

**MINUTES OF THE PATERSON BOARD OF EDUCATION
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE**

December 4, 2013 – 6:16 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. Kenneth Simmons

Absent:

Comm. Wendy Guzman
Comm. Errol Kerr
Comm. Manuel Martinez

Comm. Alex Mendez
Comm. Corey Teague

Comm. Irving: Good evening everyone. We do not have a quorum yet, but we're going to begin the meeting in committee until I get a fifth Board member and then we'll formally open the meeting. I'm going to skip the pleasantries because I can't do it until I get five, but I'll ask Dr. Evans to at least introduce the Early Childhood Five Year Program Plan presentation and we'll start there. Even if I get a fifth Board member, for the folks that are presenting, I will stop you midway through just to formally open the meeting and we'll just jump right back into your report. I don't want to just be abrupt if that happens and be disrespectful to you guys.

PRESENTATIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Early Childhood Five Year Program Plan

Dr. Evans: The report that should be in front of each Board member entitled "Five Year Preschool Program Plan 2014-2019" is something that Ms. Peron, her staff, and Ms. Holtje are going to present tonight. That really is something that we have to have in place ongoing to drive our program. I believe we were going to do this later, but there was a specific request from the Board to do it tonight. So with due respect to the Board we're coming forward with that.

Ms. Nancy Holtje: Good evening Dr. Evans, Ms. Shafer, Commissioners, and colleagues. I'm Nancy Holtje, I'm the Director of Early Childhood, and I'm here to present the Five Year Preschool Program Plan. Before I begin, I just want to first acknowledge my staff that's here to show support. I have my Supervisor for Community and Parent Involvement, Rosalyn Peterson. I have Karen Bernard, our Supervisor for Preschool Intervention and Referral Team. I have two Master Teachers, Samira Katt and Farida Asma. I have my Data Specialist, Cory Fronte. I just want to thank them for all their support. In front of you, you do have the PowerPoint. It is a little lengthy so I am asking that I just go through it and you can write your questions or anything and then we'll go back. The purpose of the five-year preschool program is to provide a comprehensive description of how the Paterson Public Schools Department of Early Childhood will implement each component of a high-quality preschool program. We do

that by focusing on school readiness, meeting children's developmental and cultural needs, and ensuring that they are receiving a high-quality preschool program. Our Paterson Public Schools vision is to be the statewide leader in urban education and the department has aligned its vision to that. It is to become a leader in educating New Jersey urban preschool children by igniting a passion for learning through high-quality preschool experiences. Our department objectives are to prepare our preschool population for academic success in the future grades and to safeguard our investment in high-quality preschool by providing recommendations and provisions for high-quality kindergarten through third grade educational experiences. It's also to uphold consistency among the district strategic plan Bright Futures, the New Jersey Teaching and Learning Standards for Preschool and the Creative Curriculum for Preschool. A little bit about our history – in 1997 the New Jersey Supreme Court ordered that Paterson implement a preschool program for all three and four-year-old residents. In 1999 the Early Childhood collaborative began in Paterson. Currently our state-mandated preschool program is a full-day program for all resident three and four-year-olds. It has 185 days and it is aligned to the schedule of the district school day of six hours and 55 minutes.

*Comm. Guzman enters the meeting at 6:21 p.m.

Comm. Irving: Nancy, I'm going to ask you to hold that thought. We're going to formally open the meeting with the Open Public Meetings Act.

MINUTES OF THE PATERSON BOARD OF EDUCATION WORKSHOP MEETING

December 4, 2013 – 6:21 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. Wendy Guzman
Comm. Jonathan Hodges
*Comm. Errol Kerr

*Comm. Manuel Martinez
*Comm. Alex Mendez
Comm. Kenneth Simmons
*Comm. Corey Teague

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

Comm. Cleaves read the Open Public Meetings Act:

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

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

**Workshop Meeting
December 4, 2013 at 6:00 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.

Ms. Holtje: Currently, Paterson Public Schools contracts with 23 state-mandated preschool centers, including Headstart. We work collaboratively with these preschool providers to ensure a high-quality preschool program. This is a list of our in-district buildings that have preschools and if you note, we have a proposed site for 2014-15 at EWK. This is our population served for this year as well as our projected enrollment for the next five years. So we have all the numbers there for you and the total number of children to be served. We also just gave a little historical view of the in-district classrooms growth because we want to keep increasing in-district preschool classrooms. We just showed you historically what it is and we're continuing to work on increasing those numbers. This slide is the Department of Early Childhood. There are approximately 80 staff members for the Department of Early Childhood. There's an administrative team. As I said before, there are four supervisors. Each supervisor has a specific component of the program. They all work together, but there's curriculum & instruction, professional development, and assessment. They work with the master teachers in curriculum implementation. We have preschool intervention and referral team supervisor, which we'll talk a little bit more about. We have a supervisor for dual language learners and bilingual children. We have a community and parent involvement specialist. We all work very closely with the special education supervisor for early childhood. Our curriculum implementation team is our master teachers. They go into the classrooms every day to ensure that the curriculum is being implemented, to model for teachers, and to coach teachers with any things that they need throughout the day. Our preschool intervention and referral team – we call them our PIRT team – they work with teachers to provide intervention strategies that may include modifying the environment or the actual curriculum to meet the individual needs of children. Our educational goals include realign all of our goals to the district priority goals. This is District Priority Goal #1 – Effective Academic Programs – and we will work to maintain and promote high-standards of achievement for all students in all centers. 22 out of our 23 providers are NAEYC-accredited. NAEYC is the National Association for the Education of Young Children and they represent the mark of quality in early childhood. We are committed to providing leadership in this national effort to raise the quality of early childhood education. This department leads the State of New Jersey in supporting all of our preschool provider centers in achieving this accreditation. The only reason there aren't 23 is because the 23rd just came on board, which is Headstart, and they are beginning the process now. We're also going to begin the process at St. Mary's, our in-district school. This is a chart that we added to align ourselves to the district systematic approach to student achievement. The items on the left are the district's educational approach and on the right is our approach. So we fully aligned it to the district. In your five-year program plan booklet on pages 33-62 we outlined the mathematics and language arts standards and we tied them to the Creative Curriculum objectives, we aligned them to the Common Core state standards, and we listed all the department activities where we will support the teachers. We listed the teacher activities, a timeline for when these activities should take place, and which staff is responsible to carry those

activities out. We've also included the curriculum and instruction goal, the performance target, as well as how we will measure it, which will include the data sources, the instruments that we use, and the analysis and use of that data. That's what those charts represent. We will cultivate a learning environment that promotes cognitive, language, physical, and social/emotional development of every child, which is aligned to District Priority #1 and #2. We use the Creative Curriculum for Preschool and it is based on the latest research on how children learn best and promotes the school readiness of preschool children. It meets all the standards put forth for effective early childhood curricula by the National Association for the Education of Young Children and the National Association of Early Childhood Specialists in State Departments of Education. These are just our teaching tools. We have the fundamentals of what our curriculum is based on and the teaching guides. Our program also includes intentional teaching cards, which just lays everything out - the main objective, the procedures, the teaching sequence, how to support children with special needs and dual language learners, as well as aligning it to the assessment. Other intentional teaching cards touch literacy and language arts throughout. So on each card the teacher will have highlighted for them different activities to enforce those skills. I just wanted to show the Board what a repeated read-aloud is. It aligns with the principles of the Institute for Learning, as well as Accountable Talk and the Common Core. It is where the students hear the same story three times and these repeated read-alouds guide the teacher into how to set up the children, what questions to ask before and during, how to build the vocabulary, and how to extend those higher-order thinking skills. This is our learning environment. It is the starting point for the implementation of the Creative Curriculum for Preschool. The physical space is organized to offer multiple opportunities for children to learn, explore, and grow in the objectives for development and learning. In the picture it seems like a pretty big room, and that is, but there are 10 learning centers and every preschool classroom, state-mandated and in-district, has all of those 10 centers. That's non-negotiable. I've added a sample schedule so that we can see the critical components of the day for each preschool. We move on to our assessment system, which is also tied to District Priority #1, and it provides timely feedback to teachers.

*Comm. Kerr enters the meeting at 6:28 p.m.

Ms. Holtje: We use the Creative Curriculum Gold. It is an online assessment system where teachers observe and document children's development and learning over time. It's used to support, guide, and inform teachers' planning. It also helps teachers report and communicate with parents and other members, as included. We follow the assessment cycle. I just wanted to show a typical continuum. The assessment is based on a continuum. The colors aren't wonderful, but everything is color-coded by the chronological age of the child. Every objective in the Creative Curriculum is laid out, the different stages, so the teacher would typically go to where the age of the child is and see where that child falls. If the child is ahead of the continuum, then there are activities for them to keep moving forward. If the child is behind on the continuum, then there are activities for them to bring them up to the next level. Each objective comes with strategies for teachers to use and implement. We look at our Gold Assessment in literacy. In our combined language arts literacy we missed the benchmark by 1%. The benchmark was 75% and we got 74%, but we did hit the benchmark in, I believe, three of the areas. We've listed our strengths and our areas in need of improvement according to our assessment data. We did the same for math in which we did meet the benchmark. The benchmark was 60% and we met and exceeded it with 70%. Again, there are areas of strength and areas in need of improvement. We also have our assessment and our data aligned to our Bright Futures indicators of success and we have added the targets for this year and the following two years for math and language

arts literacy. Our other assessments that we use are the Early Screening Inventory. Every three-year-old child and every new four-year-old child is given the screen. It's a brief instrument and it's one of the first steps to help identify children who may have problems learning. We give our preschoolers a little bit of time, four to six weeks, and then we give them the screen and they either fall within 'okay,' 'rescreen,' or 'refer.' If they're 'okay,' we're good to go. If it falls in 'refer,' that's when the preschool intervention and referral team comes in, has conversation with the teacher, decides if we have to give them a little time, what do you think, maybe strategies are given, and the child is retested. Then usually if it comes out 'rescreen' then we know that more interventions are needed. If it comes out 'refer,' then the child study team is brought in. We also have our WIDA-ACCESS Placement Test, which is the W-APT, and that's a brief screening instrument intended to measure students' English language proficiency. This is administered to all exiting four-year-olds who have been identified through a home language survey that they are English language learners. We send this information to our schools so that they can help place students and at least know if they may require bilingual or ESL services. We are also looking to implement the STAR assessment for our exiting four-year-olds. The plan is to administer the STAR assessment to four-year-olds in June. This will help us align more to the kindergarten assessments. It will give kindergarten teachers a heads-up to where the children are and an assessment that they understand. Also, we are planning to have a summer enrichment program and the assessment will be given at the end of the program to see if there have been advances there also. All this leads to our professional development plan. We fully believe that it is the teacher in the classroom that affects success the most. We will provide accessibility to research and resources to assure quality professional development that is ongoing and systematic for all preschool staff. We provide guidance to teachers, administrators, and parents about developmentally appropriate practices. We have programmatic assessments. We use our ECERS, Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale. We have SELA, Supports for Early Literacy Assessment. We have PCMI, Preschool Classroom Mathematics Inventory. We have our SAVS, Self-Assessment and Validation System, which is our version of QSAC in preschool. So we looked at our programmatic assessments for ECERS. We are at a 5.66 on a scale from 1 to 7. Listed below are the areas in need of improvement that scored below a 6. We know we still have to work on these areas. Our SELA, which is our early literacy assessment, is a scale from 1 to 5 and we are at a 4.37. Below I listed all the areas that are in need of improvement that fall below 4.3. The following is our math assessment, which is our PCMI. We are at a 3.83. That's also on a scale from 1 to 5. So everything below a 3.8 is an area in need of improvement and it's basically the mathematical concept. So we do know that is an area that we need to focus on. What we see here is that we at the department embrace professional development as an important function in support of our mission to provide high-quality preschool programs. The quality of teaching, as I stated before, is the greatest determinant of student learning. So we take the implementation of training and we base it on a three-pronged approach. The first is embedded training, that is side-by-side training that occurs in the classroom with master teachers and the PIRT team with our teachers by coaching, modeling, helping them with their lesson planning, and helping them to provide individualized instruction. We have offsite training where it's either a massive training that we pull our preschool teachers if there's something new in the curriculum when we roll out the new standards or if the writers of our curriculum come and do training. We practice the Reflective Practice Session and that's also teachers working with our master teachers where they provide reflection and feedback on teacher performance and where the teacher's strengths and weaknesses are. We also have our Project WIKI, which is a wiki that our parents and teachers can go to and get information on every component of our early childhood program. It's up 24/7. You can go in at any time. Teachers use it all the time because it has the forms that they need,

deadlines, assessment dates that are due, and things of that nature. But it also provides them with research and activities to help support them in their classrooms and it also gives parents activities to support children at home. I added our very long professional development list that we will be targeting for next year. Some are new and some will be continuing. We have to roll out our new preschool standards. For our staff here at 90 Delaware the curriculum is coming out with a new fidelity tool to help us ensure that the curriculum is being implemented. We are always looking to be reliable in our assessment system. We are continuing with Phonics First. We always need to support our English language and dual language learners. We have a list of others. Also included there are kindergarten implementation guidelines because we feel that is important too, that the P-3 continuum be tightened and really be paid attention to in our case. Other parts of our program include our Family Outreach Program. We provide guidance to families to promote understanding of their child's literacy, learning and development, as well as encourage the participation and involvement in their child's education. This is utilized through the help of the Family Outreach Grant that is sponsored by the Department of Human Services. We have three supervising social workers that work closely with our preschool family workers, who in turn work very closely with our preschool families at our sites. We also have two in-district social workers working with our in-district parents. We have fiscal effectiveness. We continue to provide operational guidance to our early childhood centers to promote fiscal accountability. I think this Board is very well-versed in our audits and the process we go through. Our team also conducts onsite compliance visits as well. Here we have our list of our plan to improve our programmatic issues and curriculum monitoring. We will continue to use our programmatic assessments. Beginning next year in 2014-15 all state-mandated preschool programs will develop a school-wide plan just like the district public schools do. In that plan school-wide goals and student objectives must be outlined, as well as the preschool's expectations for the students and where they are, where they need to be, and how they are going to get there, as well as the other components that are listed there. We will continue with our Memorandum of Understanding for those preschool centers that are having programmatic and curricular issues where they're outlined what they are. Steps may have to be taken to remove either the teacher if it's a teacher problem, or remove the classroom from the program, or the program itself. We do require all center directors that have an MOU to develop a Center Improvement Plan. That plan is submitted three times a year and there they have to address all the concerns that are on the MOU and provide proof to us that it's being addressed and being resolved. We also will continue with our supervisory walk-throughs. Those are both for our in-district as well as our state-mandated preschools. All supervisors are assigned a cohort of preschools and they do the same walk-throughs as they do for the in-district classrooms. They meet with center directors to discuss those walk-throughs, what areas need to be addressed, and how to support the teacher. They also meet with their teams here at 90 Delaware so that we're all on the same page and we're all working together. That concludes my presentation this evening.

*Comm. Teague enters the meeting at 6:38 p.m.

Dr. Evans: I'd like to add three additional comments to Ms. Holtje's presentation. First of all, I want to remind the Board and everyone that funding for our pre-k programs is categorical. It's dedicated solely to the provision of pre-k services. I think often many think we can use those funds for other things, other grades, and non-preschool schools. The funding is categorical dedicated for that particular purpose. Secondly, I want to note something that actually Nancy said. Our programs are recognized by the New Jersey Department of Education as being among the best in the state. Our vision is to be a leader in educating New Jersey's urban youth. In this area we are a recognized

leader. I hear it over and over again from folk in the Department of Education. Third, I want to thank Nancy, Ms. Peron, and the staff for helping us to maintain a quality program. We know there's room for improvement. There's always room for improvement regardless of how good you are, but they've done an extremely good job. It's a very credible program and I want to thank them for it.

Comm. Kerr: At our last curriculum meeting – I'm just referring to what Dr. Evans said – I did ask the question regarding the \$6 million carryover for the Early Childhood Department. I asked the question whether or not some of those Title I resources carried within its structure a component where you use that money for the parental outreach area of our operations. I did not get a 'yes' or 'no' answer. I was kind of surprised at Dr. Evans' statement. I think I need a little bit more than a statement. I think what I really need to find out is if there is any way in the Titles where that money can be used to further the Early Childhood Department through the parental outreach arm of the operation. I need to know that because \$6 million carryover money means that it sits there not being used and then we shove it over into the next budget cycle. There are a lot of things that need to be done in the district that are not being addressed because there's no money. That's the reason for my question at that particular meeting.

Dr. Evans: Let me begin by saying I think about three years ago that \$6 million was \$10 million.

Ms. Susana Peron: The \$6 million carryover is for NCLB Title monies. It is not early childhood money. That's under Titles I, II, and III. It's a different action for tonight. We were talking about both programs and both actions. Although we do have carryover money in early childhood it's not to the tune of \$6 million for this year. That \$6 million carryover amount is NCLB money.

Comm. Kerr: I think the correct information wasn't communicated to Dr. Evans. I remember the only question that was asked regarding whether or not the money can be used for other things was relating to that \$6 million. So maybe he did not get the question the way that it was intended.

Dr. Evans: No, I did understand the question. I really did, but the answer I didn't get a chance to complete was several years ago Ms. Peron and I and members of her staff met with folk from the Department of Education's Early Childhood Unit and at that point there was a sizeable carryover in early childhood. There were some very specific uses that Ms. Peron and her staff had already predetermined and targeted for utilization of those funds that really is unfolding as we speak in terms of expanding the services, looking at some of the services that were not meeting the standards, and replacing them with services that do meet the standards. Those things have occurred. So any carryover, regardless of the amount in early childhood, has gotten smaller and smaller because there was a plan that is very carefully executed that's dedicated to that population.

Comm. Irving: I have a few questions about the report. One I'm sure Ms. Peron is going to involve asking you. In review of the program plan and program information, I'm just trying to figure out how does what the Board and Dr. Evans adopted earlier this year about expansion of early childhood – and I see it in some of your actions in kindergarten – but how does that then translate into alignment for first and second grades as we discussed? If this is a five-year plan, I was hoping to see some elements of that in here.

Ms. Holtje: We did begin last year with a cohort of kindergarten teachers and now the Department of Education has come back and said. "We don't only want to meet with teachers. We need to meet with the administrators to begin the implementation of the new guidelines for kindergarten." So I believe we're just taking it step-by-step to first focus on kindergarten and then move it up the continuum to first, second, and third grades.

Ms. Peron: Right. So the reading instruction has been planned and I do work with Dr. Kazmark. As you can see, there is a continuum for phonics training and implementation in the classroom. In k, 1, and 2 it's called Imagine It. In kindergarten we call it Phonemic Awareness and Phonics Instruction. There's not a set program because it does come under the objectives and the skills of Creative Curriculum. The training is ongoing. It begins in preschool and goes to the second grade. A cohort of our k, 1, and 2 grade teachers have been training with the Reading Language Center, which are the developers of Phonics First. We have aligned all of our skills and standards to the kindergarten standards. So there is a flow and a continuum in that. We're beginning on the vertical articulation work. As we infuse preschool in our elementary schools those teams are becoming tighter teams. That vertical articulation is taking place.

Comm. Irving: You know all that information. This is the first time we're getting it and I think that somehow if we're talking about the expansion of early childhood beyond pre-k at some point in time what you just said needs to be spelled out in paper and writing to the Board for how this aligns. This report is what it is. It's a four or five-year plan for early childhood as it currently exists. I think some of the conversation about having the five-year plan I had an expectation of at least seeing some of that in here as well.

Ms. Peron: I think that this plan as you see it for yourself does not serve that purpose because...

Comm. Irving: I agree.

Ms. Peron: Let me explain to you why. It's very specific to what we do in preschool for our three and four-year-olds. There is a portion that says transition from preschool through third grade but it's called transition. It's in the transition piece. This plan is specific to questions that the state poses to our district on how we will meet each of the components of the preschool program. What you're asking for would probably need to be in a different document. I would probably need to work with Dr. Kazmark so we can show you the alignment, which we have presented to you in the past for literacy, our literacy development over time over what's happening as far as program implementation and professional development for teachers. But this program plan is very specific to preschool.

Comm. Irving: Fair enough. I'm just saying it's an expectation that now exists. So at some point in time it needs to be shared for what's our plan for getting there more so than anything else. At face value I'm thinking with the early childhood plan also in mind. The argument you make is fair and makes sense, but I just think at some point in time we should have that conversation for how we're going to make that happen.

Dr. Evans: As Ms. Peron has already mentioned, Dr. Kazmark and Janice Basilicato do have a plan. In fact, she just alluded to phonics and other components. It's not written out in a very comprehensive report like this, but I received a very brief overview of it in two or three pages describing what they're doing. Dr. Cavanna can orchestrate this and in an upcoming meeting we can share that information with the Board so the Board will know where we are.

Comm. Irving: Or maybe just in curriculum at first. I don't want to rush this either. I just want to make sure we keep it in the forefront.

Ms. Peron: I think we just need to put it together because everything is really there.

Comm. Irving: I think all the elements seem to be there. That's all I'm saying. I'm not trying to pick on anybody.

Ms. Peron: No, it's fair. It's a good question. It's valid.

Comm. Irving: Nancy, the other question I had was about the assessment tool that's currently being used. Is that process currently in place? Are teachers now using the assessment for the children and putting it online for the parents?

Ms. Holtje: Yes, sir. That presentation was made to the Board in the past and that is still the standard practice across all preschool providers.

Comm. Irving: Providers and in-district?

Ms. Holtje: Yes. We just provided all of our preschool teachers with I-pads as well as the children to help them facilitate the assessment process.

Ms. Peron: They also have an app on their Smartphone and they can go right on there to document, upload, and take a look at their data for their class.

Comm. Irving: Where are we with STAR and being able to teach our preschool teachers and providers about how to utilize the four-year-old level of STAR? It just wasn't reflected in the professional development plan so I wasn't sure exactly when that was coming into place.

Ms. Holtje: You'll see that action very soon. That will be forthcoming now for the spring to get that on board with our teachers.

Comm. Irving: So it's the hope to implement STAR next year?

Ms. Holtje: The hope is to implement it this year in June.

Comm. Irving: Provided that we are able to give the preschool teachers and staff enough training. The other piece we've seen with STAR is the struggle in the schools of getting faculty comfortable with the lingo and jargon and being able to explain that to parents. A lot of parents this year were saying that it wasn't adequately explained to them exactly what the STAR assessment meant. I know we have high hopes for implementing that in June, but I also want to make sure that we're not confusing parents at the end of June for a baseline for where their kids are. That's clearly a problem.

Ms. Holtje: That's not the only assessment that we use. At the end of the year every parent as well as our kindergarten folders reflects our Gold online assessment in all the areas of the curriculum where it states the child's strengths and areas that need improvement. It's a clear picture. We just wanted to take the next step and help align it to the kindergarten assessments and also give us a method to use at the end of our four-year-olds and summer enrichment program.

Ms. Peron: Every classroom has computers. Every teacher is savvy to go online and use their assessment system. So adding early literacy is just actually the training would be for them to know how to access that test, how long it takes, what the parameters are, and then what skills are going to be assessed in early literacy. The skills that are assessed in early literacy are really aligned to the objectives of the curriculum. So if our teachers understand the objectives and the standards in preschool it's very easily aligned to how it's set out and assessed in the Renaissance STAR literacy. In fact, because it is a self-reported assessment system it gives you the report and they have to learn how to read the percentiles. That's really the technical part of it that we need to take care of in-house through professional development. But we already have a set standard and cohort of how we train the teachers. We have a group that we call the assessment support people. They are like two savvy teachers from each of the centers. They are the point people. We train them, they become the trainer, and then they go into their classrooms and they're the support and technical services at their centers and at their schools. We did it because we got the experience using Gold Assessment System. At first it was a really difficult system to understand. But if they can do the Gold Assessment System, they can do early literacy STAR.

Comm. Irving: I just don't want to take lightly the transition. It might be that some parents when they get the reports as well are used to it because they have kids in other grades that use the STAR assessment. That might be an additive as well. My concern is that we just don't take it lightly. I think we all say this would be a great tool to help gauge where kids are at the end of the year and be able to pass off to the kindergarten teacher. But sometimes we all know there's disconnect between the way we think versus how our teachers communicate that information to parents as well. Just go into it with our eyes open.

Comm. Hodges: I want to thank you for your presentation. Please bear with me in some of my ignorance of some of these details and facts. Who is SELA given to in terms of grade level?

Ms. Holtje: Both three and four year-olds. It's a randomly selected group and it's programmatic.

Comm. Hodges: So it's not across the board.

Ms. Holtje: No.

Comm. Hodges: You're looking for a survey of experience. Are three and four-year-olds taught together in the same classrooms or in a specific group?

Ms. Holtje: Some classrooms are mixed. Some might be only three-year-olds and some might be only four-year-olds.

Comm. Hodges: But some of them are mixed.

Ms. Holtje: Some of them are mixed.

Comm. Hodges: What should a student who has gone through two years of our program be able to do, best case? A child who gets entered as a three-year-old...

Ms. Holtje: That child should be fully prepared for kindergarten.

Comm. Hodges: Which means what?

Ms. Holtje: He should be socially/emotionally prepared to sit and interact with his peers, to ask questions, and to follow the routines of the classroom. He should have confidence in him or herself. They should be able to perform the skills that a kindergartener should be able to do. It's across all the domains that are in our curriculum.

Comm. Irving: Are you also asking academically what they should be able to do?

Comm. Hodges: That's really all I'm concerned about.

Comm. Irving: That's the point.

Ms. Holtje: It's not just academic. It's social/emotional. It's cognitive.

Comm. Hodges: You've covered all of those in detail, but nothing was mentioned about the academics.

Ms. Holtje: They go to the preschool standards. They go into the curriculum. The assessment tool is key because it goes up to age 6. So what we tell our teachers also is that those that are at a higher level have to then go to the Common Core. They should have a very firm grip on phonological awareness. They should have the ability to read and write their names, sight words, and read short books. It depends on the level of the child. Some children might be able to read more difficult books. But they should have a good understanding and ability to perform those skills. In math they should be able to, not just know their numbers, but understand what a number is. It doesn't matter if I can count to 100. If I don't know what 1 and 2 mean I can't function in math. They have to have a firm understanding of directionality, spatial relationships, how to look at data and graphs, come up with ideas, and also interpret that data.

Comm. Hodges: I'm going to guess Ms. Peron knows where I'm trying to go.

Ms. Holtje: Yes, and so do I.

Comm. Hodges: Is it the expressly stated goal in this five-year plan to get students who have experienced two years of preschool to be able to read?

*Comm. Mendez enters the meeting at 7:08 p.m.

Ms. Holtje: It is there. Correct?

Comm. Irving: It is.

Ms. Holtje: It's right before the Bright Futures.

Ms. Peron: It is the statement that the Board and myself developed.

Comm. Hodges: So if you have three and four-year-old students who are in the same class, how is it anticipated that he or she would experience that kind of progression?

Ms. Holtje: It's called differentiated instruction.

Ms. Peron: It's called differentiated instruction. This is where it lies on the expertise of the teacher. It's not an easy skill to have. You have to be a seasoned, experienced

teacher, really understand child development, and know your standards. We don't have many mixed classes, but it really is an ideal situation to have a mixed class. However, it is a difficult and complex one. We've looked at our teachers who have more experience and then there are centers that say to us we have done this for a couple of years and we have looped teachers with children. So they're moving on to the next grade level because they understand where their children were at, where they left off, and where they need to take them. The continuum and the standards are sometimes well beyond what the expectation of the New Jersey Teaching and Learning Standards are. Sometimes the curriculum takes them further than that. I think that's the expectation that the entire Department of Early Childhood sets. We take the child for where they're at and where they need to be. Reading happens often throughout the day at many different levels and times. The read-aloud is above their level and then during the day they go at their level and sometimes below. They're seeing and hearing words and they have the ability to retell the story, follow the sequence of a story, and make predictions. With this new system in place their vocabulary really expands and takes them from 3,000 words to 5,000 words if they go through the system in 10 months.

Comm. Hodges: Vocabulary is such a major stumbling block here. What kinds of things are we doing to help parents better understand the role that they can play in helping to improve their students' vocabulary?

Ms. Holtje: In the five-year plan we have our family and parental involvement piece. We have a supervisor just for that and the goal is to bring parents on board. Our family workers in our centers hold monthly meetings with the focus being on literacy in the home and how to support what happens in preschool at the home. It's the home-school connection. We also have our teachers that provide newsletters mostly weekly or according to the study that they're doing and it's provided in the languages of the children. That also gives parents activities to help reinforce the skills that are occurring in the classroom. And our wiki is very good too, sir.

Comm. Hodges: That's good. The reason I ask the question is because I was looking at this proposed parent education schedule on page 23. It covers a number of topics, all of which are important. I just wondered about the literacy piece given our...

Ms. Holtje: That's for our health team.

Ms. Peron: That's just the health component.

Ms. Holtje: If we move forward, the next section is family and community involvement. We have a list. Some of them say child development workshops where they meet with parents consistently. We are at all the back-to-school nights. Our staff is there. Teachers are also there. That's a great opportunity for them to use. But the family workers that are assigned in each preschool center must hold through the grant monthly meetings with parents. It's with an agenda. They have four Common Core topics that they must address and literacy has to be addressed throughout the year.

Ms. Peron: These are department-led workshops that we actually facilitate and provide logistics for the family workers and the families. But apart from that, each family worker has gone through the training through Rutgers. So they have literacy workshops that they have to work at. They have resource workshops that they provide to the parents and when we submit the Board approval for the grant it's usually in that packet where you will see all of the detailed activities and workshops that the family workers provide to their families. You get that packet with that Board action in June, but we can share that information with you.

Comm. Hodges: I'd appreciate that. Because of the difficulty in our community with this it's very incumbent upon us to be aggressive. I know some educators say we take care of what's in our house only or primarily, but we have to do both from my point of view. I'm not mentioning any names, Dr. Evans. I'm just making a statement. That is a crucial thing. Of concern to me is what happens with a student who is only there for one year and they're now coming into that kindergarten environment, say it's a fourth grader or what have you.

Ms. Holtje: We do have a transition activity where our master teachers are our preschool intervention referral teams. If the child was in one of our preschool centers there is what we call our transitional folder where it lists the strengths and areas in need of instruction. That's also an opportunity for the preschool teacher. Very often their information is on the folder. The kindergarten teacher reaches out and sees what worked and where she can start off. It varies by child.

Ms. Peron: You make a good point because also the length of the child's attendance in preschool is listed. It makes a huge difference. Whether or not they attend 10 months, 6 months, or 20 months makes a huge difference in a child's life in terms of readiness and preparation. I want to say they are at a disadvantage because we've done studies to show that preschool does impact the performance of a child when they enter kindergarten. It doesn't sustain all the way up to third grade because you need to maintain that through your early grades as well, but it does make a huge impact whether or not they have attended or not attended preschool and how long they have persevered.

Comm. Hodges: That's why I asked the question about the students being in combined classes. Their attention span is challenging enough. I'm sure we do a very fine job applying differentiated teaching instruction, but that age of development is a little...

Ms. Peron: It's very difficult.

Comm. Hodges: Yes.

Ms. Peron: And challenging.

Comm. Hodges: What are we seeing in terms of proficiencies in kindergarten coming in?

Ms. Peron: Proficiencies in terms of...

Comm. Hodges: Reading proficiencies.

Ms. Peron: I don't have the data to show what the different levels of children are coming in at. That's why we want to align and have something closer to what they are assessed in at the beginning of kindergarten with early literacy. We want to show at the end of pre-k here are the skills and here's what they're doing. We've added enrichment for the summer instead of summer school. We've added that component to the five-year program so that there is not a fade effect for those two months in the summer. So when they go into kindergarten they're ready. Children have demonstrated at all levels and we have seen that we have less children at a low risk coming in. DIBELS showed us that when we assessed them about two years ago when we did a study for that, but I have not looked at that data of recent because it's data that I would need to manually collect and actually manipulate on paper and do it ourselves. We do small samplings

and we have that. We have pockets of where we have the biggest concentration of preschoolers coming into kindergarten that we know have attended preschool. We have some data about that. We speak to teachers. We survey teachers. We talk to kindergarten teachers all the time so that we can address where we see the gaps in the curriculum. More and more we hear that not by even looking at the transition folder they know that these children have attended preschool because of the behaviors and the skills that they demonstrate early on in September.

Comm. Hodges: I don't mean to be dismissive of the behavior because it starts with behavior in order to get the child to focus on the instruction.

Ms. Peron: Self-regulation.

Comm. Hodges: I certainly recognize that. On page 73, is this a survey or the general test they're looking at?

Ms. Holtje: This is our assessment data. It's the actual data that we had and it was compared to the state standard and the curriculum. As stated before, sometimes the standard is lower than the actual objective in the Creative Curriculum so we wanted to see if we're hitting the higher standard. I just added it all in there so that we could see where the strengths and the weaknesses were.

Comm. Hodges: This is fine, and as you can well imagine I was drawn instantly to it.

Ms. Holtje: Yes, sir. I knew you would be.

Comm. Hodges: Recognizing letters that are grouped to form words, 35%. I'm trying to get a sense of what that tells you.

Ms. Holtje: That tells us that we need to have teachers focus more. I wrote somewhere that when we see that the percentage is lower a lot of times with this assessment it's that the teacher is not addressing it, they're not teaching it, or they're not looking for it. They're all issues, don't get me wrong. Through Phonics First and the training of the teachers it's really bringing the attention to these skills to see how we are developing starting with the 3's. What does it look like for a three-year-old? What does it look like for a four-year-old? We're expecting these to rise.

Comm. Hodges: That's my question. What kinds of interventions are you applying to address this particular concern?

Ms. Holtje: Currently the read-aloud is fairly new. This will be the second year of full implementation for read-alouds. We're also working closely with the curriculum developer because we feel that a lot of the read-alouds are geared towards the four-year-olds where we want them to help with the 3's. Our Phonics First, as I stated before. They have begun the work with all the teachers and our teachers are saying they never thought of that. It's not that they haven't heard it before. It's coming from a different place and in a different format. It is all to guide teachers to prepare children for kindergarten, to develop those skills that are needed.

Comm. Hodges: There were other questions about testing that were in here, but I can't find them now. So I'll simply say I would like to see the data of the students that are entering kindergarten and where they are. As part of the transformation plan we had discussed earlier our goal was to have 75% of those students be able to perform and read so that you could then address your attention to making them better students,

which I'm hoping Dr. Evans will openly buy into, and also enlist their parents in a larger role in helping them. In the third year is where the drop-off begins and that age group will listen to just about anything you say and they love you. So if you can instill those set of disciplines and those skills you're way ahead. I would like to see that data as to where they are and then some thought as to what we do. I know you're talking about addressing the universe that's not been tapped or has not been partaking of our educational preschool program. That has to be done. But what do we do with that one-year child who comes in in kindergarten and does not have the benefit of... What kind of transitional services? That's what I would like to see in the plan.

Ms. Peron: What kind of intervention services do we have in kindergarten?

Comm. Hodges: Right, because this is a five-year plan looking ahead. If we go ahead and pull them in there's going to be at least some period where a child may get one year or a year and a half or whatever it is and that's going to impact our case performance levels. That's what I'd like the plan to capture as well. I'll stop there, but thank you very much.

Comm. Irving: Thank you, ladies.

Comprehensive Annual Financial Report – June 30, 3013

Dr. Evans: Annually, as you are aware, after an audit of our finances is complete a report is presented first to me and then to the Board. Item B is a report on the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report, the CAFR, and I'd like for Mr. Kilpatrick to introduce our guests who will be making that report.

Mr. Richard Kilpatrick: Good evening everyone. Tonight I feel honored really to introduce Jeff Bliss, the managing partner for Lerch, Vinci, & Higgins, who managed our project and got it underway. Last night he met with the fiscal committee and earlier that day we met with Dr. Evans. He'll be talking about the report that was sent home to you. The three major items that we have are the AMR, the Auditor's Management Report, the big fat CAFR, and also he provided us, which we left on your desk, with the comparison of the fund balances for discussion. I don't know if you have any questions about that. Jeff, take it away.

Mr. Jeff Bliss: Thank you, Rich.

Comm. Irving: Jeff, good evening. I just wanted to make a point for the sake of clarity and timeliness. I'm going to assume that everyone has read the report. So if you don't mind if you could highlight more the corrective actions that you have identified and then go into the fiscal piece. I think those two would probably be the biggest elements. If you could just kind of shape how this audit came about before we get into that that would be great.

Mr. Bliss: Okay. Just as a brief overview of the audit, with respect to the findings we issued what we call an unmodified opinion and an unmodified opinion on the financial statements means a clean opinion. Our job as the auditors is to issue an opinion on whether your financial statements are fairly stated, whether they are prepared in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles, and whether they're consistent with financial statements issued in prior years, as well as were there any scope limitations. I'm happy to report that our opinion is unmodified, meaning all those criteria were met. That is of utmost importance that an unmodified opinion on the financial statements be issued. We also are required to issue findings related to

compliance and internal controls over financial reporting. In that report, I'm very happy to report that we had no findings that rose to the level of reporting under government auditing standards. Nor did we have any material weaknesses or significant deficiencies in internal controls that required us to report those findings under government auditing standards. In addition, we're required to give you an opinion on your compliance with your major federal and state grants, as well as your internal control over compliance regarding following grant procedures. Again, under that report I am happy to report that there is also an unmodified opinion on your compliance, meaning you complied in all material respects with those grant compliance requirements. In addition, we had no findings that rose to the level of a significant deficiency or material weakness under grant compliance. For the years that I've been doing this audit, this is the first time that we have issued a report that didn't have significant deficiencies or material weaknesses in internal controls. That's a major accomplishment. It's a tremendous improvement from where we've been and I really have to commend the finance committee for keeping everyone's feet to the fire and the administration for following through on the corrective action plans related to prior year audits. In addition, there are no repeat recommendations in this audit. Again, that's a first. With respect to the findings in this year's audit, under financial planning, accounting, and reporting we had two findings which we kind of call housekeeping items in accounting. They related to a review of some of our payroll accounts. There were some balances in there that looked like they were excess and those excess balances can be transferred over to the general account and be added to our fund balances at the end of the year. In addition, we have some old prior year receivables in the general fund and the capital projects fund. It's not a lot of money in relation to the district as a whole, but we need to just take a look at them. They are several years old and we need to write those off if we can't collect on them. They are really housekeeping items, not anything that's material. Under school purchasing we had two findings this year. One related to purchasing of school supplies where we did not solicit quotes or there was no evidence of quotes being solicited. We're not talking about a lot of money, but we do need to follow the regulations with respect to obtaining quotes when they're required. We also had one finding related to an instance where a contract for professional service was entered into. However, it was not approved and we did not see any evidence of it being approved by the Board in the minutes. Those kinds of contracts that are over the bid threshold need to be approved by Board action and should be part of the minutes. Under food services we had no recommendations in that area. Under student activities, the accounts that are maintained at the schools, they are monies collected by students and spent by students on student clubs and organizations. We had two recommendations there, one regarding authorized check signers in School 13. In reviewing the signatures on the checks it appeared that halfway through the year the signatures looked like the persons that were authorized to sign those checks there seemed to be other people signing them. We really can't have that. Only the authorized signers should sign them. In all honesty, the bank shouldn't even cash them if it's not the authorized signatures. Also, just as a general comment in reviewing all of the accounts, we noticed some disbursements that came out of some of the student accounts that really were not student-related type expenses. They were not expenses that the students really participate in. We need to just enforce with the principals and the treasurers of those funds that the money can only be used for student organizations, clubs, and student body activities. With respect to the application for state school aid, which is basically a report of student counts and student population, we are required to look at the district work papers that support the counts that you submit to the state. We had some differences when we compared the work papers to the report filed to the state. Under transportation we had no recommendations. Under facilities and capital assets we made a recommendation there regarding transferring funds into the capital project account. We awarded a contract for which we thought we had sufficient funds

from a grant award. However, when we awarded the contract for the amount of the grant that we thought the amount was, when the actual grant work paper came in it was a little short. It was about \$50,000 short of what the contract award was. So we need to transfer money into that capital project fund and cover the cost of that contract. In miscellaneous there were no items. Again, a very important aspect of any audit is that there are no repeat findings. All the findings that were reported in the prior year audit have been corrected. Corrective action was taken and there are no significant deficiencies in internal controls reported and no material weaknesses. If there are any questions on the comments, if not I'll go to the finances briefly.

Comm. Irving: I just want to reiterate what I said last night. Great work to the business office for helping to correct those actions! I know in the past we have had repeat audit findings. Just hats off to all the work you guys are doing in order to make sure that doesn't happen.

Comm. Hodges: I also want to underscore that they were also looking at the way the rest of the districts performed. This was a very high performance on that standard statewide. I think the Board needs to be aware of that and appreciate that because that may certainly have some QSAC implications, or at least an argument or two. I wanted the Board to be made aware of that.

Comm. Kerr: I also want to put on record that on the school purchasing program, the recommendation here regarding the purchases, we felt and we did make the point at our meeting that we thought this was kind of immaterial. It did not reach the level of a violation as such because there were varying things being crossed in the process. We thought it did not rise to the level here, but as Mr. Bliss said in the meeting, it happened so we have to have a record of it. It wasn't something that will come back to punish the district but rather we're making a note of it. We just want there to be a record that we did question that aspect.

Mr. Bliss: Yes you did, quite frankly.

Comm. Hodges: There was also an incident regarding the school activity fund. The interest was stated last night that the students not be harmed, that they don't lose their activity fund because of some adult's misbehavior. They should not be in any way jeopardized because of what somebody else has done. We don't know how that's going to be resolved or addressed, but certainly there should still be an activity fund that the parents and the students can build and utilize in the future.

Dr. Evans: You don't know how it's going to be addressed, but I know how it's going to be addressed. Actually, we're going to review some of this, particularly the example that you gave and one or two others that involve the schools or specific departments. I will be making assignments to senior staff to follow up with those people and make sure that corrective action occurs.

Comm. Kerr: Lastly, we also did question the contract that was given to the state university in that amount that was not part of our approval as a Board. We were concerned that something as significant as that and something which has played such a significant role in one of our programs here was able to find its way without us not having a discussion and approval. It's our hope that something like this will not come back at us in our audit as an audit finding.

Comm. Hodges: Is there any way to retroactively put in a resolution that the Board can pass so that it will be on record that it has passed it? For QSAC purposes if that's out there, that's still a problem.

Dr. Evans: Correct me if I'm wrong, Ms. Pollak. This occurred in the previous year. I don't know if we can take an action this year to undo or change something for a previous year. Okay. But rest assured this won't happen again. This is one of our significant school interventions that we're implementing districtwide. This should not have happened and it's not going to happen again.

*Comm. Martinez enters the meeting at 7:39 p.m.

Comm. Hodges: That was for a substantial amount of money, too. The Board needs to be aware that.

Mr. Bliss: Okay. With respect to the finances, there was a sheet that was passed out by Mr. Kilpatrick summarizing the fund balances at the end of the year. I'm just going to summarize the balances and not go particularly into each individual line. Just overall, the district ended the year with an increase in fund balance of approximately \$1.6 million. So you basically added to the fund balances roughly by \$1.6 million. You ended the year in total with fund balances of roughly \$70 million. However, those monies are not all available for future use because some of it has been restricted for specific expenditures and some of it has already been designated and assigned to the current year's budget. So when you just break the \$70 million down into its pieces about \$9.5 million of it has been restricted for only expenditures related to capital projects, maintenance, and emergency type purchases. It cannot be used for any other purposes other than the purposes it's been restricted for. You can't take capital restricted funds and use it to pay for tuition costs, health benefits costs, or for salaries. It has to be used for capital. The same goes with maintenance reserves. They must be used for costs related to maintenance projects. That's roughly \$9.5 million. We have restricted, which is called excess surplus, the amount of fund balance over the 2% that must be used in the 14-15 budget of approximately \$6 million. You have no choice on what to do with those funds. Those funds must be used and are earmarked for use in the 14-15 budget. That's roughly \$6 million. You had about \$334,000 assigned to open purchase orders at the end of the year. Those are monies that have been assigned, committed, and rolled into the next year. At this point in time those monies are gone. Those bills have been paid. Those purchase orders have been liquidated and therefore that money is no longer available. The biggest portion of your fund balances at the end of the year, approximately 66% of it, which came to roughly \$43 million, was used to balance the 13-14 budget. You had \$70 million and you used \$43 million of it to balance the 13-14 budget. That compares to the audit that we did, which was 12-13. You used only \$27 million. You went from \$27 million in 12-13 to using \$43 million in 14-15. It's a jump of \$16 million. It's a tremendous increase. It's a number that I'm not sure how sustainable it will be in the future, if you will have \$43 million available at the end of every year to fund expenses of the next budget. It's something that you have to be aware of. We have to obviously address it and have a plan to ensure that if it doesn't come about there has to be something in place to ensure that we can balance the budget. Of this \$70 million at the end of the year approximately 66% is already earmarked for the 13-14 budget and really is no longer available going forward. It leaves you with \$11.2 million at the end of the year, which is called unassigned fund balance. It means that's the money that's available to you going forward barring any other increases that may take place during this year. That \$11.2 million is the maximum amount under the state rules you're allowed to have. It's basically 2% of your budget plus an add-on of approximately \$2 million for certain aid you received during the year

that you didn't budget for. Financially that's where you are at the end of the year. You did increase your fund balance, but you took it and took more than what you increased it by and put it back into the 13-14 budget. It was a big number. It was a \$16 million increase of what you used over this year. It's something that you need to be aware of and we have to watch the use of that surplus.

Comm. Irving: Thank you. Dr. Evans, before we open up to the Board for questions, do you want to say anything?

Dr. Evans: I'd like to thank Jeff for the work that he and his colleague did. I'd be remiss if I didn't thank Mr. Kilpatrick and his staff. To have the kind of accolades, the recognition, the non-repeat findings, and those kinds of things to occur I think is monumental for our district. That requires a lot of work, more than people realize. However, the challenge that lies ahead is one that we're going to have to do some serious planning around. I'll talk about a methodology or an approach to that in just a few minutes. But I do want to thank them for their efforts.

Comm. Irving: Thank you, Dr. Evans. Are there any questions from the Board? I do have one comment that we discussed in our finance committee at length last night. I am not the most financially astute person in the world, which is why last night I asked them to just break it down. Tell us what are we looking at and just make it very clear for everyone at the table what we're looking at, having to come up with \$42.9 million to be able to balance our budget. That does not take into account what the fund balance for this fiscal year will be. I did ask Mr. Kilpatrick when his department will have an idea or his projections of what the fund balance might be. Again, it's a projection. So even if they come back and say \$20 million, it might be \$25 million or \$15 million. We just don't know. But the bottom line is we have a Board retreat on the 14th and this is going to be probably 75% of that conversation that we have that day and trying to figure out for ourselves how we put together a process that adequately aligns with making the best decisions we can. The truth of the matter is if the state is not going to give us any more money and if the tax levy remains the way it is, then we're going to have to make some tough decisions in cutting programs or looking at what areas to cut in order to find a sustainable balance long-term. I don't want there to be any trouble, but to quote a certain someone sitting in the chair across from me, we have spent ourselves into a pretty difficult situation and now we have to figure out a creative way to get out of it. This is real folks and it's going to require us to make some really tough decisions and have some really tough conversations amongst each other and with the Superintendent. The bottom line is that fiscally it's our responsibility to figure this out.

Comm. Hodges: I don't know whether this is the place for this. \$31 million is what we're currently paying charter schools. Another \$16 is for the attendance problem. Ascension is going to open at least one of its schools next year. That's another \$2 million or possibly more.

Comm. Irving: And remember, Science and Technology is expanding as well.

Comm. Hodges: That's right. Unfortunately, that comes right off the top. So the charter schools are going to continue to eat in and there's no way to consolidate... Well, there is a way that they want us to consolidate. As you recall, from the transformation plan that was voted for, they want us to allow cohabitation. If we change our Choice School system some of those schools are going to become under-populated, which could lead to charter schools who are requiring real estate taking over our school buildings, plus our money. You just need to be aware of what the issue is. It's going to get worse because in the e-mail that the Commissioner exchanged between

the head of the Ascension group he wanted them to open several schools here. That means more money coming out of our budget leading to a possible reduction of programs, on and on.

Comm. Irving: Dr. Hodges brings up that point and my opinion of charter schools aside, the reality is it's a huge hit. There's just no way around it, but I think that there needs to be a conversation that we have with the Commissioner about the financial impact that approving these charters are having on the local school district. We're still being flat-funded every single year and not having the capacity of raise taxes on our taxpayers. We are in a pretty tough situation fiscally and no one is stepping up to the plate to at least be able to remediate that in some way and somehow. The Commissioner has come here every three or four months to address this, but the next time he comes that should be a topic of conversation. He's got to go back on some level because it's his responsibility to go to his Governor and say, "We may have to look at how we're funding public schools a little differently because these kids are not getting the resources." By law they're not giving us the resources they're supposed to give us, but every single year it becomes even more difficult to be able to sustain this.

Comm. Hodges: The Governor's position is that he wants competition. He doesn't really care if public schools are shortchanged for the money because he wants them to compete on that basis, which is a problem. It would be interesting to see what he says, but I don't look for help in that quarter, particularly now that he's running.

Comm. Irving: Anyone else?

Comm. Teague: Even more so now, he needs to try to gain the approval of the far-right wing. So he's really going to try to cut us down and do whatever he can do to damage us to get his popularity with them. I just don't know.

Comm. Irving: Thank you, Jeff.

REPORT OF STATE DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT

Dr. Evans: I have two very brief items. The first one has to do with our graduation rate. It was brought to our attention this afternoon that we were the subject of serious conversation in the State Board of Education meeting today because of our graduation rate and the fact that we've been so successful in increasing it. Once again we've become an anomaly in the state. We are an anomaly with regards to increases in our New Jersey ASK scores. That was in one of the recent publications and I actually talked to Bari Erlichson who recognized our district as being an anomaly in a day and time when state test scores, particularly New Jersey ASK scores, are not increasing statewide because of the introduction of Common Core expectations and standards in New Jersey ASK in particular. Ours increased and we're a definite anomaly. Then today again to be recognized for significantly increasing our graduation rate we once again are another anomaly. You will read about it in tomorrow's newspapers. Ms. Shafer and I were interviewed today by folk from the Star Ledger and the Bergen Record. So we're doing something right. Let's put it that way and the challenge is going to be to continue the kinds of increases that we are now realizing. The second item has to do with creating a process to address in part the fiscal cliff. As I thought through how to perhaps approach the planning process not only for the fiscal cliff but for at least two other challenges that we face that require some serious planning, I decided to take the lead actually in creating the process and leading these efforts. However, the individuals within senior staff will lead the effort for their particular area. You have a memorandum there that went out late yesterday asking people to serve on a steering

committee. The memo speaks for itself and we're going to talk in greater detail about this on the 14th. There's more to come and there are some additional materials that I'm still working on that I won't have completed until either the end of this week or early next week. But it basically says that there are three planning groups that will be put together, one around cliff planning and one around our strategic plan. Our strategic plan is a 2009-2014 plan and I want in place by June 30, 2014 a new strategic plan or a revision to our current strategic plan for the next five-year period. So planning around that has to occur. Then the last item is a combination of facilities planning and School Choice planning. I've expressed my desire to expand School Choice options for elementary students. So those three planning efforts will occur simultaneously with three different work groups and then I'm putting together a senior level in terms of CEOs for companies in Paterson or senior managers in a lot of the organizations, executive directors and so on, to advise this process. It is literally beginning to unfold as I speak. When we meet on the 14th in the workshop at least the initiative drafts of the documents will have been prepared and engage you in discussion. One of the critical questions is there will need to be reporting periodically to the Board obviously and soliciting input to both the process and the evolving products from the Board. That's one of the pieces that I'm working on right now. I'll need the Board to help me with the frequency with which you would want to be informed and react to some of the activity that's going on. But so far all I've done is draft this and I'm talking to people about being a member of the group. People are very willing to help us to do this so we should have a very good discussion about this on the 14th.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

It was moved by Comm. Mendez, seconded by Comm. Guzman 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. Mendez, 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 27, 2013 in the grand sum of \$6,687,306.56 beginning with vendor number 400 and ending with vendor number 799535 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. Mendez that Resolution No. 1 be adopted. On roll call all members voted as follows:

Comm. Cleaves: Yes.

Comm. Guzman: Yes, and I abstain from anything with the City of Paterson.

Comm. Hodges: I abstain from anything having to do with the YMCA and everything else is no.

Comm. Irving: Are the reimbursements for NABSE conference in the bills list that's here? They are. We just need to abstain from our name.

Comm. Martinez: Yes.

Comm. Mendez: Yes.

Comm. Simmons: Yes.

Comm. Teague: Yes, but I abstain from anything with my name attached to it.

Comm. Cleaves: Yes, and I abstain from anything dealing with my name.

Comm. Irving: Yes, and I abstain from anything dealing with my attendance at the NABSE conference.

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.

STAFF MEMBER	CONFERENCE	DATE	AMOUNT
*Dwayne Cox	HSC Workshops: Classroom Management and Effective Teaching of Children and Adolescents with Emotional and Behavioral Problems	November 11, 2013	\$139.00 (registration)
Teacher/School No. 10	Totowa, NJ		
*Esther Ferraro	HSC Workshops: Classroom Management and Effective Teaching of Children and Adolescents with Emotional and Behavioral Problems	November 11, 2013	\$139.00 (registration)
Teacher/School No. 10	Totowa, NJ		

*Romesha Golaub	HSC Workshops: Classroom Management and Effective Teaching of Children and Adolescents with Emotional and Behavioral Problems	November 11, 2013	\$139.00 (registration)
Teacher/School No. 10	Totowa, NJ		
*Luana Hatcher	HSC Workshops: Classroom Management and Effective Teaching of Children and Adolescents with Emotional and Behavioral Problems	November 11, 2013	\$139.00 (registration)
Instructional Asst./School No. 10	Totowa, NJ		
*Eva Razzak	HSC Workshops: Classroom Management and Effective Teaching of Children and Adolescents with Emotional and Behavioral Problems	November 11, 2013	\$139.00 (registration)
Teacher/School No. 10	Totowa, NJ		
*Mary McCaffrey	Schillinger Educational Consultants: Targeting Priority Testing Proficiencies in Reading & Writing	December 4, 2013	\$160.00 (registration)
Teacher/School No. 1	Clark, NJ		
*Helaine Rapkin	Schillinger Educational Consultants: Targeting Priority Testing Proficiencies in Reading & Writing	December 4, 2013	\$160.00 (registration)
Teacher/School No. 1	Clark, NJ		
*Heather Raywood	Schillinger Educational Consultants: Targeting Priority Testing Proficiencies in Reading & Writing	December 4, 2013	\$160.00 (registration)
Teacher/School No. 1	Clark, NJ		
Dany Estupinan	Annual Bilingual/ESL Conference	December 6, 2013	\$135.00 (registration)
Teacher/School No. 10	Wayne, NJ		
Sergia Felix	Annual Bilingual/ESL Conference	December 6, 2013	\$135.00 (registration)
Teacher/School No. 10	Wayne, NJ		
Elizabeth Geron	Annual Bilingual/ESL Conference	December 6, 2013	\$135.00 (registration)
Teacher/School No. 10	Wayne, NJ		
Sulay Leon	Annual Bilingual/ESL Conference	December 6, 2013	\$135.00 (registration)
Teacher/School No. 10	Wayne, NJ		
Blanca Martinez	Annual Bilingual/ESL Conference	December 6, 2013	\$135.00 (registration)
Teacher/School No. 10	Wayne, NJ		
Adalia Sibrian	Annual Bilingual/ESL Conference	December 6, 2013	\$135.00 (registration)
Teacher/School No. 10	Wayne, NJ		
Magalys Siri	Annual Bilingual/ESL Conference	December 6, 2013	\$135.00 (registration)
Teacher/School No. 10	Wayne, NJ		
Paul Van Laere	Annual Bilingual/ESL Conference	December 6, 2013	\$135.00 (registration)
Teacher/School No. 10	Wayne, NJ		
Michael McGinley	Advancing Achievement in STEM	December 6, 2013	\$149.00 (registration)
Principal/JFK-STEM Academy	Eatontown, NJ		
Irene Del Rosso	Grant Writing Workshop/Grant Writing USA	December 12 & 13, 2013	\$425.00 (registration)
Supervisor of NCLB	Mahwah, NJ		

TOTAL CONFERENCES: 18
TOTAL AMOUNT: \$2829.00

**For ratification*

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

GENERAL BUSINESS

Items Requiring a Vote

Curriculum and Instruction

Comm. Martinez: The curriculum committee met on Monday, December 2, 2013 and began promptly at 6:36 concluding at 8:17. In attendance were Commissioners Martinez, Kerr, and Cleaves. Also in attendance were Dr. Cavanna, Susana Peron, Nancy Aguado-Holtje, Maria Santa, and Janet Basilicato. The meeting began with the presentation that was just given to you all earlier today. For the sake of not being redundant, I don't think I have to actually read through the comments. Some of the things that were touched on that I will go over – I'm not sure if it was mentioned in the presentation that currently 80% of the students who are of preschool age are being served in the district. The intent is to up that number to that greater of 90% targeting three specific neighborhoods. Those neighborhoods are South Paterson, Riverside, and Hillcrest. It was also shared with us that folks in certain communities are oftentimes reluctant to send their children to schools that are not in their respective neighborhoods thereby necessitating the need to expand preschool services in those specific neighborhoods. It was also shared that pretests were given to all students who have gone to kindergarten in the district to gauge the level of knowledge. As we would imagine it was demonstrated that students who do not have the preschool exposure oftentimes start off behind in comparisons to their peers who do have this preschool exposure. Ms. Aguado-Holtje went into detail with the Creative Curriculum System for Preschools, which is the preschool curriculum that is currently being used. As was given in the presentation, a sample schedule was provided that begins with their daily morning meetings and ran through the day, concluding with an afternoon roundup. That was really the gist of the presentation that was given because it was just given to you all. Unless there are questions after the report then we can get back into that. If not, we'll just move into the next piece. Dr. Cavanna also shared with us an overview of the No Child Left Behind expenditures and the timeline for the drawdowns of those monies. During this presentation, Comm. Kerr expressed concern that there needs to be some type of explanation as to why so much money is continually being carried over from year to year when there are obvious needs here in the district and the monies are available. Yet we haven't been able to efficiently spend that money in a timely fashion thereby creating the need to carryover the money from year to year. Perhaps afterwards we can ask Dr. Cavanna to enlighten us a little bit more with some information regarding the expenditures. We then moved onto certain action items that were listed. They were action items that we are presenting, A-1 through A-19. We went into detail with some of the action items, A-1 being the No Child Left Behind expenditures. Another one that we moved onto that actually required some attention, and I'm hoping that we can get some clarification on, was A-4, the approved adoption of the research-based state-approved Focal Point, Principal Performance Rubrics. It was a rather lengthy package that was sent to us. Even though I read through it as best as I could I still did have some questions. I'm sure other Commissioners do as well. So after this report hopefully we can get a little bit more information on A-4. Also, A-7 was discussed at length. It has to do with the implementation of the Clearinghouse Student

Tracker Program for all high school students in the guidance department. It's a database to provide our schools on all subsequent enrollments of post-secondary institutions. This is something that is required by Race to the Top and it tracks our high school students for up to six years after they graduate high school. It's more of an efficient way. If I'm not mistaken, oftentimes in the past we were really gauging these numbers based on word-of-mouth, but we really had no way of following up efficiently to make sure that they were actually attending, or more importantly graduating from these universities and institutions. So this program allows us to monitor the progress of our students who are graduating from our high schools moving on to college and to track their performance and their graduation rates moving on thereafter for a clip of up to six years. That concluded the discussions for the action items. There were no other special items that were discussed and this concludes my report.

Comm. Hodges: You say that the clearinghouse was required by Race to the Top?

Comm. Martinez: Correct.

Comm. Hodges: Are there any other companies that do this?

Comm. Martinez: I'm unsure of that. Perhaps I can defer to Dr. Evans or someone else.

Dr. Evans: Dr. Cavanna will respond.

Dr. Anthony Cavanna: I'm not aware of any other companies that do it, but the recommendation of the United States Department of Education is to use this clearinghouse because they're established and they've been around for a while. They do have national statistics and they work with almost every single college and university. They have a pretty good track record.

Comm. Hodges: Okay. What kind of identifying information do we have to give them about our students?

Comm. Irving: It's really primarily for athletes, right? So the kids declare where they're playing and where they're going. Thereafter we now have access to following them in their academic career from high school into college.

Comm. Hodges: I'm familiar with that clearinghouse. I'm talking about this particular company here. Is this the same thing?

Dr. Cavanna: It's similar, but this one is for everybody. I'm not sure exactly what information we have to give them. We have to give them perhaps a student number. But the reason why they are recommended is because they follow the federal regulations for confidentiality and they follow the students. I can get that information if you'd like, but I'm not sure exactly what information we give them. I know that most high schools in the country that are in Race to the Top use this clearinghouse.

Comm. Hodges: That's a concern, the identifying information. I guess my next question was going to be, what will they do with the information? I read some of that in the packet.

Dr. Cavanna: As the Commissioner said, some school districts, especially in the suburbs, are in for a shock because they report 98% college acceptance rates. Some students do go to college and after six months things change and they don't ever

graduate. So they're reporting graduation rates in the 90's and the reality may be that it's in the 70's. That's what will happen, that next year on the state report card we will get exact numbers of who attended college, who stayed in college, and we'll know who graduated college.

Comm. Hodges: Are we opting to assess a surcharge on each of the requesters? It mentions something about the ability of the district to... They get paid not only from fees from us, but when a requester of information, say a business, wants to know when this applicant for a job graduated or if they graduated they get paid for that. But the district is able to attach a surcharge to that. Have we opted to do that?

Dr. Cavanna: I can find out for you. I'm not sure that we do.

Comm. Hodges: Okay. The requester is charged that surcharge. Looking at some of our financial dealings and problems going ahead, I think that all options need to be looked at. I guess the other question was which other districts are using this service.

Dr. Cavanna: I believe that every district in a Race to the Top state is using this service, or they're about to use the service.

Comm. Hodges: Race to the Top has not panned out the way we would have all liked. It raises some issues for me right there. Thank you. Regarding A-6...

Comm. Martinez: Dr. Hodges, while we have Dr. Cavanna at the podium, maybe he can answer some questions about Item A-1, the No Child Left Behind expenditures.

Comm. Kerr: I'm sorry. The question for A-1 regarding the carryover piece, we had that discussion in the curriculum meeting. He knows that there is an outstanding question regarding...

Comm. Martinez: Correct.

Comm. Irving: What's the outstanding question?

Comm. Martinez: While we have you here perhaps you can provide an overview. I know Comm. Kerr had some concerns about the continual rollover of money. The money's there. There needs are there. So why aren't we spending the money in a timely fashion?

Comm. Kerr: What can it be spent on? In particular, I mentioned in that meeting the parental piece. I know prior to Dr. Evans' administration a large portion of Title I monies were used for the parental piece. That is not being done now. So I'm just wondering how we address that piece.

Dr. Cavanna: I did some research and as you remember at the beginning of last year the RACs were sort of gearing up, the Regional Achievement Centers. We had planned to have coaches in the buildings and we hadn't filled all of those positions. Basically the reason why there's such a large amount of money that's left over is because of the change in the year. It was a shorter year this year because they changed the fiscal reporting year. Basically it was unfilled positions and the reason why the positions were unfilled was because when the RACs were gearing up we had planned to have coaches in the Priority and Focus schools and we were asked to put those on hold. So those positions remained unfilled until we got direction from the RACs and they advised us to hire supervisors. They didn't do that until about November so there were positions that

remained unfilled until November. Then in November we had to gear up. We had to write the job descriptions. We had to get the postings up, get them approved by the RACs, and go through the interview process. The principals wanted to be involved because people were going to be working in their buildings. Then we had to get the people that we selected vetted through the RACs. So in other words, there were a lot of unfilled positions and then it got more complicated because some people that we selected were classroom teachers. Of course, the principals didn't want to release their classroom teachers until they got a replacement for them. So most of the amount of money is for unfilled positions and some of that was out of our control. Some of it we take responsibility for, but a lot of it we were told to wait.

Dr. Evans: In addition to that, we're talking about funds that we couldn't use for anything else anyway. It is part of the 30% set aside that was dedicated to the Regional Achievement Centers by the Department. It is money the district would not have had anyway because it typically went to SES providers and other folks that we had no control over. It was repurposed for the RACs.

Comm. Kerr: Dr. Evans, are the RACs a state program? Or is it a federal program?

Dr. Evans: It's some of both. It is an initiative that was part of the waiver that the New Jersey Department of Education was successful in getting from the US Department of Education.

Comm. Kerr: So what portion of the Title allocation do we use to support the RAC system?

Dr. Evans: None of our district money supports it. It's all a part of what is traditionally referred to as 30% set aside. I don't know the basis of the allocation yet. Dr. Cavanna may know more about that than I, but 30% of the fund set aside to pay for what were the SES services and I think there was one other line beyond SES that was there. That's the money that was repurposed to support what's called the RAC approach.

Comm. Kerr: So the RAC component of all of that, was it satisfied in terms of the monetary allocation towards it? I'm trying to find out if 30% was set aside and that money was earmarked for the RACs to use for its program, how would that impact the carryover?

Dr. Evans: That's what Dr. Cavanna was explaining. Let's say you have \$10 million, and I'm just making that up, to serve in this particular case the RAC purpose – and Mr. Rixford and I got together to determine how it would be spent for an entire year – and the people aren't hired until mid-year, then you have money that would have paid those salaries the first half of the year that's not spent by the end of the year and it carries over. That's literally how it happened.

Comm. Kerr: I'm going to make it simple. We have \$6 million. If we did not have the problem that the money was not spent to hire the teachers and what have you, what would be the size of the carryover approximately? How would it reduce the size of the carryover then?

Dr. Evans: The money was dedicated based on the costs if each position had been filled from beginning to the end of the year.

Comm. Kerr: Filled and executed. What would the size of the carryover look like?

Dr. Evans: At least for this purpose there wouldn't be any.

Comm. Kerr: There would not be any.

Dr. Evans: If the positions were filled the very first day the academic year started and they were in place all year and all positions were filled there was money based on what the salaries would have been. That's how the budget was determined. How many people, what would be the salaries, and then filling those positions.

Comm. Kerr: My head is spinning right now because that's a large sum of money, \$6 million, and that would go directly to salaries in this district.

Dr. Evans: Yes, that's correct.

Comm. Kerr: How many people does that represent?

Dr. Cavanna: We're talking about 40 people. Remember, we have a lot of schools.

Comm. Kerr: Okay.

Dr. Cavanna: It's probably more. I can get you the exact number. I'm guessing. It's probably more than that.

Comm. Hodges: These are the people the RAC says it needs.

Dr. Evans: Again, this was a year ago. Mr. Rixford and I sat down and together decided how we would expend those funds and what positions we were going to create. I had one idea, he had another idea, and we mutually worked together to determine a model that we could both support.

Comm. Hodges: At 40 people that's \$150,000 apiece. It could be 50.

Dr. Cavanna: It's a lot more complicated because we had planned to hire certain people. We had planned to hire coaches. We weren't allowed to spend that money and then the new positions came. It is positions upon positions. If you'd like to come to my office we can sit and talk about it.

*Comm. Guzman leaves the meeting at 8:21 p.m.

Dr. Evans: There is a budget that was developed a year ago, a new budget for this year. I would just look at those budgets.

Comm. Hodges: You got my attention when you said 40 people. At 50 people you're looking at \$120,000 per person.

Dr. Evans: What are you dividing that by?

Comm. Hodges: The \$6 million by 50 people.

Dr. Evans: Where did you get \$6 million from?

Comm. Hodges: That's the carryover.

Comm. Kerr: \$6.2 million, actually.

Comm. Hodges: That's why I was taken aback.

Dr. Evans: I think there's something else included in those figures.

Comm. Hodges: I hope so.

Dr. Evans: There has to be something else.

Comm. Hodges: Even with salaries plus benefits you're looking at \$120,000 an average, which is extraordinary.

Ms. Shafer: I think we need to get the breakdown because first we need to be sure that it's all part of the 30% set aside. Is it the other side on the district? We need to get you that information and then we can back in the number of people. We need to clear that up for you.

Comm. Hodges: Please, because this is only a partial. You've hired some and these are the ones that didn't get hired at the beginning of the year. Now I'm saying, "Wait a minute."

Comm. Kerr: This doesn't represent 100%.

Dr. Evans: We should take the actual budget and sit and go through it. That's what we should do.

Dr. Cavanna: I spoke to Ms. Sullivan about it and she's willing to sit down with any of the Board members that would like to.

Comm. Hodges: The concern that I now have and didn't have before is we had talked about a 25% reduction.

Dr. Evans: By the end of this year I've committed to reduce the district office by 25%.

Comm. Hodges: Okay. Now I'm saying does that mean that there's a shift into school-based personnel, or just a separate removal from our budget?

Dr. Evans: That's something in part that we could use. That wasn't the intent. That doesn't even come close to 25%, but certainly we'll credit it towards it. I really need to work out the specifics and will be with staff in terms of what positions we're going to dedicate to that 25%. We've already behind the scenes been doing some informal reductions other than what you've just described and I don't have a comprehensive plan yet to say here's the 25% and here's where it's coming from. But certainly that could be a source.

Comm. Hodges: This bears further discussion perhaps in the finance committee or whenever because now I need clarification. Also, the impact that's going to have academically with this kind of loss and this shifting of funds, I'm really interested now. You've got my full attention.

Comm. Martinez: Suffice it to say we do have to do some more research on this and then get back to the finance committee and dig a little bit deeper.

Comm. Mendez: I would definitely like to know how the teacher negotiation will affect our budget. If there is any retroactive, where will that money come from? We're in the middle of this negotiation and I think that somehow this is going to affect our budget, but I would like to know on what level. I know on the 14th we're definitely going to talk about that in that meeting.

Comm. Martinez: I think that's a matter that probably falls under Errol's umbrella with finance. As you said, on the 14th I think that's something that we can delve much deeper into.

Dr. Cavanna: Remember, this is supplemental money. We can't use this for anything that we would pay for out of the tax levy. This is for additional services that are targeted for Title I students. We can't supplant. We can't buy a classroom teacher because that would be supplanting, but we can provide an intervention teacher because there's a need in that school.

Comm. Kerr: Dr. Cavanna, did you investigate what are the areas in which we can use some of these Title I, II, and III funds?

Dr. Cavanna: Yes. You know what the Titles are. Title I is for intervention services, Title II is for professional development, and Title III is for bilingual. We can use some of the money for professional development. As a matter of fact, one of the things we were planning on doing is providing some training to develop a more personalized learning environment for students at the middle and high school levels. I spoke to Mr. McDonald and we're looking at options around curriculum and professional development that would support those areas. So that looks like a possibility.

Comm. Kerr: Let me tell you where my question is coming from. I truly believe that you will not be successful in terms of fully educating the children of Paterson until you have a robust parental component in the mix. Right now I believe we are not doing that well regarding how we involve parents into the education of their kids. In the past, and I know the director of parental involvement and community outreach is here tonight, some of the Title I and II money was spent in this area of family outreach. I did not hear you mention that component in your address. So I'm just wondering if you did the investigation and if you did find out whether or not any of the money could be used in this area.

Dr. Cavanna: The answer is yes. But we did spend some Title I money on parental involvement. Mr. Kilpatrick can tell you what the exact expenditures were.

Comm. Kerr: I would like to know that.

Dr. Cavanna: This is the carryover. The carryover has to be spent by June 30. We were having discussions about perhaps purchasing curriculum that's needed for parental engagement and also some leadership development for parents and for the parent coordinators and the school personnel also so they can better reach out and involve parents. The answer is yes.

Comm. Kerr: Here's my problem though. If the answer is yes and we had \$6 million that we are now carrying over, monies that were not spent, I understand the piece about the RACs and all that kind of stuff, but why couldn't we even take \$1 million out of that? Is there any restriction?

Dr. Cavanna: The budget has to be approved by the county office.

Comm. Kerr: But did we make an argument as to the need for moving \$1 million to address this weak area in the whole thing? I don't care how strong our instruction is. If it's not reinforced at home and if we're not encouraging parents to have their kids develop practices that help their education, we will be spending the money here but it's not translated at the other end because we are not following through with the entire process.

Dr. Cavanna: There's money that is in the package before you for professional development for the middle and the high schools. I've asked for some proposals so that we can support those efforts. So there is money in there. We're in the process of going through an RFP and we're identifying vendors that can provide those services for us. We just have to work it out.

Comm. Kerr: Dr. Cavanna, when you say professional development, what does that mean?

Dr. Cavanna: That's what's in Title II. Title II says that you can spend the money for professional development and we've put it in there. We're planning on working with the middle schools and the high schools on further developing their themes, but also providing personalized learning environments which has the parental engagement component to it. We're trying to identify materials and those people who need the training. Then we'll be able from this pot of money to support that, but we don't have the proposal together yet. It's in the works.

Comm. Martinez: Commissioner, I hear where you're coming from. I think what you're asking is if there's a need and there are funds available, can we match them somehow someday. I think that's a valid point of conversation in the near future to have.

Comm. Hodges: I'll give my comment now, but I have some additional questions. I'm waiting for somebody else to ask first. As part of my discussion earlier with the early childhood portion of the meeting there are some cultural practices which sometimes hamper education. If people are made aware of some of those practices or ways to do things differently that could enhance what happens in the household in terms of creating an environment where learning can take place. What Mr. Kerr is speaking to is we used to do a lot more at trying to get at that than we're doing now. If we're having that kind of money being turned over, it's clear what he's asking, but I simply support that and more attention needs to be paid to that issue. It does interfere and you see it clearly when kids get to third, fourth, and fifth grades. That's where these things become very real and very damaging. So we have to develop particularized approaches to get at that and simply doing it in the classroom is not going to be adequate. It hasn't been and I promise you it won't because unless you change the mindset, when they leave the building the learning stops and gets forgotten. That's just national data. That's not me telling you. You know that. So you have to augment what you're doing in the classroom with what you're doing in the community and in a major way. That's the concern. I'll wait to ask my other questions. Regarding A-6, where is this going to be employed? It says John F. Kennedy, but at a particular academy, or diffusely? What is that?

Comm. Martinez: I am unsure as to which specific academy in JFK will be receiving these services.

Dr. Evans: Ms. Santa can respond.

Ms. Maria Santa: Good evening. If you are referring to the Halls that Inspire Program, A-6, that is not a program for a particular academy. It is a beautification project that has taken place at John F. Kennedy High School. If you have visited the school recently you will see murals and inspirational sayings throughout the school. It's throughout the school in general. It wasn't designated for a specific academy within JFK.

Comm. Hodges: I think I have that mislabeled so I'll discard it. That was not quite what I was trying to get at. I'll just discard it. That's my fault. That's not the question I was looking for. I apologize, but A-8...

Comm. Martinez: I believe that also falls under...

Ms. Santa: School 7 has received funds from a grant from the Dodge Foundation and through that grant you can see on there the types of activities that they will be able to provide the students. The Dodge Foundation partners with William Paterson University for this purpose. That is why they're listed on there as well. A-8 is indicating to us that that amount listed will be administered by William Paterson so that these activities that appear on there can be conducted at School 7.

Comm. Hodges: Okay. What curriculum has been created so far as a result of the first year of the grant's implementation?

Ms. Santa: It is not a grant that revolves around creating curriculum.

Comm. Hodges: It expressly says that a curriculum can be developed from this.

Ms. Santa: It's to supplement our curriculum. So they develop specific units around the themes that you see there to supplement the curriculum that we have, our district curriculum. Then each unit is integrated into where they fit. So if they're having a creative critical thinking unit, as you can see there, it's integrated through the science, math, and art curriculum. They're not writing curriculum per se as much as they are developing activities and units that fit into the existing curriculum.

Comm. Hodges: Do we have a collection of units that have resulted from this program?

Ms. Santa: If you would like that and you would like to see samples of what has come about from this work the principal at School 7 can share that with you. They have several activities that have been conducted and things that have been happening at the school. I understand that Comm. Martinez has had an opportunity to see some of these things in action and also the products that have been produced from these.

Comm. Hodges: My larger concern is simply that that is an integral part of what their purpose is, to provide these units. I'm thinking that since School 7 has the advantage of getting these units perhaps School 29 could utilize these units also. So if we captured them and made it available throughout then School 29 doesn't have to go and hire William Paterson next year. We like that and maybe we can use those very same units.

Ms. Santa: That's actually a great suggestion, especially because School 29 is a feeder school to School 7. They are not part to the grant. These grants and these funds are designated for specific schools that have applied for that. School 29 is not a part of it, but that doesn't mean that the work, the units, and the products of it can't be shared with School 29, which is a sister school to School 7.

Comm. Hodges: Or any school. The larger point is simply I personally don't want to see William Paterson here with their professors doing the same thing in another school when we have information that we can glean now, capture it, and have it available for somebody else to use. That's really what I'm asking about.

Ms. Santa: Absolutely. We agree.

Comm. Martinez: The staff and folks at School 7 definitely have the capacity to turnkey that to those other schools.

Comm. Hodges: Yes, and it says in the resolution that they were developing curriculum. So let's see it developed and let's see it catalogued so it's available and put some real use to it. There must be a point in time when we stop paying university this and university that for their professors to come here and have coffee.

Ms. Santa: In this particular case, Dr. Hodges, the Dodge Foundation is providing the funds. It so happens that William Paterson partners with the Dodge Foundation and that's how it comes about.

Comm. Hodges: That's a wonderful thing, but the larger point is we're still paying universities and what I'm trying to simply say is that at some point we're not going to have any money – it could be next year as a matter of fact – to do some of those things. So if we can capture the information we can perhaps reduce or forestall when that time comes when we don't have any money to do these things anymore. As a practice, and this has been discussed many years ago, we should be when possible capturing this information and then turnkeying it to everybody else so they don't have to go through the same process of giving the money to somebody else outside of our district because we can't afford it. That's all I'm saying in essence. The last question is what steps have we put in place to provide a successful assessment vehicle?

Ms. Santa: You're speaking in reference to assessing the work that the colleges are doing with the schools?

Comm. Hodges: Right.

Ms. Santa: If you remember, in one of our meetings Dr. Joanne Cardillo presented a process that has been developed for that purpose. Now every time that a school is submitting for similar activities such as what you see in A-8 they are gathering the data and evidence of how effective the process is. It's within a formal document as well that we can certainly share with you as the schools complete that. I don't remember if you remember what she shared with us that night. She had given the Board members a folder with what that process would be like and that is what's being followed at the time.

Dr. Evans: In addition, the Dodge Foundation has its own evaluation requirements. They actually hire an evaluator to go in and evaluate and determine outcomes of a lot of activities. This isn't the only activity that the Dodge Foundation funds. This actually starts with conversations between my office and Dean Candice Burns at William Paterson. The Dodge Foundation really is interested in helping us, but they do it through a third-party provider. In this case the third-party provider is William Paterson. They actually are doing some things for us in some of our schools through other third-party providers. But there is a very strong evaluation component that the Dodge Foundation has put in place to make sure their monies are being spent wisely and that it's generating the kinds of outcomes that we're talking about. What I heard you asking for earlier goes beyond that, which I think is great, and we've talked about that before.

Taking those products and using them elsewhere to benefit other schools - most certainly we should be doing that.

Comm. Hodges: I would certainly like to emulate the Dodge Foundation in creating assessment vehicles and maintaining them. Let's face it - with this structural deficit that we're looking at we're going to have to be making some decisions about priorities. We're going to have to have a basis on which to judge what program do we keep and what program do we sacrifice. That's happening sooner than we'd like to think. I don't want anybody to think that I'm opposed to having colleges in our school district. Absolutely not! I see the benefit, particularly if they're interacting with our students. I see lots of benefits to that. But financially we're not going to be able to afford to do these kinds of things much longer. Or we're going to have to pick and choose which programs are of the most benefit to students and target or utilize the information we get from these places in other places if we can mass produce it. I think that we should be thinking along those lines now. We don't have the compendium where we can...

Comm. Cleaves: We have it.

Comm. Hodges: No. We have a static list. We do not have a functional database.

Comm. Cleaves: Is that why you went back to voting no again?

Comm. Hodges: Absolutely. It's a static database which is not searchable, other than your fingers.

Comm. Cleaves: Is there any more for curriculum?

Comm. Martinez: I think we're good there. There is one more item for curriculum, A-4. Thank you, Ms. Santa. I know Ms. McKoy has been patiently waiting. If she could please come up and provide us with a brief overview of the Focal Point Principal Performance Rubrics that are currently being worked on. Thank you, Ms. McKoy, for your patience.

Ms. Marnie McKoy: Good evening everyone. You were presented with the rubric for principal, vice principal, and teacher. These are the same rubrics upon which you voted last year. It is the expectation of the state that each year we have to put forth the evaluation tools before the Board. This is part of an annual expectation for the state. The rubrics have not changed. We're simply just asking the Board to approve them again as the state expects us to do.

Comm. Hodges: Mr. Chair, are we not asking the principals to do more?

Ms. McKoy: I'm sorry.

Comm. Hodges: Are we not asking the principals to assume a larger more active role?

Dr. Evans: In the evaluation system, yes. We're expecting them to observe teachers a minimum number of times, depending on whether they're tenured or non-tenured. It's more than just one observation and then complete an evaluation and it's done. It's a lot more involved than that. But we also provided principals some assistance in the form of supervisors to help them do that.

Comm. Hodges: Would that not be reflected in their evaluation rubrics?

Ms. McKoy: The number of times that they have to...

Comm. Hodges: The additional things that we're asking them to do. It is. But you said they haven't changed.

Ms. Shafer: It didn't change from last year. Last year it was included. Last year was a pilot year, but this year is the real thing right now. So we just finished our first set of observations and if you take a typical school it's at least 75% of the time the principals need to be in classrooms in order to get all of the observations done and the summative evaluations of all their staff.

Comm. Hodges: So then we're simply following what we did last year. Okay. That's fine.

Comm. Martinez: Are there any other questions? Hearing none, that concludes my report.

Fiscal

Comm. Kerr: The fiscal committee met yesterday. Members present were Comm. Hodges, Comm. Irving, and myself. Members from staff were the BA Mr. Kilpatrick and Ms. Daisy Ayala. We also had in our meeting Mr. Jeff Bliss from the external auditing firm of Lerch, Vinci & Higgins. Our meeting started with a discussion surrounding the QSAC review and in particular the fiscal DPR. Mr. Kilpatrick informed us that the state's approach to this cycle of assessment differs rather significantly from the past. He said the primary focus in this cycle was to ascertain if the district knows what it's doing regarding standard operating principles and best practices. He further went on to say that the state is using more people in carrying out the assessment and they're also asking for more information in their drive to recast how the instrument is used. However, from the present members' perspective the new approach was considered to be a little bit over the top. We thought that it had some designs to further frustrate the district in its drive to regain some level of local control. Regarding our position the BA said he was satisfied with his department's performance and is looking forward to a positive score. Ms. Ayala also said the QSAC assessment team was very thorough in their assessment and that they were polite and courteous to members of her staff. Mr. Bliss, the same gentleman who was here tonight who presented, gave us his report regarding the state of the audit of the district. Again, he said this was the best ever audit of the district since he has been working with us. He said the internal controls are sound and there were no material weaknesses found in our operation. At this time on behalf of the fiscal committee and members of the Board we just want to express our sincere thanks to the members of the business department. I believe they have done over the years a tremendous job in bringing to balance all of the weak areas of our operation to make it what it is today. So we want to go on record as saying we are truly grateful and thankful for their hard work. Mr. Bliss walked us through the fund balances and from his presentation we realized that a significant part of our problem regarding the impending fiscal cliff comes from the siphoning off of monies from the district to fund charters. We went through that already. He made mention that our total monetary obligation to the charter system is \$31 million and that the money we need to balance our budget is around \$42 million. So there is about 75% of what we need given off the top to the charters. We are saying there's absolutely no way that this district can cut in its operation \$45 million. We can't do that and successfully operate this district. There has to be something done in terms of how we address this impending fiscal cliff besides cutting. A recommendation is that we have to make this known to the Commissioner of Education that the situation is that we are not too far from where we should be if we did

not have to fund charters. That's the recommendation, that we have a real talk with the Commissioner of Education regarding this amount of money. Then we looked at our bills list. We reviewed them and we found them to be in order. Adjournment was taken at approximately 9:35. Tonight we are presenting action items C-1 through C-15. Is there any discussion?

Comm. Hodges: I simply want to further underscore to Dr. Evans that cutting programs because of lack of funding runs contrary to the law of this district. If I see a single program that goes by the wayside then I will personally have to address that in whatever manner I possibly can to get that stopped. That message needs to be conveyed to the Commissioner of Education. I do know what the law said. I was here when it was implemented. There are other people out there who are reaching the point where they see that the cuts are wholly illegal. They're illegal and in the past we have been faced with this situation. We have actually gone to court and challenged them and have won. You may find yourself in the situation where you feel that you can't do that, but that does not mean the district can be left in that condition because it cannot be. We're not where we're supposed to be. We're struggling to make substantial improvements, and albeit there are improvements, but you're cutting staff 25% for whatever reason and then there are these other things that are being put in place. We'll reach a point where academic progress is going to be hampered and that is unacceptable. So if it requires the community reaching out to like-minded corporations, and you know there are some out there, that will have to be pursued. We simply cannot afford to head backwards. We can't. I just want to put that on record. I know you had this discussion with the Commissioner of Education, but I can't speak for anybody else. That's why I'm stating it just the way I have stated it. But there already are discussions about what's happening and I know you're aware of them. So it needs to be made very clear to the Commissioner of Education that though we have been a very quiet group here in Paterson it may not stay that way, particularly when the Governor is running for whatever office he seems to be pursuing now.

Comm. Kerr: Are there any questions? Mr. Kilpatrick, on C-8, can that be explained or some light shed on it, please?

Mr. Kilpatrick: Human Capital Consulting?

Dr. Laurie Newell: We have been having conversations in preparation for this QSAC review, especially as it pertains to personnel. We keep finding ourselves in the situation where we're having a really hard time filling those hard-to-fill areas. We have been in meetings regarding different topics, but we had a meeting with Peter Schulman several months ago because this is an issue that's not just affecting Paterson but it's affecting a lot of urban districts, finding, for example, a physics teacher, chemistry teacher, a grade 6-8 content teacher. One of the things that we're trying to do is really see if we can target our recruiting. What that means is we need to be so targeted that we work with a group that can potentially offer us a pipeline. Last year I had done a presentation and one of the things I had recommended is that we need to somehow be working with some groups that if it is providing us with ESL bilingual teachers or helping us with special education teachers or providing us with media specialists. One of the things we want to do is really put it out there that we're looking to work with high-caliber groups that can provide us with some of these hard-to-fill areas. Another part of it too is that we recognize and we have had a very in-depth QSAC review for our personnel. We also realize that there are areas that have been brought to our attention that we do need to look at more closely. So one of the things that we want to do is as we do this pipeline work to get these hard-to fill teachers, all of this and all of our processes as it relates to this particular area would be a part of this human capital review.

Dr. Evans: To add to Dr. Newell's comments, I will actually reference the last letter that you and I received indicating our QSAC scores from the last visit that came in the summer. The letter made specific reference by the Commissioner to engaging Peter Schulman on his staff to assist us and guide us. "Assist" was to be co-defined between him and us to help us to both prepare for QSAC, but at the same time to look at some of the areas that are problematic for us, such as the area where we have critical shortages of qualified candidates as only one example. That same letter indicated that Bari Erlichson would do the same in her area as well. That really is where this started after Dr. Newell and I had conversations with first Peter Schulman and then another conversation with Bari on some different issues.

Comm. Kerr: I noticed in this action item there was nothing said about what we are considering in terms of paying for such a service. Are there any specs there regarding what they're willing to pay?

Dr. Newell: We've put out the RFP and we have formed a committee, but we have not started looking at the return of the bids. So I can get to you a copy because it was in the newspaper where it has the scope of work and services for that RFP.

Comm. Kerr: Can you just tell me approximately how many individuals are we looking for to fill this requirement?

Dr. Newell: You'd be looking at one firm. We're not looking at a lot of people. We're looking at one firm who can potentially provide us with filling our needs.

Comm. Kerr: You used the word "pipeline." So they would be the conduit through which we'd get all our hard-to-fill folks?

Dr. Newell: Yes. A part of the issue is that every month we have to provide to our Commissioners for personnel as well as to the county what our vacancy reports are. Every month it's pretty much the same culprits. We've already identified that we have done our ads in Ed Weekly, Star Ledger, Community Forum, and we've put out flyers. So even though we're doing mass production we're still getting a lot of lopsided applicants, like a lot of k-5 general education. We really realize that we have to be even more targeted than the work than we've been doing. It would not be five different companies offering five different services. That's not the goal at all. The committee has to sit down and choose a company that can provide us with our needs.

Comm. Kerr: And you think there is a company out there that can provide that range of need adequately for the district?

Dr. Newell: As best as we can, yes. As a committee we're going to be going through all the different bids that come in and see. If nobody satisfies our needs we're not going to choose anyone. But we do know that we have those very hard-to-fill areas - special education, ESL, and the middle grade content areas.

Comm. Kerr: Thank you, Dr. Newell. Dr. Evans, there is no question that we have this huge need in the district to fill those hard-to-fill vacancies. Just backtracking to our discussion not too long ago regarding the impending fiscal cliff and what are some of the things we need, I just need to know if some of that argument is being made to the Commissioner of Education. This is what we are facing here. I know we have to do it, but is there any fervor in our argument to the state that we can't fund all of this? We need it, but we can't fund it based on what we have presently.

Dr. Evans: I wouldn't use the word "argument," but the Commissioner is very much aware and is concerned, as I'm concerned. I don't know that anybody is more concerned than I am, but we have had discussions about it. The big question now is, what can we do? That's what we're looking now to do, to determine what we can do and develop some plans. Those will be shared with the Commissioner along with requests to fill whatever gaps for which we urgently need some help, but that doesn't guarantee that additional funding will come.

Comm. Kerr: Well, that's a problem. When I use the term argument, I just mean someone there litigating our case. I don't mean quarreling, but someone making that case and not necessarily to say we are not going to get it before the asking is on the table.

Dr. Evans: The Commissioner is very much aware and in fact there are a number of districts in the state right now who are experiencing similar problems. Newark just went through an exercise because they needed \$50 million, and I may have the figure incorrect, because of a cliff this year. I don't know how they've addressed it. In fact, one of my follow-ups is to see what they did or if they did anything. They may still be working on it.

Comm. Kerr: I think some of these issues we need to put them in writing, send them to the Department of Education, and let them know where we are, what's needed, and what we can afford. The demand is still placed on the district to perform at a certain level and everybody will tell you you're not going to do anything without the money. The money is a part of what you do. You have to have the money to get certain things done. They are making that demand, but they are not helping us by giving us the resources to get it done. So we need to start making the case that this is where we are, this is what we need to get it done, and we're asking your help. We're asking you to help us in getting it done.

Dr. Evans: The conversation that we're going to have on the 14th will involve that in part. In all fairness, we should not be asking anybody, including the Commissioner, for funds until we've done everything we can do to cut any excess fat that we might have.

Comm. Kerr: You cannot cut \$45 million, Dr. Evans.

Dr. Evans: I don't think we have any, but I can't ask until I say we've done everything we can do and I'm not ready to say that yet.

Comm. Kerr: I understand your position, but there is not \$45 million worth of fat in this district. If I'm to accept your argument it would mean that we have a lot of fat that we can cut out and then get the results that we need to have. Certainly, it's not here. We have wrung this towel so much that it is dry and breaking. You should know, but based on what I'm seeing on the table, I don't think there is a lot. I heard what you said that we're going to cut 25% of the administrative staff. I'm not saying you're not going to be able to do that. I'm saying you're not going to be able to do that and have the same level of performance as you're having now. Are there any other questions? That concludes my report.

Legal

Comm. Simmons: The legal committee has not met yet. That meeting is being scheduled, but I do have Item B-1, which is the renewal of the lease agreement for the

parking spaces for the parking lot across from the Boris Kroll building. Are there any questions? So ends my report.

Facilities

Comm. Mendez: The facilities committee met yesterday. Members present were Comm. Irving and Comm. Cleaves. Staff present was Mr. Chris Sapara-Grant. The meeting started at 6:15 and ended at 7:00 p.m. We continued with the discussion about the long range facilities plan. Today we should have had a kickoff with a presentation, but that couldn't be possible due to the other presentation that we had on the agenda. So we're going to have the long range facilities plan presentation for the regular meeting. I believe this is extremely important to kick off with this because we're supposed to start in January with the process and end up by June. We're going to spend close to a \$1 million with this long range facilities plan hiring the company that's going to work with the demographics and the enrollment projections. A company is going to take a look and see all the facilities issues that we're facing as well. I think this is extremely important to have this plan ready in order for us to spend the money according to this plan that we make and submit it to the state in June. Also, we had an extensive conversation about how the community could use the playground and the school facilities after school. It's very clear that having the school open 24 hours has been a problem in some of the neighborhoods. But we also know that the community needs the playground open in order for them to have a safe place to play sports and exercise. We've been working on a plan to at least have one school open per ward in each of the six wards in Paterson to allow the community to use the playground and the facilities. We have to have this conversation with you, Dr. Evans, and also with Captain Smith to see if that is possible. It's very clear that the community and our youth is facing a tough time in terms of having a safe area where they can play because there is no facility available in the city for our youth after school to exercise and play basketball and that's a big problem. We have our kids in summer playing basketball at Rosa Parks in the middle of the street. We think this is going to create a big impact in a positive way in the community having at least one school open and having the playground open for the community for the kids to use it up to 8:00 Monday through Friday. We've been thinking about the different locations. In the First Ward, Dr. Frank Napier and School 5 both have a playground they can use. Also, in the Second Ward we have School 27 and School 8. In the Third Ward we have School 18 and School 26. In the Fourth Ward we have School 6. In the Fifth we have NRC and School 13. In the Sixth we have School 25. In those areas we could allow the community to use those playgrounds and when the sun goes down the school will be closing. I think that will definitely help the community a lot, but we need to know if that is possible in terms of safety. Captain Smith is going to play a big role in this. Instead of having a lot of the schools open 24 hours, I think this is a great idea. By having a facility open we're being irresponsible. We have to be responsible for our school and any school that stays open 24 hours has been a problem for the community. It doesn't matter the area. We finished with School 25. We finally resolved the problem. At School 25 we have the "No Trespassing" sign and we open the school at 6:30 a.m. and we close it at 9:00. Captain Smith is doing a great job with that. There's no problem anymore. We're not having that facility open. The problem has been resolved, but I think that we have to take a look at this district-wide and make sure that we keep our facilities safe but at least have one school in each ward to allow our youth to play basketball and exercise. We finished the meeting at 7:30. Are there any questions?

Comm. Kerr: I do understand what you're saying regarding having some of these facilities open, as you have mentioned, one per ward for the most part. But this is a city and we cannot leave out of our thinking the responsibility of the city government in this

approach. So if we're considering something like this, I would recommend that this is something we talk over with the City Council and get their buy-in because there is cost in everything that we do. If we're going to have security officers there, we're paying for that and we're providing the facilities? I don't think so. I think if it's a jointure we supply the building and they provide the security. For anything like that let's talk to the Council.

Dr. Evans: Several things need to happen. We just don't have a discussion one day and the next day schools are open. There are too many issues here such as liability issues, costs, and partnering as perhaps a facilitator that Mr. Kerr mentioned. But at the top of the list first of all a plan needs to be developed and vetted internally. Somebody needs to write a plan. The Board needs to buy into it and support that plan and then have a conversation with the city and whoever. This can't occur overnight. So while I'm for working out some kind of an arrangement I don't want it done ad-hoc or haphazard. It's got to be well-thought out and we've got to make sure we dot every I and cross every T because we may be inviting a disaster if we don't. That really is what it comes down to. I know you all discussed it in the facilities. I don't know if that involves Mr. Sapara-Grant and you folk in the facilities committee being responsible for at least drafting a plan to start the discussion among Board members. That also includes my staff because we'll be looking at it at the same time. Then once some consensus is reached then let's have a conversation with City Council. I agree with Mr. Kerr in terms of it, but this is going to take some time.

Comm. Mendez: Sure. I definitely agree, Dr. Evans. But this is the beginning of that conversation and also of that plan. I will tell you now we went to School 25 and we just finally resolved that problem, but that facility was open for a couple of years 24/7. There were drug dealers going inside there. We were very irresponsible to have that facility open 24/7. So what we're trying to do with this is just try to organize the facilities and not close them. I think that every school cannot be open 24/7 during the night. Currently at this time we have schools open. Some of the facilities that we have are open 24/7 and those facilities are a big problem for the residents at this time because at night there are a lot of things happening in those facilities. So what we're trying to do with this is not having the playground open, but just allow them to use it until a certain time. Like you said, this is the beginning of this conversation and I think we have to have a plan. We have to include the City Council, but we need to be responsible as well. If we don't do anything what's going to happen is we're going to leave the facilities that are open now at that. That's something that we have to look into, especially School 13. I've been passing by and I see kids playing at midnight and 1:00 there in the playground. That could be a big liability for us, having kids at 12:00 and 1:00 in our playgrounds and that is happening now. So with this plan I think we're going to just prevent things from happening and we're going to organize it. We're not just going to close the school, but we can let the community know this is what we're going to do, this is the plan, and we need everybody involved on this. But I totally agree with you.

Comm. Hodges: Dr. Evans spoke to some of my question. Is there a position taken by the district in terms of... There are some schools that have removed their rims. School 12 has removable rims, which they take in after 4:30 or whatever it is, which does not allow those students in that area. That's a very congested area. I don't think there's a park around there or anything.

Comm. Cleaves: Yes, there is.

Comm. Hodges: Where is that?

Comm. Cleaves: North Main.

Comm. Simmons: (Comments were made away from the microphone and were not heard on tape.)

Comm. Cleaves: Clinton Street.

Comm. Hodges: That's a very congested area there and they lose the ability to play basketball or anything else. Across the street was actually supposed to be our extension for School 12. There are now new houses there and those families don't want those kids out there at all hours of the night. In response to that the principal took the rims in. But we have to have some sort of balance and it needs to start with the statement that we do believe that the kids should be able to use the playground for some period of time. That should be a district-wide standard, but that doesn't exist right now. I don't know whether the Board has to start with a policy to do that or whatever, but that should at least be a jump-off place and then you can negotiate the times with the neighborhood itself. But you should at least establish somewhere that we want kids to use the playgrounds, and then the timeframes and how long. You can get into policing it afterwards, but that should be something that we establish now.

Dr. Evans: That should be, in my opinion, incorporated into the plan.

Comm. Hodges: Absolutely. Today is the 4th, which is usually the day that they have the board of directors meeting at the SDA. I didn't get a chance to go down there, but has there been any further update on Hazel/Marshall? We were waiting. This is December when they were supposed to be able to determine what they were doing with their construction plans.

Dr. Evans: I have not received one. Mr. Sapara-Grant has been meeting with them on a regular basis. Perhaps he has one, but I have not received an update.

Comm. Hodges: I don't want Mr. Larkin to think that I did not hear what he said.

Mr. Chris Sapara-Grant: Good evening. They've completed the constructability review. So they're about to move into the next phase.

Comm. Hodges: Both schools?

Mr. Sapara-Grant: No. You asked about Hazel/Marshall. I'll come back to School 16. They're about to move into the construction phase for Hazel/Marshall. For School 16, bids were received two weeks ago for the design build contractor. I have a conference call tomorrow with the SDA to finalize the selection and award. That is also on track.

Comm. Hodges: So if it's awarded then we're looking at starting in the spring?

Mr. Sapara-Grant: There are certain things that are done outside the site, like fabrication of steel members, and those sorts of things will be done relating to Hazel/Marshall. With School 16, some demo and exploratory work is going to start with the existing school that has been vacated by the district.

Comm. Hodges: Are they planning to do anything in terms of the foundations that are currently in place there?

Mr. Sapara-Grant: Yes. As part of the stipulation from the DCA, Community Affairs, the existing infrastructure has to be tested to see if the re-bars are satisfactory. There are

going to be reports that I'm going to have to review to be sure that they are satisfactory before they can continue the work. The re-bars that are in existence and retaining walls have been there for 10 years and have been exposed also. So there's a lot of testing that has to be done, but that is part of the contract. The contractor who has been given the contract has to do all of that as part of the work.

Comm. Hodges: So when will we see actual activity going on over at both of those places?

Mr. Sapara-Grant: I believe early spring you are going to start seeing some basic construction work or some demo work if certain parts of the foundation walls have been compromised.

Comm. Hodges: So we're talking about April or March.

Mr. Sapara-Grant: I'm not willing to give you a particular month. When I'm given something that's published, I'll be able to share it with you.

Comm. Hodges: Okay. What about the completion of the construction room at Kennedy?

Mr. Sapara-Grant: Kennedy has ordered some equipment and they are waiting for the equipment to come in. Once it comes in they will be able to complete the work because they need to be sized.

Comm. Hodges: Is that the air handling system?

Mr. Sapara-Grant: The air handling system is going to be sized through the equipment they've purchased. I've been in touch with Mr. Mazur who is the instructor and he's waiting for the delivery and he will give me the specifications.

Comm. Hodges: Dr. Evans, you need to be aware – and I think I've mentioned this before – you don't have two construction rooms over there. You have one construction room and one woodshop. The curriculum has to be split between the two and that has to be developed because you're awarding kids a degree on a program that they're not getting. So something has to be done rather quickly to get that up to date. That should have been done last year because unless you either rotate them or something, something has to change. I'll be asking again next month.

Comm. Mendez: Are there any other questions?

Policy

Comm. Simmons: The policy committee met today so I don't have the full report. I will have it at the regular meeting. We did discuss a number of policy alerts which includes teacher evaluations, some tenure changes, and things of that sort. I will have the complete report at the regular meeting for first reading.

Items Requiring Review and Comments

Personnel

Comm. Cleaves: The personnel committee met on December 2 at 5:30. In attendance were Comm. Cleaves and Comm. Martinez. Staff present was Jaime Murphy. Some of

personnel was touched on during the fiscal report with your \$6 million. We have about 45 vacancies in the district. That's money that could have been used for that. With those vacancies I tend to always ask what positions we're really looking for. We're looking for one chemistry teacher and two physics teachers - one physics teacher at PANTHER Academy, one at Kennedy at SET, and the chemistry teacher is at Destiny Academy. We're also understaffed for three middle school math teachers and two middle school science teachers. That's included in that number of staff that's missing. It's two middle school math teachers and two middle school science teachers. We also discussed QSAC briefly. QSAC did perform two days of evaluations with the personnel department. At the time of our meeting she said possibly they were thinking about coming back and doing one more day. They did do a very thorough review of the personnel files. They also quoted the saying that was quoted in the fiscal meeting that this was one of the best evaluations and reviews of the personnel files that they've had. That was it and the meeting ended at 6:30. Tonight we are presenting F-1 for personnel.

Comm. Hodges: Dr. Evans, are there any discussions about working with one of your favorite colleges, either Montclair State or William Paterson, to develop a scholarship program or some sort of tuition assistance program for students who are interested in going into the sciences as teachers? I think it would be one way to attract those teachers and actually be able to hold onto them for some time if we helped to develop those kinds of programs. Given what has happened with some of our science teachers by virtue of Tech and other places we're going to have to do something. I think our science scores are in such a state that you're putting together a new initiative to rewrite the science program curriculum throughout the district and you won't have anybody to teach it. Physics teachers are critical. Math is bad enough, but you have got to be able to look down the future and ask how we close that gap in those areas. Quite frankly, it's going to reach a point – and this is what really concerns me about our funding – where this district is no longer going to be able to get by without teaching computer programming. That day is rapidly approaching. We have turned our heads and ignored it for so long. I'm not talking about giving Scratch to 11th graders. I'm talking about putting it in earlier on. Our competition is way ahead of us and you cannot sit here and say that you're going to be a leader in urban education or whatever it is and everybody else is dusting us in one of the highest fields for employment in this country. The waivers they get for immigration are for computer programmers. So we're sitting here putting together and patting ourselves on our hotel and hospitality, which is one of the lowest wage performers out there, when the government has to beg them to come to this country. I think that's shortsighted. We're going to have to address those areas and I think that we have to be very proactive in going after that. Those two schools in particular have to provide an opportunity to have some long-range talks or discussions about how we do that and put some money aside or something. Maybe the state wants to weigh in because this is an area that's critical. It's not just us, but it's a particular problem in urban districts. So there's an opportunity to go to Jersey City and Newark and form some sort of collaborative to fund a scholarship program in these areas. We're going to have to do something. We can't just sit back - even if it means recruiting extensively in New York City or someplace else. We can't let those areas continue like this. We simply cannot.

Dr. Evans: There are two activities already underway. Let me say it differently. There are two different initiatives and one of them I can't talk about tonight. I can talk about it in executive session and we're going to have an executive session coming up soon to brief you on negotiations, but it's in that context that one of them is evolving. The other one you heard about tonight from Dr. Newell. The purpose of that really is to tap into an entity that could help us fill those gaps, to bring people in from New York or from

wherever to be able to meet that need. However, we're not above replicating what we did to get the reading teachers that we now have in our district. I remember we had a cohort of teachers to go through. In fact, I'm not sure where the second cohort is in completion of the program. We did that for the same reason – to get people with the qualifications that we needed in our classrooms. We've already worked through it. There is a partnership that we have with William Paterson to do the same with English language learner teachers, to fill that gap because that's one of the critical shortage areas. We've thought about that but these other opportunities presented themselves as well so we're now moving in that direction. If they don't come to fruition and hold tremendous promise for addressing the need in science, then I'm very open to it.

Comm. Hodges: Even though you may have another approach, I think it's still worth a discussion with some of these other universities now. It would be nice to have a glut of these teachers available, but I don't see that in the very near future. So I think irrespective of what you think you have in the hopper it would be wise to open up discussions because it isn't going to be a program that you're just going to develop tomorrow. It will take some time. These shortages are going to continue. We spend a lot of time with substitutes teaching science and it shows.

Dr. Evans: Science and mathematics are especially problematic because of the private competition. They can command much higher salaries in private concerns than they can with us or any other school district. So somehow overcoming that or making positions so attractive that they'd be willing to come to us is the thinking that we have to lend to this. How can we make it that attractive?

Comm. Kerr: I think we have to be creative to make it work for us. I believe in the short-term we might have difficulty, but I believe we can create a pipeline or feeder system that will help us long-term. I believe we have to help educate the people who we would like to bring back to the district. I believe we need to create some arrangement that we will help them with their education, but we're going to bond them for a certain period of time. After they're finished they come back to the district and serve our people. I don't believe too many people will just walk away from a job that they're going to have. They know the job is there, plus their education is being paid for. So I believe those are the kinds of initiatives we can put into place that will create that pipeline or feeder system to the district that will address some of our long term problems. This is something that we need to package and sell to the State Department to help us address some of these problems. We just can't believe that people are going to spend their money, time, and everything and get the education and then just walk inside here. It's not going to happen that way.

Dr. Evans: I'll give you an example of a potential problem, particularly with science and math, and then I'll shut up. I was in a school district where the state had initiatives such as what we have with reading and ELL that I mentioned a moment ago. It was done with science and math and the teachers had to sign a three-year agreement to commit to teach in that area or they had to pay the money back for their education. Along comes a private concern and said, "I'll pay it for you if you'll come and work for me." Guess what happened? That person left. So there's no guarantee because they are in such high demand. But I agree with you – we have to be creative. No question about it. That illustration just tells you how competitive it is.

Comm. Hodges: That was part of the thinking behind developing our national board certified teacher program here. We went down to wherever the award ceremony was and saw how other districts were sending their teachers off to get these certifications but there was no guarantee that they would stay there. Once they were in the school

and they were learning there sometimes they would stay. So we thought, why not have it here? We did that and I don't think we lost too many of them from here. Maybe we lost them now, but at that time they stayed here. The idea was to get them here and to hold onto them. So I think that it would be wise if we were out in front and leading the charge with this issue. I know it's a statewide problem. But it makes no sense for us to develop core curriculum content standards, rewrite our whole standards in science, and then don't have people to teach them. Not only at the higher levels in high school but in the elementary school where that initial joy of learning about science should take place. So I will be pestering you about this again.

Dr. Evans: I think we're in agreement. The question is, how do we make this happen?

Comm. Irving: Can we do this through curriculum? I think it's a great idea, being able to form and vet through the curriculum committee.

Comm. Hodges: I don't mind the curriculum committee having their discussions, but this is an item of great particularized concern to me and I'm not on curriculum. I certainly want to pursue it because I have a number of ideas. As a matter of fact, there are faculty members on your staff that are interested in pursuing collaborations.

Comm. Irving: Fantastic. Just to ensure that we don't have a quorum maybe on the day we have this discussion we'll just rotate out.

Comm. Hodges: Or you can create an ad-hoc committee. You could do it that way.

Comm. Irving: That's another option.

OTHER BUSINESS

Comm. Irving: Before we conclude, Cheryl just reminded me that in order for us to go right into executive session we don't have to convene. We need to make a motion tonight to go into executive session. So I need a motion to go into executive session prior to the December 18, 2013 Board meeting at 6:00 p.m.

It was moved by Comm. Martinez, seconded by Comm. Mendez that the Board go into executive session prior to the December 18, 2013 Board meeting at 6:00 p.m. to discuss negotiations.

Dr. Evans: In two weeks from now.

Comm. Irving: Yes.

Comm. Cleaves: Executive session will be at 6:00?

Comm. Irving: Yes.

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

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

The meeting was adjourned at 9:48 p.m.