correct?

Mr. McDowell: No.

Comm. Irving: You two over there said yes and I know we did because I know we cut them a check for \$32,000.

Ms. Shafer: We always gave them \$32,000 and with the \$32,000 they paid the teachers, the administrators, they did what they want and we didn't give them a nickel after that.

Comm. Irving: Correct.

Ms. Shafer: We gave them the facility. That was it. That was our in-kind, the facility. That's all we did. This year based on conversations we had with the Board and some

other things that happened we said we're not giving them \$32,000 to do what they wish. We're going to monitor what they do and we're only giving them \$12,000 and that is to pay the staff. The rest they submit to us what the request is and then we will do the requisitions and approve it.

Comm. Rivera: This organization next year will want their \$32,000 and they're probably going to want that in-kind contribution again.

Mr. McDowell: That's a speculation.

Comm. Rivera: It's a speculation, but we have to take that into account.

Comm. Irving: It's an easy speculation for you, but when we get parents coming up here telling us that we're taking the kids' field trip money, instructional materials, and their lunch away it's a very different story when people are coming at us and telling us who really have no true involvement in the contract how the program is done. The point he's making is if we said it was a program that's just going to run from January to June every single year then I think this makes sense. But if we're talking about a program that runs September to June, I think moving forward you all just need to be very transparent about the fact that this very generous allocation may have to be adjusted when we elongate the year. Given what I saw at the last Board meeting, I'm sorry. Folks who were actually uninformed of what was going on at that program and blaming this Board for it I find absolutely plausible and possible that people will come to the meeting and say, "You cut back our lunch for the kids and the field trips to do x, y, and z" not understanding that we did that this year. In essence it's a little more money for them to play with that they have to use. But that has to be made very clear to the leadership that next year this may have to be adjusted in some capacity.

Mr. McDowell: We did have extensive conversations around the same area and we did express to the organization that budgets are fluctuating at a higher bandwidth now more than ever and we're not promising \$32,000 every year. As a bit of advice we suggest to the organization that they look into contributing money from other sources because we may not be able to fund at this level. But all the other points you've made we'll definitely consider that going into the next budget year and we're pretty confident that they understand that this is not a future of large expenditure based on a wish list.

Comm. Kerr: Looking at this what we have effectively done is we have moved out that \$32,000 for their hands completely. So they can no longer look to the district for \$32,000. You may want to multiple this by two because this is for 6 months. The difference between this would be something like \$8,000. That's the money that we will have in excess to fulfill all the other requirements for the program. We are spending the money so they cannot look to us for more than the \$24,000.

Ms. Pollak: Let me just put something in perspective also. Just keep in mind that they ran it at the beginning of the school year. We've probably taken a break of about six weeks so it's really not a six-month thing. They have to pay those teachers that came at the beginning through September. We didn't have a contract in place.

Ms. Shafer: We didn't have a contract, it wasn't Board approved, and we told them that.

Ms. Pollak: But this is not something where it's going to be doubled.

Ms. Shafer: How about if we take this back, redo it, make it very clear, and get it to you way before the...

Comm. Kerr: I think we should roll with it, Mr. President. The money is so small and to put these kids out there I don't think it's worth it.

Mr. McDowell: You have to understand we're not just giving a blank check to anyone.

Comm. Irving: If I call roll call and it fails, as opposed to allowing Eileen and Kemper the opportunity to go back, readjust the numbers, and make sure the itemized section is completed so that by the next time we meet it can pass. I think the contract reads that they can't meet when we're out of school session. So we're talking about the group meeting no more than two weeks max this week and next week and then we're in holiday break. My thought would be let's just start the program in January and ensure that we have enough time for everyone to feel comfortable. I just don't feel comfortable voting for it. Given everything we've discussed I'd feel a heck of a lot better if we were able to adjust the numbers in the contract and everything happens to be there. But that's just me.

Mr. McDowell: What puts us at a disadvantage is that at this point we've only been prepared to give them salaries in three payments. So what will happen is we still have to order materials for the program. If we go January we're talking about...

Comm. Irving: That still gives them more than two and a half weeks before the new year for you guys to order all the materials and get everything you need.

Mr. McDowell: We're pretty confident that we've put some good controls in place so that the program for the children will be something there.

Comm. Irving: Please understand I'm expressing concerns for the children of the school. I don't want to be ambiguous in our ability to set parameters in our program and then somehow they fall through. I think it's important for us to fine-tune this so that it goes so well this year that we just roll right into next year with the same format and process. We may have to adjust the numbers to fit into the \$32,000 paradigm that happens to exist. But again, there has to be communication with the group knowing that the funds are contingent on the district fiscal cycle.

Mr. McDowell: They're aware of that.

Comm. Rivera: I just want to make clear I don't have an issue with the program because it's for the kids. It's just the manner in which this was presented. Let's take the lunches out. The \$3,000 they usually have to buy every year for their materials. The \$1,000 for the field trips they also used to pay. So they actually got \$16,000. They got half a year's worth. They didn't get any cut this year. Let's just make that clear. If you want to move on let's move on.

Comm. Irving: What's the pleasure of the crew? Can we just opt to put it back on the agenda at the regular meeting and then move forward from there?

Mr. McDowell: Do you want us to cost the program cost?

Comm. Irving: As Eileen identified, just fuzz the budget out and make it very clear, especially with the in-kind costs, what the itemized costs are.

Comm. Rivera: Can I just recommend something? The amounts are small and I think you expressed that their intent is to start taking advantage of this this Saturday. When is the next meeting that we have?

Comm. Irving: The 7<sup>th</sup>.

Comm. Rivera: So legally they cannot bill us. We can't start until we approve it. My whole thing was that this was being sold to us the way this resolution reads that we're giving them \$12,380 when that's not what we're giving them. That was my concern. This is not about what we're giving the kids. I'm happy to provide all the services that we can for the kids. It's just the way it's being presented to us. That was my concern and I just want to clarify that to the Board. That was my intent.

Mr. McDowell: By no means was it an attempt to pull the wool over eyes. I think the attempt was to make known the out-of-pocket that's going to the district. Being that the monies were allocated and appropriated they're in the district's coffers. The program's in-kind costs come to the district.

Comm. Hodges: The problem is you got a whole lot of information that you're looking for. That's the thing. Quite frankly, I'm really happy the Board is being this aggressive about giving money away. I'm extraordinarily happy the Board is being this aggressive about holding the administration accountable. What exactly do we want them to do? Cut out the total amount of money? Can we not do that? Can we just say not to exceed whatever it is? Can we do that?

Comm. Irving: Just capping what the cost would be for the actual year.

Comm. Hodges: Not to exceed.

Comm. Kerr: It's \$32,000.

Mr. McDowell: The contract contains the full budget actually.

Comm. Rivera: There's no need for that for this year. He's specifically limiting them to the physical money that we're giving them. We're limiting them to \$12,380.

Comm. Cleaves: No. Can we move on this if we knock out that \$12,000 and say not to exceed \$32,000?

Comm. Hodges: Whatever the total budget is not to exceed that and then we can move forward.

Comm. Cleaves: Whatever the total budget is.

Mr. McDowell: I believe the budget is in your contract.

Comm. Rivera: It's already attached to the resolution.

Mr. McDowell: It speaks to the whole \$27,000.

Comm. Rivera: Legally we cannot give them more than this.

Comm. Cleaves: So that's what it should say here, not \$12,000.

Comm. Rivera: You just heard the auditor today. Legally we cannot pay them more than \$27,200. That's what's attached to this resolution, the budget that we provided. We don't have to put that language in there. Legally we just limit it to the \$27,200.

Comm. Cleaves: In order for us to move on this action then we have to change that number from \$12,380 to reflect the \$27,000. If not we're voting on giving them only \$12,000.

Comm. Rivera: No. The money that's in section five is just the physical cash we're going to give them. That's the actual physical cash that they can bill us for. Correct?

Comm. Cleaves: Because this is what we have here.

Comm. Rivera: The other stuff is in-kind. In-kind is stuff that we already incur anyway. That's basically what in-kind is.

Comm. Irving: Let's just put it through and pray that everything goes well.

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

Comm. Hodges: On Item 4, there's a sheet here that gives us a reason why it was late. We need to have that filled in for the record. Is there a reason? We can put it on record.

### **Resolution No. 6**

INTRODUCTION: the Comprehensive Maintenance Plan (CMP) supports the Bright Futures Strategic Plan 2009-2014 in that it addresses Priority 2 – Safe, Caring and Orderly Schools – Goal 7 – Facilities that are clean and meet 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning Standards; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Education N.J.A.C.6A:26-12.1 requires New Jersey School Districts to submit a three-year maintenance plan documenting “required” maintenance activities for each year of its public school facilities; and

WHEREAS, the required maintenance activities as listed in the attached CMP document for various school facilities of the Paterson Public Schools are consistent with these requirement; and

WHEREAS, all the past and planned activities are reasonable to keep school facilities open and safe for use or in their original conditions, and to keep their system warranties valid; and

WHEREAS, the total cost for the Comprehensive Maintenance Plan for the 2014-2015 school year shall at a minimum be equal to the value of the gross building area multiplied by the current Area Cost Allowance per SF (\$143.00) which equals the building replacement value. The building replacement value is multiplied by 0.2% which is the minimum annual target expenditure; and now therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Paterson Public School District hereby authorizes the School Business Administrator to submit the Comprehensive Maintenance Plan for the Paterson Public School District in compliance with the Department of Education requirements to the County Superintendent’s Office.



**It was moved by Comm. Martinez, seconded by Comm. Cleaves that Resolution No. 6 be adopted. On roll call all members voted in the affirmative, except Comm. Hodges who abstained. The motion carried.**

### **Resolution No. 7**

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

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

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

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

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

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

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education has reviewed the HIB investigations for the month of October, 2014 in which there were a total of *86 investigations reported and 36 being confirmed* bullying incidents requiring consequences, and

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

**It was moved by Comm. Cleaves, seconded by Comm. Martinez that Resolution No. 7 be adopted.**

Comm. Kerr: At the last Board meeting, if I recall, there was a parent that came to the microphone and spoke about some bullying incidents that took place at School 18. I don't believe that we have captured in our reporting those incidents. I'm just wondering how foolproof our system is right now.

Comm. Irving: Is Mr. Best still here?

Comm. Kerr: At our last Board meeting a parent came and spoke about issues that her child was having and it was not captured in the reporting. I'm just wondering how effective is the system we have at monitoring and gathering that information.

Mr. T. J. Best: The particular parent that you're referring to is from School 18. School 18 overall is actually one of our better schools in terms of reporting incidents of HIB. None of our schools are perfect and in some cases incidents are missed. But as I said, we're working on it and School 18 is one of the better schools. We've had conversation with that particular parent both myself as well as Mr. Johnson. Their issues extend further than just a bullying case at the particular school. That parent actually had a problem with continuous bullying from the time that student was in kindergarten and the student is now in seventh grade. They just had an overall problem with the school itself and bullying was one of the problems that she had. We let her know in order for us to address it she had to specify specific incidents that occurred that we can do an investigation on. She could not direct us to one incident that occurred this year in which we could do an investigation. So there have not been any bullying incidents with that parent for this year that we could do an investigation upon.

Comm. Irving: That answers my question. I was going to ask did the parent report.

Mr. Best: There are no incidents this year with that parent.

Comm. Kerr: So you're comfortable regarding what they are doing in terms of really capturing. I'm sure that's not an isolated situation when one parent comes forward. We have 30,000 kids in our district. There are lots of other parents who are not comfortable about what's happening.

Mr. Best: Last week we just had a review with the culture and climate team as well as the assistant superintendents over the schools and Ms. Shafer to go over all of the data to date this year for all of the schools that essentially put up red flags. We looked at the schools that had what we believe were low number of reports. There are still several schools that have zero incidents for the entire year. Some of those schools exceed 500 so we wanted to take an additional look at those schools. In addition, there were a couple of schools that haven't been having regular culture and climate meetings which we could attend. And there have been other professional development opportunities that these schools have not yet taken advantage of. So in these particular cases were having the assistant superintendents reach out to the principals and then our team is going to go in to work with them more closely.

Comm. Kerr: Are we actively engaging the preventative side of the whole business of harassment, intimidation, and bullying?

Mr. Best: Most of the schools have already implemented at least one program. A program is multiple events and trainings that take course over the school year. I would say probably 80% of our schools to date have already had at least one workshop or one training for students. They're all not there yet, but we're in the process of working on them. Some of the schools are very strong. We have only a handful of schools that are really weak, but most of our schools are in progress of really getting things together.

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

## **GENERAL BUSINESS**

### **Items Requiring a Vote**

## ***Curriculum and Instruction***

Comm. Martinez: The curriculum committee met this past Monday, December 1. In attendance were a lot of people. We thoroughly vetted all action items that were presented. I apologize I don't have a copy of the minutes to share with you all, but we did vet the action items. The big items that stood out were Items A-2 and A-7 having to do with the early childhood plan. It was rather robust. Errol and I were satisfied with the information that was presented but I'm not sure if any of the other Commissioners had any questions about the plan. It also ties into Item A-11. I will afford any of the Commissioners the opportunity to ask any questions about that plan or the actions that are attached to them. There were really no other outstanding items that need to be thoroughly vetted here, but I will open up the floor to the Commissioners for any questions.

## ***Legal***

Comm. Irving: Comm. Simmons had to leave. He had a work conference call he had to jump on. Dr. Hodges, do you want to read the report for him?

Comm. Hodges: Legal met on November 25 from 11:45 to 1:15 p.m. Present were Lisa Pollak, Esq., Ms. Laureen Moloney, Mr. Theodore Best, Mr. Boris Zaydel, and myself. We discussed special education litigation ongoing and recently resolved, general liability and personal injury litigation, employment practices litigation, and workmen's compensation matters, none of which are public information. We went through all the current cases and got a description of where they are, what the concerns were, and how we're moving forward. Some concerns that resulted from these conversations were the additional need for investigative services for tort claims, employment claims, and auto crash property claims. Currently we only have one investigator who works under Captain Smith but we need an independent investigator who can devote their time and energy to investigating these cases thoroughly. There has to be some attention paid to that in terms of the budget. We additionally had covered HIB and school-based climate and culture teams. We have affirmative action officers and bullying specialists who when they investigate cases they do the investigations together, but sometimes they are one and the same. We also have issues with teachers who are sometimes thrust into being anti-bullying specialists which may be a problem. That's not optimum. In fact, it shouldn't happen at all. We need to address that area. We have an emerging problem with kids coming to school early and staying late because we provide those services to those students and we absorb the cost. We're going to have to take a look at ways to address that particular matter in terms of the parents either finding out a way to accommodate them and absorbing that cost or somehow passing those costs on to those parents. You need to provide staff and security to open the building. If someone drops their child off at 7:00 in the morning somebody has to be there to receive them and they have an hourly rate that has to be paid for somewhere. Those issues need to be looked at and some determinations need to be made along those lines. We looked at teacher discipline and tenure costs. We surveyed real estate matters and of course the current items before you on the resolution list I present those to you. Are there any questions?

## ***Fiscal***

Comm. Kerr: The fiscal committee met on December 2. Members present were Comm. Hodges and myself. From staff we had Mr. Kilpatrick and Ms. Ayala. We also had auditors from the firm of Lerch, Vinci & Higgins, Mr. Jeff Bliss and Mr. Robert Hague. Our meeting started at approximately 5:15. There were two matters on our

agenda for the evening. We had the CAFR report by Mr. Bliss and in his report he mentioned to us that we had a good audit this year and there were no repeat findings. He said in general there were no material weaknesses. He said our accounts were stable. The issues that he mentioned were the year-end open order issues. He said that we needed to do a better job in closing out the orders, as he mentioned here tonight. He also mentioned a finding regarding the confirming orders. Those were the two issues that were highlighted in this year's audit findings. In general he said it was a good audit and I'm going to take all the credit for that, Mr. President. Tonight, fiscal would like to present Items C-1 through C-12. Is there any discussion?

Comm. Irving: I have a question not necessarily related to the action item. I got a series of phone calls, one from a very irate teacher, about the change in dental benefits and vision benefits for employees. I had to listen for 30 minutes to this guy chew me out because the district changed it to a policy that he felt was subpar to the prior plan that we had. I just need to understand from the Superintendent's perspective exactly what happened there and what's going on with that. Then I did some digging around and from what I understand on some level there has to be communication with the union before we change benefits and we have to offer them a comparable plan to what they presently have. The perspective of the people who called me was that the plans are not comparable.

Dr. Evans: I met with Counsel today and Ms. Shafer to learn the full extent of the concern. I did hear the concern and there is some legitimacy to some of the concerns we're hearing. We are working through them. To more completely answer your question will require that we go into executive session. But just know that we are working on it. There are some options that we have to ultimately address the issue the teacher raised. It's more than the one teacher obviously. There are a number of teachers and other staff who have some concerns and still lots of questions out there. Even I have questions.

Comm. Irving: I have questions.

Dr. Evans: Nonetheless, we are going to be working with the union to try to work through these and I can update you and give you some more detail as to how it happened. But that would have to be in executive session. We'll do it in the next Board meeting. That would be perfect.

Comm. Irving: I'd just like to hear our options for helping to rectify this. This guy who called me today was livid. He was absolutely beside himself. The other two people who called me just didn't understand why they had to switch. But I was in a meeting listening to this guy and I found out first he was a Paterson voter and that's why I stayed on the phone. He just went off about paying more into his health benefits and he has a contract he likes and then his dental and vision gets changed. These things have an effect on morale that you can't put a price tag on. So when you think about the totality of the situation many of our faculty members are not happy with their contract. I told him flat out he needed to talk to his union about that one. The union negotiated that contract, that's what they did. He talked about the health benefits and I said the rate they pay tapers out in five years and in the next round of negotiations that's something that his leadership can bring up for discussion. But on that last piece about the dental and vision, I had nothing to tell the dude because I didn't understand exactly how that happened and why that was. In executive session in two weeks let's just have an update for how that happened and what our plans are to fix it. And if that's going to cost us anything that's going to be important too.

Dr. Evans: Hopefully by then it will be fixed.

Comm. Irving: Comm. Rivera doesn't want to bring up the fact that we had a conversation.

Comm. Rivera: I'm a proponent of having tablets over here. My concern is that we continue to request it and I don't mean to sound negative, but at the rate we're going what are we doing to address that issue of us getting our packets?

Dr. Evans: I'm not sure I understand the concern.

Comm. Rivera: This is not a concern. This is a request.

Comm. Irving: The Board wants to go paperless.

Dr. Evans: So do we!

Comm. Irving: I think it's a hell of a lot easier for us to go paperless than for you all. The question is, how do we get there? I think many of the ways to do that would first be to try to earmark and establish is there a digital format that many of the Board packets that we get can be downloaded in and sent to the Board and shared with the Board via a shared drive. Then we can figure out in our Board budget if we have the funds necessary, which I know we do, for the Board members to get tablets that would be on loan per Board member per term. You finish your term and the tablet goes back to the district and goes to the next person who happens to sit in your seat. It can't be the parting gift for all of us when we decide to leave this place eventually.

Comm. Hodges: It depends on how old they are.

Comm. Irving: I think on some level we have to start there.

Comm. Rivera: Also, we requested an analysis of the cost-savings to go paperless. There are a lot of hours that are being used from the staff and all this paper and everything.

Dr. Evans: Yes is the answer to your question in terms of tablets and yes we want to go paperless. We're doing that with forms. Ms. Corallo has led the charge in taking us paperless with many of our forms. That's going to be demonstrated to us next week. The next step is to go paperless with the Board as well.

Comm. Hodges: Timetable.

Dr. Evans: We need to find a vendor and talk to them first. But just knowing that the Board is interested helps us because the last time we tried this there was a lot of resistance among Board members for doing that so we stopped. We had already contracted a vendor who was ready to do it.

Comm. Kerr: Was I here?

Comm. Irving: Ms. Taylor had a really big issue with it. We did what Ms. Taylor said.

Comm. Kerr: But she's just one person.

Comm. Hodges: I've been given a flash drive and we have used flash drives in the past. We've gotten the entire packet on a flash drive. I've already announced at the last meeting I don't want any more packets. I returned my flash drive to Cheryl this evening indicating I really don't want any more packets coming to my house. Send me the flash drive and I will just move forward and download it that way.

Comm. Irving: If you get a tablet that can read flash drives it's even better.

Comm. Hodges: If you don't what you can do is use your computer, email the whole thing to you, and download it to your tablet.

Dr. Evans: That's still an outdated technique for doing it.

Comm. Hodges: Very much so.

Dr. Evans: In the real world it starts online or in soft form. It's actually generated there and it goes through the approval process. It's forwarded from where it originates, through the steps, ultimately to my office and we all sign off electronically. We review it electronically and sign off electronically. You see how big this is. You all get this. The attempt is to avoid this but to be more efficient in terms of moving it from one point to another. When it comes to me and I have a problem I'll send it back. It goes back and forth sometimes several times between me and the originators. It's more time-consuming perhaps than you all realize just to get this.

Comm. Rivera: At the county we have the process you just mentioned. I don't think they get the package in the form of a tablet. Do you get physical paper? Do you have a tablet? I understand you want to do that. The issue we're having here is in the meantime we could have a shared drive in the system and they can scan all these documents that we're getting boxes and boxes of paper which sometimes I lose. We're here going over a resolution that's not numbered. Maybe I'm not reading them well. I don't even have numbers here in these resolutions and it's a problem finding them. If I don't keep them in order the same way you gave it to me or in accordance with the agenda I just give up. I can't even find them. I want the information readily available from anywhere. I shouldn't have to carry boxes around of paper.

Dr. Evans: As an interim measure, yes. But the goal would be ultimately to not even have to carry a thumb drive and providing you computers. At the dais here you have a computer screen in front of you. You don't have to bring your tablet. There will be one sitting there when you come in that automatically connects you. That's the goal. But in the interim we can provide you with a tablet or a laptop, whichever you prefer. It would be better for us if you all wanted the same thing. If you all wanted tablets, that would work. If you all wanted laptops, that would work.

Comm. Martinez: Make it uniform and simple. You buy them in bulk, it's cheaper, and everyone gets the same thing.

Comm. Irving: Can we commission Cheryl to work with our technology department to investigate three choices of tablets, I-pads or surface pros – I don't know what other choice they have – and then report back to the Board what those costs would be. But we do need from the finance department some type of analysis for what that would look like for us before we do that. I can see an article being written about the School Board and we need to be prepared to say that we're saving the district money by taking this expense on in the foreseeable future. Actually it's more a fiscally responsible move. But we have to be empowered with that information. So Rich, I know we asked about it

before, but we really do need that information by the time we decide to make a decision. So let's start there with Cheryl asking our technology folks to get back to us. I think two weeks is probably a good enough timeframe for them to let us know exactly what the cost of the three different variations would be and then maybe we can put it on the agenda at the January meeting for the option to go digital thereafter.

Comm. Hodges: But you need a time study of what it takes them to print out the material.

Comm. Irving: That's all the questions I had for finance.

Comm. Hodges: There's been a conversation with the City Council about our budget situation. They may be coming to you for a joint meeting.

Comm. Irving: Who had the conversation?

Comm. Hodges: I went down and reported out what we're doing to the City Council and I explained the potential for our budget discussions and their concerns, things that we talked about in our retreat.

Comm. Irving: I welcome the opportunity.

### ***Facilities***

Comm. Irving: Facilities has not met yet, but we are going to meet within the next week. Cheryl, can you schedule a facilities committee meeting sometime next week, please? This evening we do have Items D-1 and D-2 up for discussion. Are there any questions?

### ***Policy***

Comm. Cleaves: The policy committee met on November 21. Presiding was Comm. Simmons and in attendance were Comm. Cleaves, Ms. Lisa Pollak, Mr. Boris Zaydel, and Dr. Bill Librera, a consultant. We are presenting for second reading E-1 and E-2 this evening. Are there any questions? E-2 is first reading and E-1 is second reading.

Comm. Hodges: I just want to call to your attention that there was a change made in E-1 with the guidance counselors.

Comm. Irving: It's the same change we identified at the last meeting, right?

Comm. Hodges: No. I submitted the change to the policy committee and the change was the college week. I don't know whether you saw that.

Comm. Cleaves: You did that at the last Board meeting.

Comm. Hodges: I submitted the language.

Comm. Cleaves: It's in there. Is there any more discussion?

### **Items Requiring Review and Comments**

## **Personnel**

Comm. Cleaves: Personnel met on December 1 at 5:00 p.m. In attendance were Comm. Cleaves, Comm. Martinez, Ms. McKoy and Ms. Murphy. We have a report that we gave you the last workshop meeting and it told you how many current vacancies we had and retirement and resignations. This is just a continuation of that list. Also, we've asked for under section three current retirements, resignations, and terminations on all positions. We asked them to list it out so we know exactly how many of those were actual instructional teachers. We started in July and we were up to 252 and then September to November there were another 81 that resigned, retired, or were terminated. From November 2 to January 1 they've already submitted their paperwork that as of January 1, 2015 they would be retiring or resigning. There's another section because there's an estimation of nine that have already submitted paperwork. From July 1, 2014 to July 1, 2015 nine people submitted paperwork that between January and July of 2015 they would be resigning or retiring. Out of that number 171 of those are actual teachers.

Comm. Kerr: So what does that say? Do we have a gap of 171?

Comm. Cleaves: We continue to hire. So even though the number sounds high each month we're hiring. We may lose some, but then we hire some. We're not fully staffed. As fast as we lose them we try to rehire them and there's always going to be a gap because of the timing. If you look on the back of the report they had a mid-year job fair. The Commissioners asked for some specific information regarding the job fair. So if you look at the job fair each category tells you how many males were there, how many females were there, ethnicity, and how many persons actually from Paterson. We wanted to know because there was an issue of the district hiring residents from the city. There were a total of 240 candidates that showed up for the job fair and this is the breakdown of the job fair. Then you also see in Section B the upcoming job fairs that the district will be participating in. Tonight the personnel committee presents F-1.

Comm. Irving: As per the new standard operating procedure, I know we have some vacancies for principals and we'll be doing hiring for a district director of guidance. I just want to make sure the process is moving forward and that for those senior level positions in particular the recommendation from the Superintendent goes to the Board at the next personnel committee meeting. Then the personnel committee will make the recommendation to the full Board to vote on those positions at the next Board meeting. Those individuals will not start or be offered the position until the Board votes on those positions. I just want to be sure we're all clear on that because I know there were some interviews this week for guidance and I know there will be some interviews for principals coming up. I want to make sure for the folks in human resources that you all understand that the next step is the Board once the Superintendent or the cabinet has identified who their choices are.

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

The meeting was adjourned at 10:11 p.m.