

# MINUTES OF THE PATERSON BOARD OF EDUCATION WORKSHOP MEETING

April 2, 2025 – 6:19 p.m.  
Central Office (First Floor)

Presiding: Comm. Eddie Gonzalez, President

Present:

Dr. Laurie W. Newell, Superintendent of Schools  
Dr. Rodney Henderson, Deputy Superintendent  
Khalifah Shabazz-Charles, Esq., General Counsel

Comm. Valerie Freeman  
Comm. Della McCall (Remote)  
Comm. Hector Nieves  
Comm. Joel Ramirez, Vice President

Comm. Mohammed Rashid  
Comm. Kenneth Rosado  
Comm. Kenneth Simmons  
Comm. Corey Teague

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

Comm. Gonzalez 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 adequate and electronic notice of this meeting:

**Workshop Meeting  
April 2, 2025 at 6:00 p.m.  
90 Delaware Avenue  
Paterson, New Jersey**

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

## PRESENTATIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS

### School No. 16 Performance

*Performance by School No. 16 students*

### School No. 2 Highlights

Dr. Vanessa Serrano: Good evening. I'm Dr. Serrano, the very proud principal of the amazing School No. 2. I'm going to share some highlights of some of the things we are doing in our building. We are the Soaring Eagles. Our School No. 2 core values –

School No. 2's commitment to fostering academic excellence and personal growth in our students provides unwavering support and guidance and a nurturing environment that encourages continuous learning and development. Some of extracurricular highlights – recent enhancements to the music program, English language arts peer tutoring program, and autism after-school program have significantly impacted the school community, enriching teaching practices and increasing student engagement. Our School No. 2 music department – the establishment of extracurricular coral ensembles provides valuable opportunities beyond the general music classroom, allowing students to refine their musical skills in a more specialized and collaborative setting. Just to give you a little background, these are some of the ensembles that we have. We have our second and third grader Eaglets. We have our Eagles Glee Club for grades 4 and 5. We have our Eagles Cadets, grades 6-8. And then we have our Eagles African American drumming ensemble for grades 7 and 8. As you know, School No. 2 is not a performing arts school. However, we do have a lot of talent there. It all started in a conversation with myself and the music teacher, Mr. Jeremy Watson, who is here with us tonight, just talking about trying to get students to perform in a show. Pick two classes and let's have them perform. It kind of just grew from there. They started performing at different venues and we just started opening it up to some of the other students who were very interested in participating. As they get older, Eaglets become our Eagles Glee Club, so on and so forth. The choral and drumming extracurricular ensembles offer students unique collaborative opportunities to enhance their musical abilities, teamwork and self-confidence. Through performances at prominent local venues these groups contribute to the community's cultural enrichment while fostering leadership and inspiration. That picture was taken outside the Prudential Center, where our students performed last year at American Young Voices. They will be performing again this year in June. Involvement in our Eagle music ensembles foster creativity while also instilling discipline and collaboration, skills that seamlessly contribute to academic success. Some of the grants that we've received are Save the Music, where we received instruments for our students to utilize during music classes. We've also received a grant from the Peter Marsh Foundation. One of the requirements is performing at senior homes so they will be performing, actually, at one of the senior homes in our neighborhood, the new grandparents building in our neighborhood.

### ***Video Presentation***

Dr. Serrano: That ensemble was just put together this year. I give them a lot of credit. These are some of our upcoming performances. Our Soaring Eagles Glee Club will be performing on April 28 at the Preakness Healthcare Center. On April 30, we actually have students from William Paterson who are coming to observe the class. Our Eagles chorus and the Soaring Eagles Glee Club will be performing on June 3 at American Young Voices, as I said before. We have our spring concert. We are joining forces with School No. 16 to perform at Six Flags. Back in December, our music teacher entered our Glee Club into a contest run by NBC. Although we did not win, we were one of the finalists. This is our School No. 2 English language arts peer tutoring program. Our aim with this program is to narrow the achievement gap, as reflected in NJSLA results, by implementing diverse instructional strategies to enhance the learning experience. This approach strengthens student relationships, promoting collaboration and peer support. The ELA peer tutoring program was designed to establish a structured and effective approach during the daily intervention period. Our daily intervention period is a half-hour from 10:45 to 11:15 every day, Monday through Friday. By minimizing class sizes, teachers can provide targeted instruction to small groups, addressing specific learning needs through data-driven strategies. Additionally, the program challenges high-achieving students, keeping them engaged and motivated in their academic growth. This program utilizes small group instruction and strategic pairing of tutors. The tutors

are middle schoolers in grades 6-8 with tutees who are in grades 4-5. It focuses on data-driven selection and thorough training to promote strong peer connections and support academic progress. This program runs on Tuesdays and Thursdays during that intervention period, 10:45 to 11:15. That allows for students who are not part of the program to receive small group instruction within their classroom, whether it's math or English language arts. We have resource teachers paired with general education classroom teachers by grade level and content area specifically for that intervention period. You have smaller groups with more individualized and direct instruction.

### ***Video Presentation***

Dr. Serrano: The tutors were trained by our middle school language arts teachers on different strategies for them to use with the students. Every session that they meet, they are held accountable for something. Each student has their own individual folder that they keep throughout the program. Dr. Newell visited us and witnessed some of the things going on during our tutoring program so that was nice. This is some of the data. These are the students who are participating currently in our peer tutoring program. I have their Link-It A and B percentages. Every student went up, with the exception of two, and that was due to other contributing factors. Everyone else showed growth. These are students that we are tracking. We have their NJSLA scores from this year. Once we get their NJSLA scores for next year we will keep tracking. Our School No. 2 autism after-school program provides a structured yet flexible setting for special needs students, blending routine-based instruction with interactive activities to foster life skills, independence and special interaction. We're very fortunate. This program was funded by Full Service. We currently have an after-school program, Focus 21, for grades 3-8 and this is branching off of that. We were able to secure funding in order to have this program. These are just some pictures of our students during the program practicing social skills. This was a field trip that they went to. They do some cooking. This is a sample schedule of what one after-school day looks like. For one hour they'll work on hygiene. They'll have dinner because we provide them dinner. During the next hour, they work on different skills. On this particular day, they were working on money skills, tying their shoes and sorting laundry. Then they have an hour for outdoor games and indoor games, which allows them to practice their social skills. This program is a community-based life skills program where we utilize what we have in our community. We obviously don't have the facilities within our building, but where School No. 2 is located, we are fortunate enough to have a laundromat down the block from us where the students go. They learn how to wash, fold and use a washing machine and a dryer to do laundry. They'll go to the corner Bodega to do some shopping. They'll go to the bank up in Center City Mall. We're trying to give them a prerequisite because most of our students transition after eighth grade to STARS Academy, where they really dive deeper into this. We took a field trip to Life Town. It's a simulated community. I wish we can have something like this within our within our building. It was a very fun experience for the students. This was also funded by Full Service. Because we have the after-school program, they were able to fund our trip. We had a grant. One student cost \$35 but because we are a Title I school, we applied for a grant and everybody went for free. We were very fortunate to be able to participate in that. Some of the things that Life Town offers - the village is a simulated town square with streets, traffic lights, a park, sidewalks and shops. It's 11,000 square feet. This is the largest area in Life Town and central to the mission of giving each individual the tools he or she needs to live up to their individual potential. When the students first arrived there, they were given something to hold their money that went around their neck. They were given \$12 each. They were able to go throughout the different shops in the simulated town, whether it was to the supermarket. They went to the bank. They bought ice cream. There was a pet shop. The girls were getting their

nails done. The boys were getting hand massages. The bottom line is that they were going, and they were using their own money that they were given to be able to do these things. They have an aquatic center, which we did not have access to. They had a therapeutic wing, a gymnasium where the students also played and a multipurpose room where we met. The students have lunch there. They have a volunteer lounge. They do have hours for the general public, which I asked about because it's something I would love to bring my own children to. It was very interesting. They were able to ride their little bike around town. They had to stop and go. There was a traffic light. We are going to continue being responsible, respectful and ready at School No. 2. Thank you.

Comm. Gonzalez: Thank you for that, Dr. Serrano. Great job to your staff, all the children and to the music teacher in the back! I had the pleasure of participating at the ring ceremony and it was an amazing event. Thank you for inviting me. Great job!

### **School No. 20 Highlights**

Mr. Michael Hill: Good evening, Dr. Newell, Dr. Anderson, as well as members of the Board. My name is Mr. Hill. I'm the Principal of School No. 20. I was watching her as she was operating this. This is my second year as Principal of School No. 20. As you drive down 20th Avenue, you can't miss it. It's between 36<sup>th</sup> and 37<sup>th</sup> Streets, at that far east end of Paterson, New Jersey. One of the key things to School No. 20, and we're doing the history on this, our main entrance within that building is probably one of the most beautiful entrances in all of Paterson, not just speaking of schools. We have actual art that's displayed in the main entrance on both sides as you enter. We would love to have everyone come through and take a look at this. The story that was told to me, because this predates to the 1960s and 1970s, was that an art teacher took a trip to Africa. When he returned, he shared some of the art with the school. This is the other side of the actual front entrance. As you take a look, it's very African inspired and very beautiful. These paintings are roughly anywhere between 4 to 6 feet in the length. They're very large. Our mission statement is to foster a love of lifelong learning by guiding students to build foundational academic skills that will contribute to their ongoing success, and by encouraging creative collaboration in an inclusive environment. We do emphasize lifelong learning in an inclusive environment. School No. 20 houses a k-8 autism program, as well as an ERI program of k-5. Each morning this is something that's very important to me and to all the students of the school. We have created a statement of respect that we have learned, and we recite every morning. If you were to walk up to any of the students, they would be able to recite it for you. "I am important. I am respectful. I am prepared. I am responsible for my own actions. I am positive with myself and others." During the course of the morning announcements, all of our students participate in performing the morning announcements. As the Principal of the school, I get to sit back and allow the students to be the leaders of the school. The picture that we have here is one of our ERI second grade students who is actually leading the morning announcements for that day. Moving forward, we're going to be showing some slides in regard to some of the activities that the students normally participate in over the course of the school year. BizTown is a field trip for the fifth graders, which they take on a yearly basis. It helps them with financial literacy. They also participate in the district's science fair. The Halloween trunk-or-treat as well as a corn maze is something that the kids enjoy. We all have opportunity to actually bring our cars around and provide opportunities for the students. We celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month. We have one of the greatest ceremonies in regard to Hispanic Heritage Month each year. Our Black History Month Program, we had the opportunity to start this year. Because we do house students of the autistic population, we do utilize our grounds to have what we consider a pumpkin patch. We have a vendor bring in the pumpkins and lay them out on the atrium area of the school. That allows the kids to go

out and have that sensory process in regard to having their own pumpkin patch at the school. Girls on the Run is something that the fifth-grade girls participate in every year. I actually went to try to participate in it with them. I'm glad I was late because by the time I got there, they had run and was finished. I can't do that. Our fifth graders have the opportunity each year to actually raise funds. They work through a program where they get free sneakers. Then they go out and practice by running around the school, getting themselves ready for this 5-K run, which actually is happening in May. We also have Read Across America with Dr. Seuss' birthday participating, along with our middle-grade students. They all go to the elementary school grade levels and read to those students. Something that was new for us this year, we were blessed to have received 33 bicycles for our second-grade students through the Land Rover-Jaguar Dealership of Mahwah through a partnership with Wishful Wheels. This was an opportunity for our second graders to get free bicycles and helmets and a quick lesson on our playground. This is me going back to being the daddy and helping those kids. It was a great experience for all our staff as well as the second graders. Some of these kids are receiving their first bicycles. This is our second year. We do have a partnership with the Brooklyn Nets. We are the only school in the State of New Jersey that is allowed to serve in this partnership with the Brooklyn Nets. They offer basketball clinics to our students during the PE periods, as well as allow us to have opportunity to bring in new books to our library. They'll be participating in the future with Read Across America. They have some of their coaches through their youth clinics and their youth teams come in and do what they can for us. This is big for them because normally they're not allowed to leave the outskirts of New York. Each year they do participate in an Easter egg hunt, which is coming up pretty soon. Like I said, this is something with our autism program and we're spreading it out to our k-2. We'll be utilizing the field to the rear of the school. Our end-of-the-year school carnival gets bigger and bigger every year through our faculty leadership and bringing in new experiences for the students. We do have this at the end of the school year on the field behind the school. The kids have a great time. They have an experience where they can go out and socialize with the other grade levels. It's a cherished moment. Some of the other things that happen in the school that we do not have slides for at this time, this year we have started or brought back our drumline. Mr. Redmond is spearheading this movement. We have at this time 12 fifth graders who are participating in the drumline and they have participated in programs. We are offering the School No. 20 drumline to the Board in regard to future programs. They are ready. They practice twice a week. They are fully invested and we're looking forward to great things for them in the future. Our motto for the school is "Together Everyone Achieves More." Being my second year as principal, we're making a lot of strides in regard to what's happening in the building. We're putting these pieces together to hopefully drive better instruction of the school, as well as to get more and more opportunities for our students so they'll be able to see change within the community around them, as well as open up brighter thoughts and mindset so they can do for others within the community. That lifelong learning mindset is a key thing for our students. When you look at different programs related to ERI, with our regular education students, the first year I was there they were so used to hearing, "Second grade ERI, come down for the assembly. First grade autism, come down for the assembly." We want to foster an atmosphere of inclusion where we don't think of ourselves through the different programs. We think of ourselves through ourselves as an individual and through that different grade. When we started having these assemblies last year and we called down second grade, they would come down to the auditorium and I would get the phone calls. Now that change in the mindset has really taken place in the school. We're looking to move forward and do greater things. As I have the microphone, I am jealous, and I would love to have the opportunity to have a music teacher. That's something we would definitely love to have, and we can take the drumline to another level. Thank you.

Comm. Gonzalez: Thank you so much. Great job! Dr. Serrano, you better hold on to your music teacher tightly there.

### **School No. 5 Highlights**

Ms. Rebecca Cecala: Good evening, Dr. Newell, Dr. Henderson, cabinet and Board members. I am Rebecca Cecala. I am the Principal of School No. 5. This is my first year at School No. 5, coming from about 10 years of being a middle school principal. Moving into an elementary school for the first time in quite a while was an interesting experience. A lot of tears and runny noses, and that was just the staff. Just kidding! It was a wonderful experience, and I do have to applaud my outstanding Vice Principals who are here with me, Dr. Tiffany McBride and Ms. Ramona Serrano, for being able to help me through that transition. Without them we couldn't have done the things that we have done this year. We're really proud and excited to share that with you. Without further ado, I'm going to introduce Ms. Serrano to review our school's mission and vision.

Ms. Ramona Serrano: Good evening. School No. 5 houses kindergarten through fifth grade students. Our mission is to prepare our students socially and emotionally to develop their full potential to meet high academic expectations in the present and beyond. Our vision is to reach a level of excellence that will allow all students to become successful lifelong learners. You will see many highlights here that include our students, but of course, our wonderful staff that put this together in our building. I would like to introduce Dr. Tiffany McBride, our Vice Principal.

Dr. Tiffany McBride: Good evening, Board. As you are aware, School No. 5 is a k-5 elementary school. Our school currently houses 763 students. We have 360 multilingual students, 103 special education students, 456 Hispanic students, 259 Bengali students, 46 African American students, 3 white students and 1 Native American student. Here's a fun fact about school five – we have the largest multilingual student population within the district. We are very excited and looking forward to the upcoming school year because we are becoming a Magnet School for the 2025-26 school year. Next, Principal Cecala will discuss our goals for the 2024-25 school year.

Ms. Cecala: We believe that it takes a village to raise a child, or in this case, 765 of them. When your village has the talent, expertise and commitment that we have at School No. 5, we make sure that those skills are utilized, shared and recognized. In addition to our academic and social emotional goals for the year, our focus has turned to identifying students who were interested and ready to take on roles that would make a change for School No. 5 and for their own future. We also sought out teacher and staff leaders who expressed interest in implementing various initiatives to improve the school community and provide them with the tools to do so. Last, but certainly not least, we identified the need to create a parent-teacher partnership that School No. 5 needed. As you will see, the remaining parts of this presentation will reflect those exact goals that we set out to accomplish this year. You will hear from many of our staff and student leaders who are here to share with you the work that they have completed and continue to do each day to make the School No. 5 community succeed. Without further ado, I introduce Dr. Jacqueline Dorrman, our Special Education Teacher at School No. 5, as well as some members of our ARC team community, Ms. Kayla Soto and Ms. Tara Martin.

Dr. Jacqueline Dorrman: Good evening. My name is Jacqueline Dorrman, and I am part of the ARC team at our school. It's the attendance review committee. We started

in September assigning success mentors, which is what we call them, for each homeroom in our school. They are usually servicing, at most, three classes and they will check in with those classes each week. At our ARC meeting, we do review the updated chronic list. Our focus is on creating an environment that is just showing all the students in every classroom that there's more than just your homeroom teacher that cares for you to be there, improve their daily attendance, as well as improve that loving, nurturing community for them. If you see the quote on there, "You can't achieve your dreams if you don't show up to chase them." We want them there. We want them learning and just knowing that we love them and that learning is fun. This is the parental initiative. First, we had a "Power of the Presence" workshop hosted by our School No. 5 admin and other staff members to inform parents on why attendance is important and needed. We also will send home success mentor letters to any of our chronic students, just to open that dialog with the families, letting them know we're here. We give our personal information for success mentors so they can have that conversation with us. We can dive a little deeper into what are the root causes of why we're absent so much. We also will send phone calls home and log them in our Infinite Campus so that our admin team is notified right away. If there seems to be some pattern that's arriving, at our ARC meetings we'll discuss it as a team, bounce ideas off of each other on what are some initiatives or incentives, or any way to attack these particular problems and help all of our students. Next, Ms. Martin will speak about our schoolwide initiative.

Ms. Tara Martin: Good afternoon. As you can see, we do reward them for having perfect attendance. Every month, the success mentors go into the classrooms, give them a golden ticket and put it in a box. Once the golden tickets are in the box, they go to a June raffle for a grand prize. In the past, we have given prizes as great as Hoover boards and bicycles. They look forward to that. One student from each grade will have his name pulled and they will receive the grand prize. Thank you.

Ms. Kayla Soto: Good afternoon. I'll be talking about the class-wide initiatives. Each of our classes will be given a perfect attendance sheet. Every day that all the students in that class do attend, a letter will get filled in. After 17 days, the class gets to pick their class-wide incentive. They can get an extra gym or art period. It's up to the discretion of the students and the homeroom teacher. They'll also get a shout-out in the morning announcements.

Dr. Dorrman: Then we end with individual initiatives. Each student does receive a trophy that they are able to color decorate and it is posted right outside their classroom door. Grades 3-5 will also receive a homework pass that is given to any student who has achieved perfect attendance. Success mentors are able to come up with their own incentives for their students. I know in the past; I've given homework passes to students and it motivates them. As long as they're giving me 2 weeks of straight attendance and improve that chronic absenteeism number, then they are earning their own rewards. Our K-2 students will receive something a little more tangible, like an eraser, pencil or stickers. They're not just yet as motivated by homework passes. Some other incentives that some of our other success mentors have done is they've given their classes squishy balls, slime, glitter pens or something to keep motivating. We're focusing more on the positive than the negative and the whole class is there to support every student to keep showing up, just be there. That's pretty much our ARC committee.

Ms. Cecala: Thank you for that. As the ARC team does the work that they do and meet every week, obviously we want to know if it's working. Is this making a difference? And it certainly has. One of our schoolwide goals this year has been to decrease our

chronic absenteeism rate in comparison to last year. As you can see, the dark line is the chronic absenteeism rate for the 2023-24 school year. The red line is the chronic absenteeism rate for the 2024-25 school year. We do see an uptick from November until January. I do attribute that to the viruses that were out there and causing mayhem. We are now on a downward trajectory so we're looking forward to seeing some more positive results. I would like to pass this over to Ms. Nusra Ali. She is our Student Government Vice President, accompanied by one of our SGA advisors, Ms. Kelly Williams. Come on up.

Ms. Nusra Ali: Good afternoon. My name is Nusra Ali and I am the Vice President of the Student Government Association. My journey to running for student government started with a desire to make a real difference in our school community. I began by talking to my peers, listening to their concerns and gathering ideas on what they wanted to see change. From there, I developed a platform that focused on boosting school spirit and getting more students involved in activities. I poured my energy into campaigns. I designed posters, wrote a speech, practiced and shared my vision with the students. It was a lot of work, but I was driven by my passion for helping others and I'm grateful for the support I've received along the way. I would like to introduce you to Jelani Morales, Treasurer of the Student Government Association.

Ms. Jelani Morales: My name is Jelani Morales, Treasurer of the Student Government Association. Our school government works hard to serve a purpose at our school. We represent student interests and act as the voice of the student body. We develop personal leadership skills to help us throughout the school and the rest of our lives. We promote school spirit and unity through events, campaigns and student activities.

Ms. Maddie Lopez: Good afternoon. My name is Maddie Lopez and I'm the President of the Student Government Association. These are some images of our campaigning process. Here are our accomplishments. We did a toy drive for School No. 5 for St. Joseph Children's Hospital as a way to give back during the holiday seasons. Here's our flyer for the \$1 puppet race this year. The SGO holds puppet races to raise funds for schoolwide activities.

Ms. Ali: We had the pleasure of opening our new improved auditorium to School No. 5.

### ***Video Presentation***

Ms. Tamina Choudhury: Good evening, everyone. I'm Tamina Choudhury, an ESL bilingual teacher at School No. 5. Today, I want to talk about something that makes our school truly special. It's multilingual environment. In our classrooms, hallways and playgrounds you hear a symphony of languages, each representing a unique culture, history and way of thinking. A multilingual school is more than just a place of learning. It's a bridge that connects people from different backgrounds. School No. 5 fosters inclusivity broadens perspectives and prepares students for a world where communication across cultures is essential. When students learn in multiple languages, they not only develop stronger cognitive skills, they also gain a deeper appreciation of diversity. Here at School No. 5, every language is valued, and every student's voice matters. Whether you speak one language or five, you are part of a community that celebrates linguistic and cultural richness. School No. 5 is where we continue to support and uplift each other to make our school a place where all languages are heard, respected and cherished. This year we celebrated Multilanguage Day at School No. 5 for the very first time with staff and students. We highlighted the international Multilanguage Day, which is a national holiday in Bangladesh. The teachers and students presented a slide show along with the history of the Multilanguage Day

following some performances to tribute martyrs who sacrificed their lives to establish the Bangla language. Ms. Ramirez, our School No. 5 fifth grade teacher, will talk more about it and we will watch a video afterwards. Thank you.

Ms. Asha Ramirez: Good evening. My name is Asha Ramirez. I'm a fifth-grade teacher at School No. 5. On February 28 our school celebrated Multilanguage Day. This special event allowed the students to embrace the beauty of languages around the world. The students were able to see that language is more than just words. It's the heartbeat of culture, history, different ethnic foods and so much more. Students were able to see the School No. 5 family come together as different languages were presented, allowing the students to see their peers share their stories, traditions, dances and cultural experiences. During this event, some of the students performed traditional Bengali dances. We had a kindergarten class do the Mexican hat dance. Some of our fifth graders even danced some Bachata. Multilanguage Day allowed our School No. 5 family to come together as a community to learn, explore and appreciate the diversity of languages that allows our world to be so rich and vibrant. Here is a video recap.

### ***Video Presentation***

Ms. Cecala: Last, but not least, another initiative that we have this year is forming a parent/teacher connection through our parent/teacher advisory group, PTAG. I would like to introduce Ms. Diana Sanchez, Ms. Tina Mangione and Ms. Colleen Kelly to come up and speak about that.

Ms. Colleen Kelly: Hello. My name is Colleen Kelly. I'm a teacher liaison for the PTAG team.

Ms. Diana Sanchez: I'm Diana Sanchez, secretary for the PTAG team.

Ms. Tina Mangione: I'm Tina Mangione, the treasurer.

Ms. Sanchez: The purpose of the PTAG team is to serve as a bridge between the parents, guardians and the School No. 5 community, offering a platform for open communication, sharing the experiences and addressing concerns related to the school policies, programs and services. Tina will be showing our monthly meetings.

Ms. Mangione: Workshops for parents update parents on events in the community that will benefit their families and provide information about different services. We also do student of the month celebrations. Teachers nominate the students and parents and guardians will come and celebrate the student of the month.

Ms. Kelly: These are the different certificates that we pass out to the students when they are nominated. This we bring to the classrooms, and this is what the children receive. The second picture is the actual certificate that they get. Then we give a certificate to the parents to thank them. The student of the month is my favorite assembly held at School No. 5. It brings me joy to see how excited the students are and how proud each parent is of their child. Invitations to the ceremony are hand-delivered to each student. When the students see the special paper, their eyes light up. The students are very kind to the nominee that has been selected by their teacher. They clap, cheer or just say kind words. It's really sweet to see this happen at every grade level. On the day of the ceremony, the students and parents are invited to attend. The students' names are announced, and a brief description is given as to why that student was chosen. Both the students and the parents receive certificates, and they

also have the opportunity to have their pictures taken. After the ceremony, there is a light reception to honor these students. That's our PTAG team.

Ms. Cecala: We thank you for your attention tonight to the highlights for School No. 5. Again, this is the first year that these different initiatives have been implemented. We're really excited to see how they have become more embedded in the school culture as we move on throughout the years. I cannot thank the team enough for coming out this evening and especially for the students and parents who had to bring them this evening. Without them, this work could not happen. Thank you very much. Have a great day.

### **Overview of Long Range Facilities Plan/Middle School Model**

Mr. Neil Mapp: Good evening, Board President, Board members, Superintendent, Deputy Superintendent and general public. My name is Neil Mapp. I'm the Chief Officer of Facilities and Custodial Services for Paterson Public Schools. I'm responsible for the maintenance of all our facilities, the general upkeep, care, and custodial services that we provide. We enable the general and public use of our facilities after hours as a community school district. I'd like to take this opportunity to follow Principal Cecala's presentation by saying that if you haven't been to School No. 5, please go check it out. It's one of our most beautiful schools in the district. It has incredible architecture, and we just spent nearly \$1 million. We got a \$1 million grant to upgrade their auditorium. We have beautiful auditorium seats and floors. We redid the plaster work inside the building, and it looks extraordinary. Thank you, Principal Cecala, for inviting facilities to the ribbon cutting. It was an exciting time. The kids were in the auditorium having a ball for the first time in about 4 years and I'm so happy about that. You should see that. Another thing I'd like to say is that what they did today highlights some valuable information. School No. 5 is part of our cohort redistricting for the district. I see a lot of signs that say middle school model. School No. 5 is part of an area that was redistricted as part of the middle school model, and this is an example of how great that redistricting went over a year ago. School No. 5, School No. 7, School No. 19, School No. 27 and Joseph A. Taub are part of that redistricting effort. I commend the staff at School No. 5 for doing a great job making that transition.

Comm. Teague: You didn't mention School No. 9 or Hani Awadallah. That's what I'm trying to figure out.

Mr. Mapp: That's not part of Area #5.

Comm. Gonzalez: Let him finish his presentation first.

Mr. Mapp: Area #5 included the schools that I just mentioned and that was phase two of our plan, but I'll go through it. I just wanted to mention that part of that redistricting was to create a Spanish and Bengali magnet school there. What you heard was the diversity of that neighborhood and the coming together of that neighborhood to create a community. That community is now thriving, and I commend you. I introduced myself and I'm here today because the Board requested that I explain how the framework was developed to redistrict elementary school programming for pre-K through 5 and 6-8 grades cohorts. I'm using the word cohort. Some people may not be familiar with the term. A cohort is a group of people or students that begin and complete course work or programming together. They begin and they finish it together as a unified entity. They move together in classes and through the building on a daily basis. That's the cohort. There are two cohorts at the elementary school level. They are the pre-K through 5 and 6-8. The 6-8 make up the middle school cohort and the pre-K through 5 make up the elementary school cohort. As you hear that term used throughout my presentation,

you'll understand what I'm saying. The district has formally named this effort the middle school model. For those who are reading all of the literature that I've produced since 2019 on this subject, and I've presented to the Board on many occasions, I've spent many hours developing this framework. We as a district use that name to describe the effort to separate the two cohorts, elementary school and middle school, and we call it the middle school model. We implemented that model already in one area of the district. The long-range facility plan, as you can see in my first slide, it says long range facility plan, background and implementation. The middle school model, or the separation of the cohorts, is part of a larger plan. Every 5 years the district is responsible for updating that long range facility plan. It describes the complement of buildings and facilities that we have in the district and the need for space, whether or not the district can satisfy that need and also the ability to upkeep those spaces. We identify capital projects that we must undertake over the next 5 years to maintain the efficacy of our services and also to maintain a healthy environment throughout the district. We have to amend that plan every 5 years and send it down to the New Jersey Department of Education. They have to approve our plan and then we move forward with the capital projects that we engage in every year. As a district, we will have to provide funding on a local level to enable those projects to take place. The long-range facility plan is a comprehensive 5-year plan that outlines the district's facility needs, how we will address them to ensure safe, healthy and educationally adequate school facilities. I've been in the district now for about 12 years. There have only been two updates to the long-range facility plan since I've been here. In 2015 to 2020 was the initial long-range facility plan that spoke to the separation of the elementary school and middle school cohorts. In 2015, the Board approved the submission to the New Jersey Department of Education on August 19, 2015. In that submission and the approval were schools that were identified to have those cohorts, elementary school and middle school components, separated. There were about 3 schools back in 2015-2020 that were identified to be moved to a middle school component only. In 2019, the facilities department was charged with making a major amendment to that approved plan. The DOE approved the plan on May 2, 2016, which included the redistricting of New Roberto Clemente from a pre-K to a middle school. It included the redistricting of School No. 15 from a pre-k to 8 to pre-k to 5 and the construction of a new middle school, Joseph A. Taub, to replace the old Don Bosco School. Back in 2016 it was approved by the DOE and that Board to move in that direction. The approval of the 2015-2020 long range facility plan initiated the districtwide move to separate the elementary school cohorts into elementary school and middle school. We reviewed the long-range facility plan from 2015-2020. In 2020, the district hired consultants to take on a more in-depth review of that plan and also to submit a revision or a major amendment to that plan. We were required to do that in 2020 because the plan was a 5-year plan that was originally approved and in the fifth year we had to submit a new plan. We hired design consultants and a demographer to study the City of Paterson and the population. They looked at where people live and how many people are living in the city. They looked at how many students were in the city. They also looked at buildings that were built and constructed over the last 5 years to project what our enrollment may be over the next 5 years. That's what a demographer did, along with the design consultant. This was done to establish a framework to continue implementing the separation of the 2 cohorts, elementary school and middle school, focusing solely on enrollment data and building capacity. We looked at each building in the district and we counted each classroom to make sure that the students that live in and around that building can be housed and educated in that building. Additionally, we assembled a team to identify the current and future needs of the district regarding educational space and professional staff. We wanted to make sure that in every building we had enough staff to actually prosecute the curriculum that's specified for those cohorts. The team looked at the previous long-range facility plans to see if

elementary school enrollment data trends were handled, if they established goals from those plans relative to elementary schools, and if those goals were achieved or still outstanding. If any of the goals were still outstanding, we looked at those goals to see if they were still valid. If they said that School No. 9 would be a middle school from 6-8, we looked at that to see if it was still valid from 2015-2020. We can see the enrollment data to see if those plans and that request that we were making to the state to change School No. 9 was still valid at that time. We then conducted existing condition surveys of each building to see the condition of the building, what the building needed in terms of heating, ventilation, air conditioning, if it needed new floors, new gyms, or new auditoriums. We made an entire and comprehensive list of what the needs of the buildings were. We had to do that to submit that as part of the long-range facility plan. An exhaustive classroom count was done for all elementary schools with existing occupancy capacities that were established and documented as part of this plan. We looked at each building, we saw how many rooms they had, and we determined how many students can fit in that building. Currently, School No. 5 has about 800 students, and the capacity of that building is probably a little over 800 students. We looked at the utilization of the school. If every classroom was utilized for programming, then it's 100% utilization. Those are the things we were looking at and had to report to the state. We also reviewed the physical requirements for middle school program, whether or not they had all of the classroom space and lab spaces in the school to support a middle school program. A middle school educational program is even larger. It takes more space than a high school program. We looked at current elementary schools and the majority of our elementary schools do not have sufficient labs to support sixth, seventh and eighth grade programs. Those are the things that we had to document and had to come to terms with and determine how we get around that in terms of providing adequate educational services for our students. Using the district's enrollment data from March 2022, every elementary school student in the district was also geocoded. We looked at every elementary school student and where they live relative to a school. That's what geocoding is. If you lived 2 blocks away from School No. 5 or 3 blocks away from School No. 9, it shows exactly where you live. We could determine how many students around that school could possibly attend that school. We do that also to determine the capacity of the school. As part of the long-range facility plan, we have to ensure and make certain that if any charter school or Catholic school fails, we can absorb those students into our schools. That's why we geocode, and we determine the capacity of our schools. We grouped schools into 7 attendance areas. This is where we begin to create a format to move the district to a middle school model or to separate the two cohorts. We looked at dividing the school district into 7 attendance areas. Each attendance area would be anchored by a middle school. You'd go from preschool to eighth grade in your neighborhood. That's what we were looking at. Recommendations for the attendance areas were data-driven only but not determined by a need for specialized programs. Once we counted all the general classrooms, we said that the students that live in that area can fit in those classrooms. We determined that there were extra classrooms in our elementary schools. That means we can bring in other services, like special education services, those services that our students are going either across town or out of the city to acquire. We also looked at that capacity and that need to bring special education students back into our district. After we geocoded and surveyed all our buildings, we found that there was an imbalance in enrollment across the district at the elementary school level. That means that a school like School No. 28 has as many students as a School No. 19. School No. 19 may have 300 students at that time and School No. 28 also had about 300 students. The difference is School No. 28 is 3 times as large as School No. 19. Although School No. 19 was 3 times smaller than School No. 28, they had just as many students. That's a problem because in every classroom now at School No. 19 you may have 24 or 30 students in the classroom in order to satisfy the need, whereas School No. 28 had room to spread out. They may

have then 15 or 20 students in the classroom. That's the imbalance in enrollment that we found when we began to geocode students and see where they live and where they attended school. We also found that there was an excessive capacity in schools when viewed from a high level. That means for the classroom spaces that were being used, there were extra classrooms not being used. Despite the need for specialized program spaces, such as self-contained classrooms and pre-K, we saw that there was an extreme abundance of classroom space at the elementary school level. When we did our long-range facility plan and we issued the plan, it showed that we didn't need any more elementary schools. The only schools that we really needed were high schools. We needed 1,200 more seats at the high school level. That's why we're building a new high school behind Paterson Catholic, to satisfy that need for 1,200 more high school seats. At the elementary school level, we did not need any additional seats because we had an abundance of seats. We found also after geocoding that students were leaving their neighborhoods to access educational services, whether they be specialized services for special education or just general education. They were leaving their neighborhoods, going across town to other schools to access educational services. Most k-8 elementary schools also lacked science labs and other ancillary spaces that were needed to support that middle school program. Those were our findings after we geocoded and surveyed all the schools. The goal of creating just one cohort for 6-8 was to create a balance in classroom sizes across the elementary school buildings. It was also to unify academic programs. If you can imagine, and you may not know this, at a current elementary school with pre-K through 8, there are 3 different lunches that are being delivered to that school. That's 3 different efforts that have to be taken in order to feed our students. When we separate those cohorts, now it's only 2 at the elementary school level and 1 at the middle school level. That's some of the benefit of separating the cohorts. A reduction in class sizes also to meet educational adequacy standards. We wanted to make sure that in every elementary school the classroom sizes achieved the educational adequacy standard. The educational adequacy standard for self-contained classrooms is 12. The educational adequacy standards for pre-K classrooms are 15 students. The educational adequacy standard for K-1 is 21 students. The educational adequacy standard for 2-5 is 23 students per classroom. The educational adequacy standard for 6-8 is 25 students per classroom. In most cases, and the teachers can tell you, there are more than 25 kids in your classroom. In other schools there would be 10 kids in the classroom. We wanted to make sure that there was equity across the district. Every teacher had the opportunity to teach in an educationally adequately sized classroom. That's one of the motivating factors behind this separation of cohorts. When you take the middle school grades, 6, 7, and 8, out of an elementary school, you now have additional classroom space that you can place other students in. You have excess capacity once you take sixth, seventh and eighth graders out of an elementary school. When you centralize that sixth, seventh and eighth grade to a middle school, you then centralize all those teachers that were in the 5 or 6 different elementary schools in that neighborhood come together as one. You have one unified educational program so everyone's teaching the same curriculum everywhere at the same time. Testing becomes more standard because you don't have a lack of curriculum teachers, for an entire year, perhaps. You don't have consistency across the district. That's what we're trying to do. We're trying to be as consistent as possible across the district as we provide educational services for our students. We also wanted to create neighborhood attendance zones based on where students live, and open new elementary classrooms to house special education cohorts. We want to bring in special education cohorts that may be going to school outside of our district back into our district so we can house them at our schools. We received Board approval for the major amendment of the long-range facility plan in August of 2021. In order to reach or get that Board approval, I had several presentations that I made to the Board on December 16, 2020, December 23, 2020, and July 21, 2021. On July 21,

2021, is when the Board reviewed and approved the submission of the major amendment to the long-range facility plan be submitted to the New Jersey Department of Education. In that plan we showed where we would continue separating the cohorts, elementary school and middle school, by redistricting schools for the upcoming 5-year period. On June 8, 2022, I also went to the Board again and requested the continuation of the middle school model to continue to separate the cohorts. I've been doing this since 2019. I've been informing the Board all the way through this process. From the time we did a demographic study, we presented all of those findings to the Board, to the time we made recommendations on how we would redistrict our schools and create some format to separate the cohorts. I came to the Board with that also. I also came to the Board before we submitted that long range facility plan major amendment to NJDOE for your approval and we moved forward with it. To date, we've accomplished 2 phases of this process. As I told the Board in past presentations, this would be a multi-phase, multi-year effort in order to separate the 2 cohorts districtwide. What we've done in Phase 1 was to redistrict New Roberto Clemente to a middle school. We also got approval to build a new middle school, which was Joseph A. Taub. In Phase 2, which was a year or so ago, we redistricted Area #5, which included School No. 5, School No. 7, School No. 19, School No. 27 and Joseph A. Taub. We also took School No. 29 offline. It was a leased facility. That was another goal of the Board, to divest ourselves of lease facilities. We took those program elements and moved them to neighboring schools. The third phase of this effort, and there are subsequent phases to come, the district will be redistricting Area #1, which is School No. 3, School No. 8, School No. 9, and Dr. Hani Awadallah. In the last phase of redistricting Area #5 we'll add grade 5 to School No. 19 and we'll add new sped classrooms to School No. 7 and School No. 8. Because we removed the middle school components from those schools, it enabled us to add special education classrooms or classes to those schools at School No. 7 and School No. 8. We're also doing the Bengali/Spanish magnet school for the 2025-2026 school year. That too is another initiative of the middle school model, to add those services to that area. There are some academic benefits that we gain from this effort. It offers accessibility and flexibility in our district, special education programs and preschool programs. We now have space to bring and expand those programs. It also centralizes our resources and programs for the middle school cohort. It creates neighborhood attendance areas to reduce absenteeism because they don't have to go across town to access educational services. It also creates a balance in class sizes across the elementary school district. It creates unified academic programs. It reduces class sizes to meet educational adequacy standards. It creates neighborhood attendance zones based on where students live. It opens new elementary classrooms to house special education cohorts. Just to be a little more specific, the implications for special education students – it limits the number of student moves throughout a pre-k to 8 school experience. Currently, a sped student risks moving multiple times because they age out of a program housed in one location. They may be seeking that service across town. They age out of it and now they have to move back over to their neighborhood in order to get additional services based on their age. The middle school model then creates and provides that service within their neighborhood. As they age, they stay in their neighborhood and don't have to travel across town. The middle school cohort model also sustains a neighborhood environment for special education students, even if they don't live in that existing neighborhood. They stay there within their community. This change could reduce the number of moves to 1 from elementary school to middle school, providing more continuity for our families. Standardized transportation also for special education students will be something that's achieved. The middle school model also builds a cohesive network of support for families. It builds student capacity with the longevity of peer relationships. The cohort stays together as they age. It supports continuous relationships with staff, administration, child support teams and related service providers. It enforces student familiarity with

their surroundings. Additionally, it provides parity in specialized facilities in each neighborhood area. As we create these neighborhoods and these areas, we're able to provide sensory rooms, calming rooms, child study team rooms and related service rooms in each one of these areas. You don't have to go across town to access any of these types of services. That's my recap of how we got to this point and the development of the model or framework to move and separate the two cohorts, elementary school and middle school. I open up for questions from our Board.

Comm. Gonzalez: Thank you for your presentation. It's very much appreciated. I hope that answered a lot of questions.

Comm. Teague: It didn't answer any questions, honestly. You already know how it's going to go.

Comm. Gonzalez: That's fine, but let's be respectful. This is not the city council. It answered a lot of questions for us. If you have additional questions, we'll get to them. Let's be respectful. That's all I ask. Are there any questions from the Board?

Comm. Teague: The first question was about the cohorts. You mentioned it was the third phase that you wanted to add School No. 9 and the other schools. Parents have been asking for this for the longest. Why wasn't it ever presented to the community?

Mr. Mapp: Asking for what? I'm sorry.

Comm. Teague: They've been asking for this plan that was put on the screen. Parents have put in OPRA requests. They've been requesting at meetings. They've been coming here. This is the first time this was...

Mr. Mapp: I'm sorry. Can you restate your question?

Comm. Teague: The plan that you just put on the screen, the parents have been asking for this information for the longest and have not gotten it. If I'm wrong, just tell me I'm wrong. They have not gotten it. I'm getting the phone calls.

Mr. Mapp: You're wrong, because I presented to the Board on numerous occasions.

Comm. Teague: No. What you're doing is playing semantics.

Comm. Gonzalez: Be respectful.

Comm. Teague: Answer the questions that they're asking. Give them the answers to the questions that they're asking.

Mr. Mapp: Commissioner, I'm going to respond to you.

Comm. Teague: I was very clear with you. Give them the answers to the questions they're asking. I'm asking him to be open with the public instead of trying to lambaste the community and trying to make the public feel bad for being concerned about their children. Then you're going to tell the community that it takes a village to raise a child. But when the village is here, you're not showing them any respect.

Comm. Gonzalez: With all due respect, everyone here on the Board may want to ask questions.

Comm. Teague: I'll yield to the public. When the public speaks, they'll have the questions. I'll yield to them.

Comm. Gonzalez: We're going to be respectful to our presenter. We're not going to go back and forth in that manner. We're going to have some decorum. We're better than that.

Comm. Teague: Hey bro, I'm not a child over here.

Comm. Gonzalez: We're better than that.

Comm. Teague: I'm 43 years old. You're not going to talk to me like that. You're not going to talk to me like I'm a child.

Comm. Gonzalez: We're going to have order on this side of the dais.

Comm. Teague: What we're not going to have is you trying to dictate what goes on around here.

Comm. Gonzalez: No one's dictating, but I am the President. I am going to control this meeting.

Comm. Teague: I know you're President, but that does not make you the dictator.

Comm. Gonzalez: I'm not a dictator.

Comm. Teague: You're not going to be the dictator up there.

Comm. Gonzalez: You're not going to talk over people. I'm sorry. You can answer his question.

Mr. Mapp: On a number of occasions, I have presented the middle school model.

Comm. Teague: To parents?

Mr. Mapp: In public.

Comm. Gonzalez: Let him answer the question.

Mr. Mapp: In public to the parents. I presented the middle school model. I showed all areas. You can go back to all the Board presentations because they were recorded.

Comm. Teague: Excuse me. That question is not for you. You're not the person I need to ask. I need to ask Dr. Newell that question. Apparently, you can't make the call on that. Dr. Newell does. She's your boss. Correct?

Mr. Mapp: Dr. Newell was not here when I made the presentations.

Comm. Teague: See what I mean? That's not even the name that's on the document. Eileen Shafer's name is still on that document.

Mr. Mapp: Comm. Teague, if you haven't received from Cheryl, I will give you those presentations to show who was on the Board at the time and the presentation that I

made. You had an opportunity to come to this meeting. It was open to the public. I did not do it in private.

Comm. Gonzalez: Excuse me, you're addressing the Commissioners of this Board.

Mr. Mapp: I will provide that information to him if he wants to see it. I've done numerous presentations where I showed each area and the middle school and elementary schools that anchored that area.

Comm. Gonzalez: Correct me if I'm wrong, but in the presentation you did have all the dates laid out of those presentations that you did. Correct?

Mr. Mapp: Not all of them, but most of them.

Comm. Gonzalez: There were more.

Mr. Mapp: We will provide those presentations to you.

Comm. Gonzalez: Thank you. Are there any other questions from Board members?

Comm. Freeman: Mr. Mapp, I'm not sure if you can give the parents what they're asking for. They are asking for full transparency. I've sat in these meetings, and I've listened to the parents ask for the data that shows that this middle school model will work. They've asked that question over and over again. They've asked for the data that shows that this middle school model will work, and they haven't been able to get it. They've been asking questions. They've been wanting to see exactly what you put up here. Had that been presented to them before, I'm sure they wouldn't be here because they would understand it. They're asking just for clarity and transparency. Where is the data that's going to make them feel comfortable enough to know that this is going to work? That's what I've been hearing. They're not getting that answer. If you make it clear and plain to them, I'm sure things will be different. To go back and forth, we understand that it was during Covid that this came to be. We understand that. We were virtual. It happened. Most of us weren't here, but you have to understand their cry. I understand it. All they're asking for is the data that's going to show them that this middle school model and this move will benefit their children. That's all I've been hearing them ask for and they're not getting that answer. I'm not sure if you can give that answer, Mr. Mapp. I'm not going to put that on you because that's not your place. It has to come from Dr. Newell.

Mr. Mapp: The data that I produce and deal with is purely structural. How many classrooms do we have? How many students do we have? Can they fit in the building? The data that I have says that when we redistrict Area 5 we redistrict 3,000 students in School No. 5, School No. 7, School No. 19, School No. 27 and Joseph A. Taub. The next area we're only dealing with 1,800 students that will be impacted and redistricted under that next move. Those are the types of data that I deal with. It's only been a year or so. The data that you need and are requesting probably comes a year or two from now.

Comm. Freeman: That's what the parents need to be told. They don't need to be shuffled back and forth or made to believe something different.

Mr. Mapp: That's not what I'm trying to do today.

Comm. Freeman: I understand that. You've done what you were brought here to do. You've done what you're supposed to do. That's your area. The data that's going to make these parents feel comfortable knowing this middle school model will work needs to come from administration. We need to be transparent. We need to be clear with them. We need to be honest with them. Let them know this is what it is, this is what it's going to do, this is how it's going to work and this is what won't work. Then we don't be here. When we're not transparent and honest, you're going to get the backlash. It's going to come at you because you're sitting here and giving this presentation to the parents now. Although you gave it several times before, maybe the communication didn't go out to the parents to let them understand the importance of what really was happening. It's no fault to you because you've done what you're supposed to do. They want data and I don't blame them. They should have the data. They should have everything that comes with this move, and they should feel comfortable with it. We can't be angry at them because they're here questioning us. That's what we're here for. We have to be honest with them.

Comm. Gonzalez: Any other questions from Board members?

### **Update on Reregistration Process**

Ms. Lisa Vainieri: Good evening, Board members, Dr. Newell, Dr. Henderson, parents, community. I'm here to give an update on our reregistration. We have completed the four weeks of reregistration for the four schools – School No. 3, School No. 8, School No. 9, and Dr. Hani. We will now have makeup days, April 7-10, for those who did not come. We did have 1,867 re-registrations and 273 that have not at the time, which is about 15%. We are reaching out. We finished calling those from School No. 3 that did not come, and we began today calling those from School No. 8, so on and so forth. We will go to School No. 9 next and Dr. Hani. Hopefully all the calls will be done by the time the makeup days come. After the makeup day week, which is April 7-10, any time between 8:00 and 4:00, after that I will finalize the numbers as to who's enrolled at what school. Those who did not come will not be on roll. We will use the numbers based off that. We did add additional daytime hours throughout this whole process. We told them they can come and walk in between 8:00 and 3:00 and many did. It was successful. We only have 15% that have not. We're hoping to get them done by calling them and letting them know. Are there any questions?

### **REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT**

Dr. Newell: Good evening, everyone. I just wanted to very briefly talk about some of the happenings that we've been doing. This morning, the Department of Special Education, led by Assistant Superintendent Cheryl Coy, hosted an exciting flag-raising ceremony here at Central Office in celebration of Autism Awareness Day. The ceremony brought together students, staff and members of the community for autism awareness. The event was a tremendous success that highlighted the importance of inclusion and acceptance of everyone. Thank you to our special education team and everyone who helped to make our school community a place where each individual was able to be seen and valued today at the Autism Awareness Celebration. I wanted to briefly speak on the strategic planning sessions that we've started. On Wednesday, March 26 we held the first of our 2 strategic planning community forums. As was advertised, the forums provided students, parents, staff and members of the community with the opportunity to bring their insights and perspectives to the development process. I thank everyone who attended our first session. The conversation was lively and productive. I'd also like to remind the community that our next session will be on Thursday, April 10 from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. Everyone is welcome to attend. We hope to

have as many possible participate in the process developing the next strategic plan for the district. I also want to speak on the School No. 3 community forum that was held on Thursday, March 27. Thank you to Dr. Vanessa Serrano, who hosted it at School No. 2. We had members of the School No. 3 community come out to listen and to give their thoughts and ideas about moving forward. It was hosted by Mr. David Cozart, Assistant Superintendent, and I'd like to thank everyone who participated in the discussion and shared their thoughts. We look forward to further developments as we pull together all of the feedback that we received. Finally, the Passaic County School Boards Association is hosting its Annual Spring Celebrations meeting on Wednesday, May 28, 2025, at Mario's Restaurant in Clifton. All Board members, superintendents, business administrators and other key staff members are invited to attend. As is the tradition, this year's Passaic County School Boards Association meeting will include a segment honoring board members across Passaic County who are celebrating significant milestones, as well as those who have received a certification through the Board Member Academy in the past year. I'm excited and honored to say that we are celebrating our very own Comm. Kenneth Simmons. As many of you know, Comm. Simmons has served as a member of the Paterson's Board of Education for 15 years. There is a flyer that I handed out that each of you has. Congratulations to Comm. Simmons on this remarkable achievement. Thank you so much for your many years of service to the Paterson community. Thank you. That ends my report.

## **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

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

Mr. Alexander Cardillo: I would like to explain to this Board the meeting that took place on April 4, 2019. Monica Florez, after three weeks of stalking me, confronted me about my relationship with Student E. She did so with my PEA rep. My PEA rep, who was also student E's resource teacher, seeing that I was nervous, said to her, "I'm going to ask you to stop. We asked him to do this." Monica Florez had a shocked look on her face and said that I needed to be commended. It was interesting that she finally confronted me on this day because I was going to speak to an assistant superintendent about her bizarre behavior. I spoke with her, but I didn't tell the full story because I thought after we cleared everything up after three long weeks that I was supposed to work with student E. It would be over. A secretary took notes at this meeting with the assistant superintendent, which was not provided in the discovery period and are still missing. Even though I was still sick because I felt something was wrong with Monica Florez, I let my guard down. While this was happening, the Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources and Superintendent of Schools asked for a third name for the RIF list. I had no idea about the DCPD house call Monica Florez made in March. I didn't find out until September in 2019 when student E himself told me. I knew when student E told me about the house visit the moment when the PEA rep said to Monica Florez that I was asked to do this was the moment she knew she had to get rid of me. This way I would never find out. Student E told me he sent you email correspondence as to why he found me after I was fired and how that went down. I will not repeat it here. On April 9 and 10, I was physically sick and exhausted with infection and anxiety. There was still something off with the way Monica Florez was acting. On April 11, she sent another email about what the rules were for having students in the library. She had previously taken my rights away to have students in the library, but every other teacher was allowed to do whatever it is they wanted to do. It was humiliating and she did it because she believed in her fake investigation. A pattern for Monica Florez was to

always change or make up rules as she went along to manipulate the situation to her liking. Again, I'm asking you please take the time to meet with us. I appreciate it.

Dr. JoAnn Cardillo: Good evening. My name is JoAnn Cardillo. It has been six years since the RIF of 2019, which is the basis of current litigation of Cardillo vs. Paterson Public Schools. School districts in Northern New Jersey find themselves in positions where cuts will be made and reductions in force may occur. Urban districts will not be left untouched. In light of what is happening with Mr. Cardillo's case, I recommend the following so that teachers and staff, both tenured and non-tenured, are treated fairly and according to 18A and 6A. This district is one Paterson Public School District. Each school is not its own district, as your attorney argued in front of a judge. The district's HR Department must take an active role with the information requested of the schools and follow up with lists and seniority rights. There were none in 2019. In 2019 the district allowed every principal to recommend two or three staff members, regardless of seniority status, with no universal metric. Therein lies the problem of equity among staff members in an environment of unchecked administrative power. The district can non-renew by reason of economics all non-tenured staff without legal recourse. There is no such thing as a non-renew due to a reduction in staff. You need to review your form letters because they are worded incorrectly. They speak to a RIF and cite the law of non-renew, which is another mistake. If you RIF non-tenured teachers, your policy and laws require you to create seniority lists by category of the whole district, thus bumping rights for seniority come into play. You did not do this in 2019 and we are still disputing the fact that Mr. Cardillo was next in seniority and other librarians with less seniority remained in the district and received tenure in the last five years. Mr. Cardillo was not called back, as his letter indicated he would be. Technically, he is a RIF afforded seniority callback status. You are required by law to non-renew all staff with CE's first. They did not remain in the district or go on a seniority list. In 2010 the RIF was done incorrectly, but it was rectified. In 2019 the RIF was again done incorrectly. It was never rectified. Along with Mr. Cardillo, 150 staff members were approved for a RIF, not a non-renew. They were placed on a RIF list and not a non-renew list. I will continue to be the voice of this situation until this is resolved. Mr. Cardillo has seniority status in this district. He is still on a RIF list that was Board-approved in 2019. Thank you.

Ms. Cameo Black: Good evening. I came here for several reasons. I'm gonna start off with you, Eddie Gonzalez. You are a troublemaker. You throw rocks and hide your hands. I'm gonna put it out there on the record the incident that happened with Shavar. He got thrown under the bus, but you were the real one behind it. Don't look at me stupid because you know what I'm talking about. When you told him to get her out of here, that was your doing. He just happened to get the rift of it when they recorded it. Don't play with me. It wasn't Shavar and I want it to be on record. He's not the bad guy. You're the freaking monster. It's you. I can't wait until November so we can get you up out of here. Ms. Badawy, I don't know where you are. You got one strike. You got two strikes. You won't get a third one with me. That phone call was atrocious. But like I told you, I'm here for it. Dr. Newell and everybody got an email. I'm going to bring it to light. My son received text messages on the phone. They are very explicit text messages. I'm not going to get into details, because I'm going to file a lawsuit against the district. I want you all to know that. I am lawyer shopping. These are the police reports that allegedly the detective said that the administration shut it out. It's not a DCPD case. Just to let y'all know, I reached out to DCPD. It is an open investigation. That is a DCPD case. Y'all sit there. Y'all tried to shield the young man at the school. When the kids start sending text messages like that, as parents y'all should look into it. That's somebody crying out for help. Something is going on in the home. As y'all always scream, it starts in the house. Yes, it does. Somebody needs to be checked. When I reached out and I asked y'all to call DCPD, y'all told me it wasn't a case. It's

bullshit. Excuse my language kids, but it's bullshit. Like I said, if it would have been a brown, they would have been leaving in handcuffs. Then to sit there and tell me he's undocumented? I don't care if he's undocumented or not. When I tell y'all that there are explicit text messages coming through, do something about it. He's still in school. When you walk up to my son and tell him to tell your mother that I had nothing to do with it? No. Somebody got something to do with it. It's a lot going on. I keep telling y'all NRC, when I came to the Board of Education, nobody was aware of what was going on. No incident reports have been done. Dr. Newell, I emailed y'all. This happened last Wednesday. I haven't spoken to you until today. You make too much money. Like I told you before, I'm tired of talking to you woman to woman, mother to mother, because it's falling on deaf ears. I'm not coming back here no more. All the parents here, y'all wasting y'all time. Like I told y'all, it's time to get some buses, go to Trenton, and beg and plead to get the state to take back control because y'all incompetent as hell.

Ms. Sumaira Toor: Good evening. My name is Sumaira Toor and I have been a sixth grade ELA teacher at School No. 9 for the past 20 years. Teachers are following these Board meetings and what the PTO and our students are saying regarding this unwelcomed shift to a middle school model very closely. Some are here today, but some have been hesitant to even be present at the Board meetings due to a fear, founded or not, of retaliation against them in the form of transfers. I have come here today to support the parents and students who do not believe in or want the Middle School Model implemented. The reason I support them is because there is overwhelming data and research that concludes that moving to a Middle School Model can be more detrimental to students continued academic progress than staying in a K-8 school. According to a study posted in the journal Education Next, students who move from elementary school to middle school experience a bigger dip in math and ELA achievement than their K-8 counterparts do and they tend to be absent more often. A 2005 study found that K-8 schools have significant beneficial effects on achievement, attendance, and suspension rates. This same study found that sixth and seventh graders showed greater improvement in math and reading compared to the same grades in middle schools. But the most interesting study I found was one that debunks the myth that the Middle School Model better prepares students for high school. A study of 16 school districts found that students who attended middle schools experienced greater achievement loss in the transition to high school than students making the transition from K-8 schools. There are pages and pages of similar research data and statistics, all of which confirm exactly what we see right here in Paterson. We already have two middle schools, NRC and JAT. If we compare the assessment results in student growth of each of these schools to School No. 9, it exceeds them on every graph, every model and every target. Let's just take student growth. School No. 9 met its student growth targets in ELA and math, while NRC only met its math target, and JAT did not meet math or ELA. In School No. 9, sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students outperformed the middle school students at both NRC and JAT. On a more personal note, my students are not names and ID numbers on a roster. They have stories and histories, especially the students who have classifications and flags. A few months ago, I had a meeting with a parent of one of my sixth graders and I asked the student's kindergarten bilingual teacher to join me. Having that support, being able to tap into that child's history at the school, made all the difference in addressing the needs of that student. With this shift to a Middle School Model, we are going to be abruptly cut off from all those stories and histories left to teach in isolation and that's when we'll see test scores plummet. Thank you.

Ms. Amira Abdelhadi: Good evening. My name is Amira Abdelhadi. I am a graduate of School No. 9. I'm appalled by the proposed Middle School Model, which blatantly

disregards the wellbeing and safety of our children. Despite repeated expressions of concerns from your parents, students and teachers, you've chosen to ignore us. It's your responsibility as Board members to prioritize our student and staff needs. Instead, you're seen rolling ahead with a plan that's fundamentally flawed. The proposed model is reckless and irresponsible. Forcing students to walk over 20 minutes to pick up siblings from elementary school exposes them to dangers such as bad weather and traffic congestion. You guys only chose to make Dr. Hanı the Middle School Model because of its location. Dr. Hanı isn't even built to be a Middle School Model. They have a playground while School No. 9 doesn't. This is unacceptable and borders on negligence. I ask that you take our concerns seriously and for once abandon this plan. You're not just making decisions about statistics or data points. You're gambling with our children's future, setting them up for failure. We won't stand idly by while you experiment with their education and wellbeing. I just want to add that after watching School No. 5's presentation when the ESL teacher spoke about the multilingual and diversity in their school and how strong it is, just know that this is what we want to keep in our community and district. Stop trying to separate culture with the magnet schools because it will make it harder for students to learn English. Don't separate. Keep us all together as one. It's time for you to listen to the voices of our community and work with us to create a solution that truly serves our children's best interests. Thank you.

Ms. Tameem Alkhudairi: Good evening, Board members. My name is Tameem Alkhudairi and I'm nine. I'm here to tell you your plan is going to wreck my life. You want to rip me away from my school, from my teachers who actually care about me, from my friends who've been with me since we were little? No, that's not okay. Do you even know what you're doing to kids like me? Fourth grade is hard enough, but you want to throw us into a brand-new school where nobody knows us, where we're just new kids. That's terrifying and it's mean. I love my school. It's where I feel safe, where I know every hallway, every teacher smiles, and where my best friend sits next to me at lunch. Why would you take that away? You keep saying it's better, but how? Who asked for this? Not me, not my friends, and not my mom. Who are you really doing this for? Because it sure isn't for us! If you really cared about kids, you'd listen to all of us right now, but right now it feels like you don't care at all. We're begging you, stop. Don't ruin what's working. Don't break our hearts just because you want to change things. We deserve better and you know it. Thank you, but I'm not thanking you if you do this.

Mr. Bakan Ramadan: Good evening. My name is Bakan Ramadan and I'm in the third grade. I'm a third-generation School No. 9 student. It's amazing to hear how the school has changed over the years since both of my parents and grandparents attended School No. 9. It's my turn to graduate next in the family. I have so much that I want to do. I want to join the soccer and basketball teams. I want to be part of the Student Government Association. I want to be a safety patrol. I want to be part of the chorus. I want to graduate with honors from School No. 9. Please do not take this opportunity away from me. Thank you.

Ms. Sanan Ramadan: Good evening, members of the Board of Education, Superintendent, teachers, parents, and community members. I stand before you tonight on behalf of the parents, students, and teachers of our district who are deeply concerned about the abrupt and unaccountable changes being imposed on our schools, particularly the decision to convert School No. 9 into a pre-k through grade 5 school and shift Dr. Hanı into a middle school. This decision has left our community frustrated, confused, and unheard. Now, thanks to reporting from Paterson Press, we have proved that nowhere in the 2021 long-range facilities plan or its amendments is there any mention of this drastic shift. If it was part of a so-called citywide switch to a middle school model, then why wasn't it documented? Why wasn't it discussed transparently

with parents, teachers, and students who will be most affected? Even after hearing your presentation, we still haven't seen any evidence that School No. 9 or Dr. Hanani were in any of the plans. We want documentation. We want to see minutes. We want to see documentation like all reports we do. We do not want to hear your speech. When was School No. 9, Dr. Hanani Awadallah, and School No. 8 approved and spoken about? These schools were never mentioned in any of these plans. We demand accountability. We demand transparency. Most importantly, we demand that you listen to all the people you are here to serve. Parents do not support this change. We know that a middle school model is not what's best for our children. Research shows that keeping younger students in k-8 schools foster stronger relationships, better academic performance, and improved emotional wellbeing. Pulling them out of that structure and placing them into a standalone Middle School creates instability at a crucial stage of development. Teachers do not support this change. They know that transitions are difficult for students, especially when they are made without adequate preparations or input from educators. Our teachers are the ones in the classrooms every day, seeing firsthand what works and what doesn't. Yet, their voices have been ignored in this process. Most importantly, our students do not support this change. They do not want to be shuffled from one school to another like pieces on a chessboard. They deserve stability, consistency, and an education system that prioritizes their needs, not one that makes arbitrary changes behind closed doors. We are asking this Board to do the right thing. Halt the implementation of the middle school model. Conduct public forums with parents, teachers and students to hear their concerns, not just have forums to say that you did and not provide them with clear and adequate information. Reconsider this change based on research or community input, not bureaucratic decisions made without accountability. This is our school district. These are our children, and we will not stand by while decisions are made in secrecy that disrupts their education and their future. Mr. Rashid, somebody mentioned that you're on your phone. I tried to reach out before and you did not reach out back to me. I understand that you guys are a team. Last time behind closed doors you changed your vote to do the taxes. Don't be afraid. You serve us. We voted for you. You are supposed to stand for us. Don't be afraid. I don't know who bullied you or who you're afraid of that's sitting up there. You can make your own decision. Thank you.

Ms. Hamza Dar al Sheikh: Hi. My name is Hamza and I'm a student in this district. I just wanted to come tonight because I'm really worried about what's about to happen. I don't think this middle school model is a good idea, at least not right now. School is already hard sometimes and the thought of changing everything so fast makes me and a lot of my friend feel scared. We're the ones who have to live with this every day. We're the ones who will be in those classrooms. Please think about us. Please listen to us. Please don't do something that will make the school harder and scarier. Thank you.

Mr. Rahkman: Good evening. I'm a student at School No. 9. I stand before you today to ask you a simple question. Why fix something that isn't broken? In Paterson, we already see the effects of the middle school model in some schools. What do we see? We see lower test scores and more bullying. Despite these problems, the district is pushing forward with expanding this model to all schools. Why? Look at the schools that are doing well, Dr. Hanani and School No. 9. They follow the K-8 model and their students are thriving. They have stability, better academic performance, and fewer behavior problems. Why disturb that success? If middle schools in Paterson already struggle, why would we choose to expand a failing model? Shouldn't we focus on improving the schools we already have instead of forcing a system that clearly isn't working? Students deserve better. We deserve schools that support us, not experiments that put them at risk. Listen to the facts, not just follow a plan that ignores reality. Thank you.

Ms. Leylah: Good evening, Superintendent, Dr. Newell, and Board members. My name is Leylah. I stand before you today with much respect. However, I come to you as one of the many students that do not want this change for the middle school. I plead for you, Dr. Newell, please reconsider moving forward with this. If I was your child, would you want me to feel the way I'm feeling currently? If yes, what would you do to help me accept the fact that the people we entrust with our education are not thinking of us? As a student and someone that speaks on behalf of all the students, I want to tell you, Dr. Newell, we deserve better. Our emotional wellbeing is currently at an all-time low because all that we think about are the changes that we would have to endure. Leaving behind a school that we have known since kindergarten will be difficult for all of us. On March 11, I was logged on to see the forum and I heard Deputy Superintendent Henderson say that the building does not matter as long as you're getting an education. Not only am I here to say how wrong that statement is, but how insensitive and out of touch it is to us students. The building where we are learning eight hours a day does matter, not for our education, but most importantly, our comfort. Right now, our school system is far from perfect. However, I feel that with this new middle school model, it would become worse. We have dedicated teachers and a wonderful group of administrators that love and know us as individuals. Why don't you instead work on making the school system better and leave everyone where they are currently? I feel like taking this leap of unknowing faith with our education and our emotional wellbeing is selfish and should not happen. We should focus on fixing our schools now. Dr. Newell, as the heart and mind of this Board, I respectfully ask you to think not once, but a few times, over this ridiculous middle school model. It won't be fair to dismantle an entire school community to then realize that this won't work. You're not playing chess to win. You're simply taking a risk with an idea that you didn't come up with. You're hurting the most important people, which are the children that trust you with their education. Keep in mind you guys are trying to make a solution to a problem that never existed. Respectfully, I ask that you leave us where we are and allow us to continue strengthening the current system. Thank you for your time.

Ms. Rosie Grant: Good evening, Mr. President, Madam Superintendent, Commissioners, staff and community. My name is Rosie Grant, and I speak on behalf of the Paterson Education Fund. Thank you for today's presentations. It's really good to see what is happening inside the school since we all can't be there. The things that stood out for me, there were demonstrations of academic enrichment, attention to attendance, trying to reduce chronic absenteeism, which is a problem across the district, the importance of arts education, and meaningful student engagement through the Student Government Association. I'm so glad to see that. Mr. Hill left, but I need a drumline for Palm Sunday, so I'll be reaching out to him. That was very rewarding to watch. Regarding the budget, there's a well-known African phrase, "How are the children?" The expected answer is, "The children are well." I'm going to repeatedly ask you, how are the children when I come to the microphone because that's a discussion I don't hear amongst the School Board members. It's the reason why we're all here, because we want the children to be well. Unless we can say the children are well, we're failing as a community. I had an opportunity to testify to the Assembly Budget Committee in Trenton. I asked for more money for Paterson Public Schools. I reported that the local fair share is burdensome, but we know that it's something we must do because we have to provide for our children, as in every community, and asked for a new formula that will renegotiate what the local fair share needs to be. We can't cut and expect everything to remain the same. I'm not comfortable with the argument that we're cutting the budget, but the kids won't have any shortfall. Everything you do as the Board of Education is for the kids. If you cut, it does affect the kids no matter what it is. I also asked for facilities money. While we may or may not have enough seats, we have

crumbling buildings, and I know that it's hard to keep up with it and the state budget from the Governor assigned \$20 million less than last year to school facilities. So, I really need you to join in advocacy. I also asked for money for Full-Service Community Schools or community schools in any format. That has been put in the budget to the tune of \$3 million for the past two years and cut out because the Governor's office couldn't decide how to spend it. So that money has gone back for two years. I asked that they rescind the \$3 million that was advocated for cases for cell phones and instead allocate that money in a place that is more useful in Full-Service Community Schools. Finally, Paterson Education Fund will be honoring Dr. Hodges and the Extra Mile Award that is presented by Paterson Alliance. I invite you all to buy tickets. The money does not come to Paterson Education Fund, but just to be there to support Dr. Hodges for the work that he has done for Paterson students. Thank you.

Ms. Intasar Rabah: Good evening. I have four kids and two of them go to Paterson Public Schools. You did mention last time in the last meeting you guys have no control over this and you have nothing to do with it. But guess what? If we say something, we'll make a big difference. But if you say something, it will make even a bigger difference. You guys are like a little puzzle that they move you around. You guys need to have a voice. You need to show us that you hear us like you don't ignore us. You guys look more confused than I am and more confused than all of us. We don't know what to do either. You are in that chair for a reason. They put you in that chair to put your hands in our hands and help us and not just hear us and go home and sleep. We've been here so many times. You know what I call this school model? It's a huge mess where so many hundreds of kids are going to pay the price. A new school means a new grade. Some kids don't know the way to that school and is not used to that school for a whole year. He has to do a lot of adjusting just for him to follow your plan. This is ridiculous because not just the parents are going to suffer. The kids are going to suffer in silence. Some of the parents won't know what to do for them. We came here so many times and you guys did nothing. Say something. Let us feel like you're working with us. You keep repeating yourself. Do something different. This is so sad. It's like we are nothing. We said that before and I say this now. Please work with us and help us. My kid does not have to pay the price for another kid. If you need a new school, go build one. Don't change my kid's school and their environment. School No. 9 has been such a great school. There are so many smart kids. Some kids go to scholarships. My son went to scholarship, and he didn't make it through. Now you're going to bring other kids who don't have good grades. I know they're going to have the teacher, but they're not going to have the same teacher. Everything is going to change for them. Please work with us. Show us that you're doing something. We're not here to fight you. We want your voice. Give us your voice. Don't fight us. Say something. Some of you are so brave. You show that you're on our side. The rest of you are sitting there like the game my son plays. They move you around like this. I'm sorry for the disrespect. As much as I hate that game, don't be their little puzzle. Good night.

Ms. Asma Sheikh: Good evening. My name is Asma Sheikh. I stand before you tonight as a mom who cannot sleep at night because I am so worried about what's happening in our schools. This middle school model may look nice in presentation, but in reality, it is not. What about our children's hearts? What about their minds? What about their safety? What about the real-life impact on them? I'm still here every night wondering how I will send my twin boys crossing the street alone if they want to transfer to Hani. I cannot do that to them. I want to take my other siblings to School No. 9. That doesn't work for me or any of us here. Our kids are not experiments. They are not numbers on a chart. They are children who need support, stability, and a system that truly works for them. I know many of you because I stood beside you when you ran for these seats. We all stood beside you when you were running for these seats. We

cheered you on. We encouraged others to vote for you. Now I'm here begging you to please not turn your backs on us. We need you to be the leaders we believed in. I need you to be a role model for my kids. When they ask, "Mom, why are they doing this to me?" I don't know what to tell them. I need you to show them that you are good leaders for them so they can support you. The leaders who care more about kids than rushing a model that isn't ready. Please stand with us. Please slow this down and protect our children. Thank you.

Mr. Matthew Eisenberg: Good evening, Board. This is a change of subject for at least one speaker. I hope this isn't coming off my three minutes. My name is Matthew Eisenberg. I live in Wayne, New Jersey. I'm going to take us away from the subject at hand and I apologize for that interruption. As part of my mission in life, which is to elevate societal consciousness by empowering youth to navigate life with confidence and purpose, I have written a book titled "Confidence Skills for Young Adults." I have created this potentially transformative guide after realizing that crucial life skills are not currently widely taught in high schools or universities. Some topics included in the 10 chapters are discernment, self-awareness, confidence levels, self-esteem, courage, critical thinking, effective communication, boundaries, trust, growth mindset, how to cope with failure, elements of an apology, elements of a request, and reciprocity styles. I also show how these different pieces of the jigsaw puzzle connect together. The reason for my speaking tonight is to ask your assistance in vetting and figuring out how to best share the book and curriculum course that I've created with the Paterson high school students. Any next step assistance as to how best accomplish this goal would be most appreciated. I've also included in each of the 10 units of the curriculum, one unit for each chapter, a standards alignment session where the social-emotional learning and Castle Core Competencies, the Common Core ELA standards, and the National Health Education standards are associated with the topics in each unit. I'm also giving a four-week free course at the Wayne Township Community Center starting on April 22 from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. That is free to anyone who wishes to attend either in person or live streaming. It will be recorded also, I'm hoping. In closing, my goal is to inspire and motivate the young adults in our society to be excited about embarking on their journey in life with the courage and confidence that they and the rest of us have because it resides in all of us. We just need to have the tools to express it and that's what my book and I hope to achieve. Thank you.

Ms. Joy Spinelli: Good evening, Dr. Newell, Dr. Henderson, President Gonzalez, and Commissioners. My name is Joy Spinelli and I'm an officer of the Paterson Education Association. I've sat on the Joint Worksite Safety and Health Committee for about 15 years. Each month I've met with the district to discuss all safety, health, violence, vandalism, and SSDS issues brought to the PEA. I can probably count on one hand the number of times an issue could not be resolved in my committee and had to be brought to the attention of the Board. Unfortunately, tonight is one of them. September 1, 2016, was a beautiful sunny day. I remember it very well. It was the first day of school at the brand-new Dr. Hani Awadallah School. To be able to see the building's pristine and immaculate condition was exciting. I had never taught in a brand-new school before. Unfortunately, it only took the first rainy day to realize the roof leaked. Here we are eight years later with a roof that still continues to leak. We have classrooms and hallways with either stained ceiling tiles or no tiles at all. It is important that I emphasize that I'm happy to see patchwork is being done on the building. Where we once had 10 classrooms with leaks, we are now down to just a couple. Our administration and chief have worked tirelessly on staying on top of the issue. What I most question is, are we putting Band-aids on a problem that requires a lot more work? Can you please let me know about the possibility of getting the roof replaced? Shouldn't there still be a warranty? Is patching the roof the best long-term solution? It is not acceptable to have

a classroom with leaks and I can't believe I'm standing here discussing a building that is just 10 years old. I don't want this message to get merged with the middle school model message. I've been trying to hold this off for a couple of months, but I don't want to wait any longer. I'm hoping legal could help us look into maybe the warranty. Thank you.

Mr. Eddie Ruiz: Good evening everyone. I stand before you, not just as a concerned parent, but as someone who believes that identity matters. It defines who we are. It shapes how we are seen. Right now, we need to ask ourselves a serious question, what is the identity of our district? The truth is the identity our district carries today is not one of excellence, progress, or pride. It's one marked by struggles, system failures, and silence in the face of unacceptable conditions. Let's talk about buildings. A lot of our schools are over 100 years old. Classrooms are overcrowded. Some don't even have walls. We have students learning in trailers and walking up staircases that are falling apart. We're putting our children in environments with mold, asbestos, lead, and rat infestations, and we dare call this preparing for the future. What about academics? More than 600 students are currently enrolled in a credit recovery program. Not because they lack effort, but because they weren't given the support, they needed to pass the first time. When the Board says changes are being made to educate these kids or help them for the future, what world are we repairing them for if they're being set up for failure or scrambling to graduate on time? Let's go deeper. In the 2023-2024 school year more than 90% of students in six of our regular high schools failed the state math exam. Our graduation rate fell 75%, the lowest it's been in over a decade. 41% of our students are chronically absent. That's over 8,900 students missing over 18 days or more in a single school year. Those are not just statistics. That is a crisis. While students are slipping through the cracks, leadership was here debating about budgets. What's even more troubling is the identity we project to our children. When they walk into those classrooms that are falling apart, when they are shuffled between teachers mid-year, when they see failure normalized, what message are we sending them about their worth, their future, and their community? We're promising opportunities while stripping away structures they need to reach it. We're telling them to aim high while handing them broken tools. What is our identity? If we continue down this path, if we ignore the truth staring us in the face, then our identity will be this - a district that failed its kids while pretending everything was fine. Let me remind you of the words of Dr. King who said, "We all have come on different ships, but we are all in the same boat now." Dr. King's identity was one of courage, unity, and love rooted in justice. He was the conscience of a nation; a man who believed non-violence and truth could change the world. He dreamed boldly and acted even bolder. He didn't wait for the system to fix itself. He challenged it to rise. He taught us that identity is not what we inherit. It's what we build together. That's what our district must do now. We must reclaim our identity. We must stop settling for broken systems and broken promises. We demand better for our children, teachers, and futures. The time is now. Not tomorrow, now. Let's stop hiding behind politics and policies. Let's start leading with courage and community. Let's rewrite our identity, not just for show, but for the sake of our children that continue to show us that we need more than words. Thank you.

Ms. Luz: Good evening. At the last meeting, I addressed the counsel and asked a direct question. Since the middle school restructuring decision was made locally without state involvement, it can be rescinded. I asked for specific steps the Board must take to revise it and what legal procedurally barriers, if any, stand in the way. The counsel was supposed to follow up with me, yet here I am waiting for the answer. What I do know is that President Gonzalez and Ramirez publicly stated that this decision could not be revised. That was a lie. They knew, as we all do now, that this is a local matter and absolutely can be changed. Just last meeting I watched President Eddie Gonzalez convince Rashid to change his tax vote right in front of us twice. But

somehow, we can't reverse this disastrous plan that affects thousands of students and families. I also demanded full transparency. I asked whether the Commissioners had seen any concrete plans for this restructuring. Instead of allowing them to answer, Eddie shut them down. The reason for this is clear now. There are no real plans. As we just reviewed, nowhere in the long-range facilities plan is there any mention of Dr. Hani or School No. 9 shifting to a middle school model. You spoke about the middle school model as if it was an amazing solution, but you spoke from an aerial view, not from reality. You mentioned using geocoding to assign students based on where they lived. Yet, two different kids going to two different schools around the same grade level barely miles apart? What's the logic behind that? You also stated that all special education students will be assigned to their attendance area. What you failed to mention is that the students are currently being bused to their schools. It's because the Board approved it in the first place. Our special education students, however, were not as lucky. When registering our special education children, parents were told that they won't even know what's going on or what will happen to them probably until the summer. That is completely unacceptable. These are some of the most vulnerable students in our district and yet there is no plan for them. It shouldn't be surprising because right now you're all scrambling with no real plan at all. You all fail to mention the amount of work that School No. 8 needs. It's a failing system that's failing the kids, not the other way around. The kids are not failing. It's lack of teachers, nothing but substitutes, no principal, no support, and no proper education. As I've said before and I say again, we keep hearing that you feel this middle school model is better for our children. However, there has never been any proper discussion of concrete plans on paper to prove or sustain these feelings. The Board has a duty to represent the voices of citizens, taxpayers, parents, school administration, as well as advocate for the needs of our students and the district. Can a Board justify pushing a model that was never in any existing plans? The real concern here is why lie and say this couldn't be reversed when the truth is that it was never in the plans at all? We're not going anywhere. We will not stop demanding answers. We will not let this Board ignore us any longer.

Ms. Jenny: (Spoke in Spanish) I'm going to express myself in Spanish. As a mother, I wouldn't want that to stop me from expressing myself. I'm the mother of two children, one of them goes to School No. 8 and he is here with me today. I think that the issue of moving kids from School No. 8 is not the answer. What should happen is fixing the issues at School No. 8 first. This is not something that just occurred now. This is something from 10 years ago. There are no teachers in that school. Since kindergarten my child has been going through this. There have been periods where he has no teacher. He is now in sixth grade and is missing a science teacher. My son who's in eighth grade is getting ready to go to high school. What has he learned? He has learned nothing. I don't think it's right that kids who actually have it good in another school come to School No. 8 where we have a lot of issues. I have a daughter in her second year at Eastside and she graduated from School No. 8. At School No. 8 she never received good grades because she never had teachers. My daughter is a sophomore at Eastside and excelling very well. She has honors and she's very proud of that. Please solve the issues at School No. 8 first where the parents are screaming for help. Don't bring students from the other schools to School No. 8 where we really need help. My heart breaks as a mother each morning when my son has to go to school and doesn't want to go because he doesn't have teachers. He doesn't understand the math teacher and many times has stayed home because he simply does not have the desire to go to school. I ask as a mother please help School No. 8. We need a lot of help there. Thank you.

Councilman Michael Jackson: Good evening, everyone. First, I would like to take my hat off to many of our speakers this evening. The young man in the red was very

compelling. If they are not having an opportunity to compel you guys that they are serious about their circumstances, I don't know what will. If a mother who can express herself, who never stood in front of anyone and asked for their vote to fight on behalf of the students, can come here and talk about things that logically make sense, how can a student expect to learn without a teacher? You can shuffle people around, but without proper instruction and teachers it's still going to be a disaster. The gentleman who gave the presentation earlier, I respect and appreciate the presentation, but as director of facilities and janitorial services there was much of his presentation that had to do with education. Yet, he posed the position that this did not have to do with education and was simply about facilities, but he talked about these facilities being moved around and how it would help facilitate better models for education. From my perspective, the best model to look at is the one that's being displayed tonight. These children coming here to express themselves in such a profound manner and you guys are sitting here allowing it to go on deaf ears is shameful. The lady came from the PEA and talked about a leaky roof that leaked the very first day that the school was contracted by this Board, and we didn't hold that contractor accountable. 10 years later the roof is still leaking. We have a young lady come here and the Director of Facilities can talk about moving students around, but doesn't have a hand on whether or not a brand new school has a leaky roof. There are some things to think about right there. A study was done in 2015-2019, but the schools that are being currently asked to move have not been modeled in that study. Where is the current study? Where is the updated study that shows the statistics of the academic programming? All the presentations that were given earlier about teaching kids how to wash clothes and the various activities were nice. But there was not one presentation that talked about academic rigor, progress, and standards that should be held across the board. It's been very disappointing. Leadership means a great deal. It is not how you can demand people to be quiet. Leadership is not kicking someone out who's very concerned. Leadership means returning a phone call. I've called you and texted you. We've been friends many years. I know you did not appreciate me coming up here and being critical, but leadership means that I should have gotten a phone call, and we should have had a discussion the following day to talk about how we understand the needs of our students. I understand Dr. Newell was not here when the study was done, but you guys hired her. You guys are paying her in excess of \$300,000 a year. Where is her plan to address these parents' concerns? Did we hire her just to follow a plan that was made by her predecessor? Did we hire her to allow her to sit quietly and ignore parents' concerns? These are people who are giving their concerns that sound very logical to me and to not hear them is doing the community a disservice. For every single one of you that stood there and asked for their votes... Brother Gonzalez, I watched a video of you at a former School Board meeting as you stood at this podium and the things you spoke about are exactly what you're doing today. You talked about parents supporting you so their concerns wouldn't be ignored. Lastly, I just can't help but point out that Dr. Newell talked about the celebration on behalf of Brother Simmons. 15 plus years and yet he doesn't have one committee assignment. Other Board members who have not even gone through training are sitting on committee assignments. That's not responsible governance.

Mr. Charles Ferrer: Good evening, Charles Ferrer. I know I should have put my name on the list before Mike. I'm hearing everything that's being said here and when it comes out of the mouths of the babes, it speaks wisdom. These children are telling you what they need and want. I'm going to tell you why this plan failed. I've said it before, and I brought you some information. The stakeholders said the success of all plans is when everybody is at the table at the beginning. In this little piece right here, they said that the most important component or commodity of the stakeholders at the table is the children so that you can hear what they want. What are we doing to them? We're

ignoring them. We're taking them back to my age. When I was coming up, we were to be seen and not heard. Times have changed. Out of the mouths of babes comes wisdom. You left out the parents, the extended family and the faith-based entities. You're trying to do things that are going to be better for them. They're saying, "Show me." They're still looking for it. That's unacceptable. There was a PowerPoint done on June 8, 2022, with nice pictures. Why don't they have it? Why don't they have what was just presented here today? It's out here. So you showed it to some people. You didn't show it to them. It's not impacting those people because those children are gone. Their children are here. Middle school was not new. I was lucky. I went to School No. 10 and transferred to School No. 20. Some of my friends went from School No. 13 to MLK and they had to walk. We're talking in the 1970's. It was different. Walking around the corner a kid goes to the grocery store for his grandmother and gets killed. We want them to walk where and how? I don't know if you know, but Joseph A. Taub was out of control. Other staff members in some of the other schools that you're talking about aren't happy. You think we have a shortage now? We got two resignations today of people who were born and raised in Paterson and they're leaving. Why? Because they've been overlooked for positions here so they figure they will take their talents and go elsewhere. This is only going to do something that's going to hurt these children. Their teachers are going to leave. They have one and a half foot out of the door if you move forward with this model. Anything that has been on the table can come off the table. Don't say to them you can't push this back. That's not true and it's not right to them. My best relationships that I have are with all of my teachers that I had in grammar school. One of my eighth-grade teachers, Dr. Ruth Hayes, is 95 years old and I still communicate with her and many others. Ms. Ida Cohen Harris was my eighth-grade teacher. She went to School No. 6 with my mother. What are we doing here? The data says this and that. When you find that data, will you share it with the parents? Until you do, it doesn't exist. It's that simple, folks. In the words of Spike Lee, "Do the right thing."

Ms. Rocio Pena: Good evening, Board of Education, parents, and community. My name is Rocio Pena. I'm honored to serve as a PTO Leadership President and PTO President of Alexander Hamilton Academy. Thank you for the opportunity to speak tonight and for your unwavering commitment to shaping the future of our schools. Parents, we must be constant advocates for our children, not only when an issue arises or when we disagree with a Board decision, but consistently. Attending Board meetings regularly allows us to stay informed, be proactive, and build a stronger more unified community. Knowledge is power and consistency is key. When we engage, listen and participate we strengthen our ability to support our children effectively. For over a year I have raised concerns about the state of Alexander Hamilton Academy's fence and the buildup of garbage along our school. Through the persistence of Alexander Hamilton Academy parents, our principal and the PTO members who attended Board meetings consistently, I am pleased to share that work has finally begun on removing the old fences this week. This demonstrates that respectful communication and perseverance do lead to meaningful change. Additionally, the PTO leadership remains committed to fostering transparency and collaboration with the Board. Our leadership team is dedicated to attending all Board meetings, ensuring we are informed, engaged and proactive in addressing concerns while working towards solutions. Building strong relationships with the Board allows us to work together effectively for the benefit of our schools. With that in mind, I want to extend my sincere gratitude to President Gonzalez for attending our last PTO leadership meeting. His willingness to introduce himself, outline his mission for his term and engage with PTO leaders throughout the district was greatly appreciated. We look forward to working alongside him as we implement 90-day closeout strategies, policies and initiatives that strengthen our school communities. In closing, improvement begins with us. When we communicate openly, listen attentively

and take action with the best interest of our students in mind our schools thrive. Together through respect, collaboration and commitment we can continue to drive positive change. Councilman Jackson, you're in our ward and I've never met you before. You never came to our school. I've been here for a year and a half expressing our concerns about our school Alexander Hamilton Academy. I believe you came once and there was no action done. Also, just to let you know Board members, some of you are very disrespectful. I'm sorry. You should be examples of how to behave in this type of surrounding. We are parents and we're stressed enough. We don't need councilmen and other people attacking the Board. We need to provide respect in order to get communication. We're holding them accountable, but you have to do it in a clear consistent way. Thank you.

Mr. Akkheem Dunham: Good evening. My name is Akkheem Dunham. I didn't come with any scriptures tonight. I do come before you as a father and as an engaged community member with only one goal in mind from the very beginning, to make the cost of things for our families lower and to protect what rightfully belongs to our children. I wish I would have known sooner about the dollar lease deal involving Hinchliffe Stadium. This is written so I won't stray off topic. I'm so bothered by this. Once I discovered the details, I kept digging and what I found was deeply disappointing. A historic, revenue-generating asset owned by the Paterson Board of Education was handed over to private developers without any lease revenue, profit-sharing or financial benefit to our children. Let me be clear this was a bad deal. While I cannot go back in time, I can act now and so can you. That's why I've prepared a formal resolution which I have submitted for each of you to review and consider voicing. This resolution calls for a public commitment to renegotiate this lease to hold all parties accountable and to ensure that moving forward our children are not left out of economic decisions made with their assets. To any office holder, developer, or elected official who may be listening, this Board body is not a rubber stamp. It is a legal guardian of public trust. Our duty is clear, to protect the interests, value and future of the youth of the City of Paterson. I ask each of you to join me in setting this straight. The community is watching and the children are depending on us. Thank you.

Ms. Greta Mills: Hello, everyone. I'm Greta Mills, a teacher in the Paterson Public Schools and former resident of Paterson. They're asking about School No. 8 and what can be done about teachers. I already gave that suggestion on what to do. Put the supervisors back in the classroom. It's going to save money and it's going to help the students. Do you care? No. You could have done it by now. They wouldn't have to be sitting in the room by themselves. You're getting proximity people to sit in there. Then you put money into people for Inspire. You've wasted millions of dollars for two years straight on that. Do you care? No. You've been given the suggestion – put the supervisors back in the classrooms. Put everybody back in the classrooms and service the students in smaller class sizes. It's a failing district and the only way it's going to get better is small class sizes. All this putting a teacher in a classroom with 20 or 30 kids is not the answer. I'm trying to understand for the life of me why certain schools are still not fixed. I gave you my information about School No. 10 and I still have my photos. They clearly were left out in the fixing up of the school building. The floor and walls, and I told you about the mice running around during the day. I wish we had concerned people up here who could care more about the children and making sure that classrooms are covered. You sit up here and keep arguing about who is this and that. You come in here and you argue, and even people coming from the council. It doesn't make any sense. Stop. This is about the children. We are all getting checks based off the children, but we refuse to make sure they can learn and be the superintendent and assistant superintendents of this school district. They're not going to be any of that. These kids did a wonderful job. I have to appreciate that. And I like what some of the

other schools presented. Guess what? School No. 10 doesn't have an art teacher. We just got a music teacher. I hope they share the grants from School No. 2 with Mr. D'Olivera so he will know what to do. Maybe School No. 10 will start having a better environment. Right now, it's horrible. The kids' behavior is horrible. Let's be very clear about that. I came to you and told you how certain kids are making life hard, running around the building. You need to fix the school building and the behavior. You need to put the people back into the classroom. The only way it's going to get better is smaller class sizes. A lot of teachers have been out sick and it's hard for me to breathe. It has nothing to do with me having COVID because I went to the doctor. I don't have COVID and I don't have the flu. It's just allergies. It's dust mites and the fact that there is too much going on in that school building that needs to be fixed. Fix the school building. The teachers are out and the kids are out. Be concerned. As you said, Eddie Gonzalez, your main concern is Dr. Newell. That was great. I'm never going to forget that you said that. Enjoy. Thank you.

Ms. Maritza Vargas: Good evening, everybody. I know you guys know my face already. I'm here because I was amazed with what I saw today. He really didn't make any sense of what he put on the board at all. I called the Board of Education and talked to Taina Pou, and they told me it could be reversed. Like he said, and he proved it to me, it was done in the time of COVID. We were not included in that. You guys were. Some of you guys were not probably involved with the decision. Comm. Freeman, I apologize because I came out the other day very rough. Mr. Gonzalez, what you did on the last Board meeting was a shame to us Hispanics. You showed us you manipulate these men. He manipulated you and you saw that. I'm upset. Do you know why? You're putting a job before my grandkids. That woman right there stood up and there was somebody else. Corey, thank you. We call her "Deborah." You know that woman that stands up and fights for the rights? Those are the people we need for the Board of Education. We need you. We need more women like her. Depending on you, man? Come on, Eddie. I know you from School No. 8. You know where we come from. You should be making it better for our kids. You probably don't remember my face, but we grew up together. I know where you come from. I know your background. Let's fix this. We need to fix it. Taina Pou told me you guys could reverse this. It was done, and he just proved it to us, when it was COVID. No decision should have been done. You know why? We have family members that were dying. Our children were sick with COVID. You guys are making decisions for our kids? A lot of kids died at that time, and nobody had mercy on our kids. Now they're coming back to school and you guys don't care. You know how many family members I lost, and I still have to do virtual with my kids? He didn't make any sense. Tell him if he's in charge of the construction, do School No. 10. She's been here twice. Let's get it together.

Ms. Jasiman Lopez: Good evening. My name is Jasiman Lopez. Good evening, Board members, families, friends and everyone. This is the first time I come up. My son goes to Dr. Hani. He is in special education and this affects me now. Before, I sat here and I supported, but today I was told something and it hurt a lot. There is no classroom for him right now, no classroom for our kids in special education. I fought hard to get him here. I haven't gotten a phone call. Where is he going to go? The answer to me was, "We don't know." When am I going to get a phone call? Probably the summertime. That is not fair. He struggled a lot. He's doing amazing in Dr. Hani. I'm afraid he's going to be put in a school that's going to fail him. I fought a lot to get him there, because people here know who I am. I fought a lot. I am his advocate at the end of the day. I'm standing here begging, please reconsider this. What's going to happen with the children that cannot voice their opinion and that cannot express how they feel? He lost a teacher that was really good because of this Board of Education because she was failed. He's still struggling, but he's making it. He's making it because he's happy in this

school. He's not happy with the change. I'm very transparent with what's going on with him. He needs to know, and he shouldn't be thrown another curve ball. This is his second school in the Paterson district, and I really don't want him to leave. That's all I'm asking. Just listen to us. Remember the Board of Education can make a difference for these kids, especially for him and children like him. It's Autism Awareness Month right now. It's very important that these kids get the education they need and the programs continue to stay open for them. At the end of the day, I have family members that are in the same school. They have IEPs. They have 504 plans. Some of them are in self-contained classrooms. Where are the self-contained classrooms now? I'm hearing all this move around. I have not heard we're going to have this amount of special education self-contained classes for these children. I hear transportation. That's fine. I get that. No problem. Where is the self-contained classroom that I fought to get him into? I need to know the answer. I don't want to know on August 15. That's what I'm asking. Don't tell me in August. Thank you.

Comm. Gonzalez: Ms. Coy, do you want to...?

Ms. Cheryl Coy: Yes. I hear a lot of conversation tonight about placements for SPED students. Every year the district follows the same protocol as the general education population. Those students are notified at the end of the school year for report card. That is the same time we notify special education parents of where the placement is going to be. I'm glad that she mentioned...

Comm. Gonzalez: I'm sorry. I'm going to cut you off because I really want her to hear. You need to hear this. This is just for you. Pay attention, and for everyone else as well. Thank you.

Ms. Coy: We notify parents at the end of the school year, just like the general education population. If a sixth grader in general education is moving up to seventh grade homeroom 71, they normally find out at the end of the year on their report card. We do ours simultaneously the same time. There's no difference. We don't do anything different than general education when notification comes. She did make a comment that is one of the major reasons we're looking to move into the middle school model direction, continuity of programs. There are students in a k-2 here, then your 3-5 is over here, and your 6-8 is here. That child at some point will touch three different schools around the district. They will never be homegrown with a group of students. When you go to this middle school model, you have 40 plus schools. Out of that 40, 35 are elementary. It would allow the district to create 8 zones of the k-5 middle school model, which means you have now 8 middle schools where you pour middle school resources in for special education, bilingual and ESL. You maximize the resources. The k-5 population is able to be nurtured, even the preschool, from ages 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8, until they get up to fifth grade in an environment of their peers that is more conducive than a k-8 environment. Paterson has a k-8, but if you do the research and look, right now you have Wayne, Totowa, Clifton, Ridgewood, Little Falls, Lodi, all our surrounding districts are k-5. Excuse me because I was very respectful. I sit here as a Patersonian. I went to School No. 21 K-8 and it was a great experience, but one thing that I did realize is when it came time for me to go to high school, I was not 100% prepared because I still was in that k-5 mindset. High school freshman year is a culture shock to our kids. We want to talk about chronic absenteeism. It hits them at freshman year. It's a major adjustment going from eighth grade to high school because they're still in that k-8 model where they are kind of brought down to that k-5 environment. There's a lot of conversation going on here. I'm not taking away from the way anybody feels. I've been in this district 21 years. I work very hard for these SPED programs. My teams work very hard. I do right by these kids. My certification is on the line every time I walk in

this district and have to place a child in-district or out-of-district. I do right by my kids. When I hear people say that we don't try to build capacity and continuity, that's a false statement. Look at other surrounding districts. You can go to Hawthorne right now with your child's IEP and Hawthorne is going to send you back to Paterson because they're not going to provide those services. Clifton is not. Little Falls is not. Lodi is not. Totowa is not. Paterson maximizes. We get way more than what our students need because we know we have to build capacity because they're in the third largest and they're in a much rougher environment than a Clifton and Totowa. So please, when you come to the mic attacking, understand there are a lot of people behind the scene that are supporting these kids. They spend a lot of hours here to support these kids. I'm not trying to disrespect any parent. I listen and talk to any parent that wants to have my ear, but we work really hard. We're not here to take anything away from you all. Look at just around the districts. Clifton has it. Totowa has it. A lot of districts have it. We have people that come to this microphone that don't even live in Paterson and talk about what we don't do as a district, but don't carry that same energy to Totowa, Woodland Park or Clifton where they live at. We have a Board up here that everybody voted in. Give the respect because the Board turns around and votes in the Superintendent. We may not all agree. We agree to disagree, but it's frustrating for weeks to come here and know the hard work. We're here at 6:00 or 7:00 o'clock in the morning. We're here at 10:00 and 11:00 o'clock at night to make sure it's right for the district. Everybody wants to say what we make. Granted, I make \$198,000 a year, but 12 months out of the year, 10 to 12 hours a day sometimes taken away from my own one child to make sure I pour into Paterson's finest. Bring my kid into Paterson out of the suburbs so he can experience the best teachers in the state. Let me tell you, you all can say what you want to say, but our teachers are great. We have vacancies because we are spread too thin. When you do the math, we have 22,000 students in this district. At one point we had 30,000. The charter schools are eating them up, which is okay because at some point we can't house them all. But when you get mad because there's a vacancy in a classroom that has 10 kids here and 20 over here because they all spread out, or a special permission, there's no equity. That's all we're trying to do, bring equity across the district. I apologize to the Board if I'm out of line. I'll take any consequences that come because that's the woman that I am. But enough is enough. We have sat here for weeks listening to you ridicule the work that we have done. There are people working countless hours to make a difference in this district. I don't see you all at the council meetings when you have all these new buildings being put up left and right and all these tax abatements and these people are not paying into the education for this district. Then you hold the district accountable for things that you want done. Hold your city accountable as well. We are a joint venture. If there is pedophilia in your district, go see your Mayor. If there is crime on the street, go see your Mayor. If there are people under the bridge, go see your Mayor. That is not a Paterson Public School duty. We protect when they get inside the building. Wait a minute. I didn't disrespect anybody. I didn't say anything. There is no three minutes. I work for the district and I'm responding to the parents. I've never had an issue with sitting down. I didn't even know you were here still. You filed the paperwork and we're looking into it. Like I said, I don't negate any concern the parent brings to me. No, no, no problem. I just know that it's very frustrating. It's very sad to have teachers texting throughout the night saying this is so sad to see how our district seems to look like we are falling apart when we're trying to do right by kids. Nobody's trying to take away or rob education. That's what I don't understand. We're trying to make it better. If you have 8 middle schools in a zone, you can have 8 great science labs, 8 great music teachers, 8 great areas of middle school instruction that move and prepare kids for the next level into high school. It's the same thing with k-5. K-5 students take a different population of educators to work with them. Let's call it what it is. You have students that come here that may have never had education at the age of 15. Technically, we are supposed to put them in an elementary

school. My 3-year-old is now walking around with a 15-year-old in the hallway. We're just trying to balance the equity. You all have a right to have a voice, but please understand that at some point our responsibility is to try and make it equitable for everybody. At one point, School No. 9 was a house that was together and then it separated. Now it's kind of going back together from k-5 and 6-8. I truly don't understand. I need somebody to really make me understand. I've spent a lot of money to be an educator and this is frustrating. I sat there all night, and I kept saying, "I know tonight's going to be the night I get in trouble." It's because what I'm listening to is there's no compassion for what is trying to be done for the educator's level. You have teachers that struggle with trying to balance. Numbers are busting at the scene. Guess what? You level it out k-5 across the district and you bring equity into those classrooms where you can't bring the classroom numbers down. You now have 3 middle schools in one environment where the kids can spread out with fidelity. There's a process. I'm sorry.

Comm. Freeman: Mr. President, I just need to say one thing. Dr. Coy, I applaud what you just said, but that should have been said a long time ago. We have to understand these parents cry. Don't take this any other way than what I'm saying it. What you sat up there and said, you basically explained what they've been wanting to hear. It takes for the parents to come out in force for it to come out. It should have been explained and laid all on the table. Let them know. I'm not going to blame the parents for coming out here demanding to know what it is. She sat right there, and she gave the whole plan. If this was given before, I'm sure these parents wouldn't be here. Who do we blame on that? Who do we blame on that? We have to take the blame because they were not informed properly. I don't care what kind of paper you put out. I don't care what kind of notice you put out. They were not informed properly. She sat right there and she gave the whole plan in a few minutes, something that they've been asking for that is not coming from here. She got up there and just said everything that needed to be said. But by no means will we blame the parents for this. We have to take the blame, and we got to eat it. We got to make it right. There's no if, ands or buts about it. I understood it very clear when she stood here. Mr. Mapp stood up here and gave a facilities report that these parents would not understand because they don't know anything about facilities. Mr. Mapp deals with facilities and logistics on where the kids go. He cannot tell them what classroom they go into or what services are going to be provided. So, we sit here and we try to tell the parents how to come at us. Everybody has to be respected. I understand that. Dr. Coy just stood here and gave the whole layout of the middle school model while we sat and listened to Mr. Mapp give a facilities report. You expected these parents to understand what he was talking about. Absolutely not! They did not understand it. They wouldn't understand it because it's not his place to tell the parents what's beneficial for their children in a classroom. That is the bottom line. We have to keep it real with these parents. This is why they get frustrated, because we try to sugarcoat stuff. There's no way in the world Mr. Mapp should have been up there trying to make these parents understand the middle school model and how educationally it is going to affect their children. She sat right there and did it right here and that's what should have been done from the beginning.

Comm. Gonzalez: Thank you. Were there any other speakers?

Ms. Anthony Vanegas: My name is Anthony Vanegas. Next to me is my classmate, Winston, who also attends Dr. Hani. We are all really scared about what's happening to my school. We don't understand why this change is happening. Nobody asked us how we feel. Nobody asked if we feel safe. Now we hear our school will be different and that makes us really nervous. We don't want to be in a school with too many kids when my teacher won't have time to help. We don't want to be in a place where kids get bullied and feel lost. We don't want to be somewhere that just doesn't feel like home

anymore. Please don't do this to us. We love our schools the way they are. Please don't take them away.

Mr. Elakei: Good morning, everybody. My name is Elakei. I go to Dr. Han and I love it. I love my school. I loved my teachers, my friends and everything I have learned there. This plan scares me. It makes me sad and angry. I don't want to lose my teachers, and I don't want to be in a school that is too crowded where kids get bullied and don't feel safe. My big brother won't be there to help me next year and I know I am not the only little brother or little sister who feels like they're being left behind. Why are you making this change when no one asked for it? Why didn't you ask the kids who actually have to live with it? I am asking you, please do not take my school away from me. Thank you.

**It was moved by Comm. Teague, seconded by Comm. Nieves 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**

WHEREAS, the Paterson Public School District approves payment for the list of bills dated April 2, 2025, beginning with check number 247438 and ending with check number 247444, along with direct deposit numbers 2400 through 2423, in the amount of \$9,212,454.09, and wires in the amount of \$4,479,212.08, for a total of \$13,691,666.17; and

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

### **Resolution No. 2**

WHEREAS, The Superintendent recommends the appointment, salary adjustments, transfers, supports the Paterson: A Promising Tomorrow Strategic Plan 2019-2024 which amongst its strategies goals is Priority I- Effective Academic Programs-Goal 1 - Increase Student Achievement; and

WHEREAS, The Board of the Paterson Public School District has reviewed the recommendation of the Superintendent; and

WHEREAS, The Board of the Paterson Board of Education communicated expectations that such recommendations are made on a timely basis and include the proposed appointment, transfer, personnel in compliance with the contractual and/or statutory requirements.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, The Board of the Paterson Board of Education accepts the personnel recommendations of the Superintendent adopted in the April 2, 2025 Board Meeting.

## **PERSONNEL**

**F.1** Motion to take action on personnel matters, as listed below; and appoint and submit to the County Superintendent applications for emergent hiring and the

applicant's attestation that he/she has not been convicted of any disqualifying crime pursuant to the provisions of N.J.S.A. 18A:6-7.1 et. Seq., N.J.S.A. 18A:39-17 et. seq., or N.J.S.A. 18A:6-4.13 et. seq. for those employees listed below:

(All appointments are contingent upon receipt of proper teaching certification and all salary placements are pending receipt of college transcripts verifying degree status and letter stating years of service in other districts).

**A. POSITION CONTROL ABOLISH/CREATE**

**A1.** Action to transfer **PC# 180** Teacher of Kindergarten to 690 Department of Human Resources.

**A2.** Action to transfer **PC# 21** to 690 Department of Human Resources.

**A3.** Action to transfer **PC# 1315**, Teacher Grade 2 to 690 Department of Human Resources.

**A4.** Action to transfer **Wynter Willis**, Interim Supervisor at 655 in **PC# 6614** to **PC# 5329** as the Interim Supervisor at 655.

**Account#** 11.000.221.102.655.000.0000.000

**A5.** Action to reclassify **PC# 3478** from World Language Teacher at PS 27 (.6) and School 3 at MLK (.4) to World Language Teacher at School 27 (1) and hire **Camila Campo-Giraldo** as a Teacher World Language in **PC# 1310** at JFK HS for the 2025-2026 School Year.

**A6.** Action is requested to transfer **Sierra Gerald**, School/Community Coordinator, with **PC# 2845** to location 865 – Student Attendance Department to support District Wide Goal and Initiatives of Relationship Development of Parental Engagement to assist in reducing chronic absenteeism, with Preschool and Kindergarten being one of the targeted priorities. Effective: April 2, 2025.

**A7.** Action to create and assign a Substitute PC#'s for a Personal Aide to the following 504 students: **AR 5253216** student attends School 21 - **PC# 10047**.

**NT 5266743** student attends School 1 - **PC# 10049**. Effective immediately. Required by code: Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

**A8.** Action is requested to reclassify **PC# 3008** Bilingual ESL Teacher at School 5 to Teacher of Bilingual K-6 at School 5. Principal is aware.

**Account#** 15.240.100.101.005.000.0000.000

**A. POSITION CONTROL ABOLISH/CREATE (CONT.)**

**A9.** Action to move **PC#26**, School Psychologist, from Schools 1, 18, and 26 to Central Office.

**A10.** Action to move **PC# 2929**, School Social Worker to Central Office.

**A11.** Action to transfer **PC# 1893**, Teacher Grade 1 to 690 Department of Human Resources.

**A12.** Action to assign PA Sub PC# for the following students:

**ABV 5246681** at STARS – **PC# 10108**. **EW 5266539** at PS#21 - **PC# 10109**.

**SH 5260271** at ELC - **PC# 10111**. **RPL 5258561** at PS#16 - **PC# 10113**.

**JLC 5261279** at EWK - **PC# 10114**. **BM 5268582** at PS#24 – **PC# 10115**.

**DB 5240130** at PS#4 - **PC# 10116**. **TS 5272244** at PS#25 – **PC# 10118**.

**IB 5267168** at PS#18 - **PC# 10121**. **MD 5257819** at MLK - **PC #10122**.

**A13.** Action to assign PA Sub PC# for the following students:

**DCM 5259033** at Dale Ave - **PC#10023**. **II 5272286** at PS#21(male aide req)-**PC# 10768**.

**AS 5238041** at International High School-**PC# 10867**.

**ME 5269247** at PS#27- **PC#10781**. **AML 5272987** at EWK – **PC# 10048**.

**EMD 5248377** at Dale Ave (male bilingual aide requested-Spanish speaking) -**PC# 10916**.

**KB 5252831** at PS#20 – **PC# 10950**. **JM 5240255** at PS#13 - **PC# 10101**.

**MM 5256659** at PS#9 - **PC# 10099**. **NK 5246781** at MLK - **PC# 10096**.

**AA 5267852** at MLK - **PC# 10094**. **KG 5268129** at EWK- **PC #10089**.

**A14.** Action to assign PA Sub PC# for the following students:

**AR 5212100** at JFK (female aide req) - **PC# 10103**.

**LB 5259893** at EWK (male aide req)- **PC# 10104**.

**JMS 5264954** at Dale (bilingual aide req-Spanish) - **PC# 10106**.

**LM 5246385** at PS#8 - **PC# 10105**. Reassign Sub **PC# 10942** to Students **JS 5271513** & **DDG 5269300** at ELC. (same class). Transfer Sub **PC# 10068** from PS #4 to MLK for Student **IW 5230747**. PC # is following student.

**A15.** Action to correct PA Sub PC#'s:

Sub **PC# 10109** for Student **TP 5254154**. Student transferred to PS#20 with Sub **PC# 10112**. Sub **PC# 10111** for Student **JF 5260759**. Student has a District PA **Rose Cabrera PC# 2819**. Assign District PA **#3039 Lakisha Bailey** to Student **AA 5217122** at PS#2. **PC#1162 Exebio Gaudy** is the Sub Certified Aide covering the class. Gaudy is not the PA for Student **AA 5217122**. Assign District PA **Daisy Munoz PC#2659** to Student **VM 5220534** at PS#2. **Marianny Sanchez PC#618** is not the PA for this student, she is the PA for Student **RI 5244711** AT PS#2. Deactivate Sub **PC#10096** currently assigned to Student **RI 5244711**. Deactivate Sub **PC#10750** at PS#5 for Student **ARG 5253448**. Student is assigned Sub **PC#10745** at current enrollment at PS#20.

#### **A. POSITION CONTROL ABOLISH/CREATE (CONT.)**

**A16.** Action is requested to re-assign Sub **PC#10028** to Student **AGV 5269184** at PS #16. Previous student is on Home Instruction pending OOD placement. Transfer Sub **PC#10246** from JFK to IHS following Student **AS 5238041**. Transfer Sub **PC#10086** from PS#5 to PS#20 following Student **ECM 5257967**. Correct ID# for Student **AM** is

**5263828** not **5263838** at PS #15. Re-assign **PC #851** (Mr. Harrison) to Student **AM 5263828** at PS#15 and deactivate Sub **PC#10094**. Previous student assigned to this number no longer has a PA in the IEP. Re-assign **PC#338** (Elizabeth Lugo) to Student **BM 5268582** at PS #24. Previous student moved out of district.

**A17.** Action is requested to correct PC#'s

Deactivate Sub **PC# 10048** for student ERR **5272705** at EWK. Student is assigned Sub **PC# 10077**. Deactivate Sub **PC# 10023** for student **AR 5205664** at EHS. Student is assigned district PA **Paula Fonder PC# 2429**. Deactivate Sub **PC# 10768** for student **DP 5205969** at EHS. Student is assigned district PA **Altagracia Tapia PC# 49**. Deactivate Sub **PC# 10867** for student **LA 5264752** at EHS. Student is at STARS with PA **PC# 2893 Mary Webber**. Deactivate Sub **PC# 10781** for student **YI 5211993** at RPHS. Student is assigned district PA **Tiffany Peoples PC# 2373** at RPHS. Deactivate Sub **PC#s 10916 & 10950** for student **AP 5203981** at STEAM. Student is assigned district **PA Kim McEachern PC# 1252**. Deactivate Sub **PC# 10089** for student **AMT 5252137** at STARS. Student is assigned **PC# 732 Jose Brito**.

**B. SUSPENSIONS- N/A**

**B1.** Action to suspend with pay **Omar Khalil (PC# 3026)** from his position as Social Studies Teacher at International High School effective March 3, 2025 through June 30, 2025. His retirement date is effective July 1, 2025. =

**C. RESIGNATION/ RETIREMENT**

**D. TERMINATIONS**

**D1.** Action is requested to terminate **Cassandra Preciose**, Instructional Aide Special Ed/Autism in **PC#1928**, effective March 10, 2025.

**D2.** This action is to terminate the following P/T District Officers. Effective immediately. **Michael Quinones (PC# 5500) & Raymond Heffernan (PC# 5501)**.

**E. NON-RENEWAL**

**F. LEAVES OF ABSENCE**

**G. APPOINTMENT**

	Last Name	First Name	School/Location	Title	Salary	Reason
<b>G1</b>	Alegre	Manuel	Department of Facilities	Chief Custodian C - JFK (night)	\$53,605.00 + \$700.00 + \$750.00 = \$55,055.00	filling vacancy
<b>G2</b>	Caamano	Rosanna	MLK	Teacher Grade 5	no change	filling vacancy

<b>G3</b>	Campo - Giraldo	Camila	John F. Kennedy HS	Teacher World Language	\$64,685.00	filling vacancy
<b>G4</b>	Champagne	Kylla	Teacher Physical Education	School #21	\$62,170.00	filling vacancy
<b>G5</b>	Charles	Justin	Dept of Special Services @ Central Office	Personal Aide to Student MM 2057055	\$36,036.00	filling vacancy
<b>G6</b>	Cobb	Ta'shon	Napier	Cafeteria Monitor	\$12,392.00	filling vacancy
<b>G7</b>	Deza	Joseph	Department of Facilities	Chief Custodian C - 200 Sheridan Ave	\$53,605.00 + \$700.00 = \$54,305.00	filling vacancy
<b>G8</b>	Dominguez	Katarina	PS 24	Teacher ESL	no change	filling vacancy
<b>G9</b>	Ewers	Vivia	Department of Food Services	Substitute Cafeteria Worker	\$15.49 per hour	filling vacancy
<b>G10</b>	Guzman de Vasquez	Maria	Department of Food Services	Substitute Cafeteria Worker	\$15.49 per hour	filling vacancy
<b>G11</b>	Haywood	Jestia	Department of Central Registration	P/T Central Registration Worker	\$21.45 per hour	filling vacancy
<b>G12</b>	Long	Peter	Department of Communications	Supervisor of Special Projects and Communications	\$86,000.00	filling vacancy
<b>G13</b>	Lydner	Kaara	Dept of Special Services at Central Office	Interim Director of Special Services	\$900/month	appointment
<b>G14</b>	Mora-Lopez	Leidy	Department of Human Resources	Interim Human Resources Partner	\$600/month	appointment
<b>G15</b>	Mosquea-Lagombra	Joselina	PS 5	Teacher Bilingual	\$66,685.00	filling vacancy
<b>G16</b>	Perez	Rafrejen	Dept of Special Services at Central Office	Instructional Assistant	\$43,546.00	filling vacancy
<b>G17</b>	Rodriguez	Lillian	PS 20	School Secretary	\$54,030.00	filling vacancy
<b>G18</b>	Smalley	Joshua	Department of Transportation	Bus Inspector/Van Driver	\$59,000.00	filling vacancy
<b>G19</b>	Smith	La'Donna	Eastside High School	Teacher Biology	\$73,285.00	filling vacancy
<b>G20</b>	Solano	Aidan	Department of Communications	Content/Graphics Coordinator	\$71,000.00	filling vacancy

<b>G21</b>	Topolski	Thomas	PS 13	Teacher K-2 SPED/LLD	\$70,180.00	filling vacancy
<b>G22</b>	Turriago Carvajal	Jose	JAT	Cafeteria Monitor	\$12,392.00	filling vacancy
<b>G23</b>	Vasilopoulos	Vasilios	EWK (.49) & School #21 (.51)	Teacher Social Worker	\$78,225 + \$400CST = \$78,625	filling vacancy
<b>G24</b>	Velasquez	Mayra	MLK	Teacher Grade 2	no change	filling vacancy
<b>G25</b>	Yabar Morales	Gianella	Department of Food Services	Substitute Cafeteria Worker	\$15.49 per hour	filling vacancy
<b>G26</b>	Yompian Flores	Eilyn	Early Learning Center	IA Preschool	\$36,036.00	filling vacancy
<b>G27</b>	Zoubkova	Klara	Department of Central Registration/Trans.	P/T Transportation Worker	\$21.45 per hour	filling vacancy

#### **H. TRANSFERS**

	<b>Last Name</b>	<b>First Name</b>	<b>School/Location</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Salary</b>	<b>Reason</b>
<b>H1</b>	Balbi	Brian	Department of Human Resources	Substitute Secretary	no change	location change
<b>H2</b>	Britton	Florence	MLK	Teacher Grade 1	no change	transfer
<b>H3</b>	Bushman- Lewandoski	Cheryl	School # 13	Teacher Grade 6-8 Math	no change	transfer
<b>H4</b>	Campos	Jenny	School #5 (.51) & School #27 (.49)	Teacher Guidance Counselor	no change	transfer
<b>H5</b>	Caquias	Vilmary	East Side High School	District Security Officers	no change	transfer
<b>H6</b>	Castellanos	Javier	PS 5	District Security Officers	no change	transfer
<b>H7</b>	De Lillo	Karen	School # 19	Teacher Sped. Resource	no change	restructuring
<b>H8</b>	Deleon	Efrain	Department of Facilities	Custodian Head C - PS 24	no change	transfer
<b>H9</b>	Fernandes	Susana	School #3 (.6) & MLK (.4)	Teacher Social Worker	no change	transfer
<b>H10</b>	Haney	Tanya	School #27	Teacher Guidance Counselor	no change	transfer
<b>H11</b>	Hernandez	Nicolette	School # 13	Teacher Grade 4-5 Math	no change	restructuring
<b>H12</b>	Kearney	Carl	STEAM High School	District Security Officers	no change	transfer
<b>H13</b>	Lindsey	Christopher	School # 20	Teacher Grade 5	no change	restructuring
<b>H14</b>	Mc Kenzie	Derrick	Martin Luther King	District Security	no change	transfer

			School/PS 30	Officers		
<b>H15</b>	Navarro	Anthony	PS 4	District Security Officers	no change	transfer
<b>H16</b>	Nelson	Kendrick	PS 25	Personal Aide	no change	transfer
<b>H17</b>	Ortiz	Rafael	Department of Facilities	Chief Custodian C - Eastside High School	\$67,205.00+ \$700.00+ \$750.00= \$68,655.00	transfer
<b>H18</b>	Pritchard	Juana	PS 27	Teacher World Language	no change	transfer
<b>H19</b>	Pujols	Yoany	Department of Facilities	Chief Custodian C Floater - 200 Sheridan Ave	\$61,405.00 + \$2,400.00 longevity +\$700= \$64,505.00	transfer
<b>H20</b>	Rozo-Ospina	Miguel	Department of Facilities	Chief Custodian B - PS 10	\$52,955.00 + \$700.00 = \$53,655.00	transfer
<b>H21</b>	Selim	Orhan	Department of Facilities	Chief Custodian C 90 Delaware Ave	no change	transfer
<b>H22</b>	Sinclair	Gladys	Accounts Payable	Accounts Payable Coordinator	no change	transfer
<b>H23</b>	Taft	Kenyetta	PS 13	District Security Officers	no change	transfer
<b>H24</b>	Tejada De La Cruz	Gloria	School # 8	Teacher Grade 4 Bilingual	no change	reclass
<b>H25</b>	Tronci	Veva	MLK	Teacher Kindergarten	no change	restructuring
<b>H26</b>	Zimmerman	Eric	PS 4	District Security Officers	no change	transfer

**I. RECALL FROM RIF**

**J. LEAVE REPLACEMENT**

**K. DISTRICT/SCHOOL PROGRAM HIRING - N/A**

**K1.** Request to compensate **Jorge Ventura** as Lead Teacher for the Afterschool STEAM Program at Joseph A. Taub School. The program will operate on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays. The duration of the program is from January 27, 2025 through May 29, 2025. The Lead Teacher's hours are 4:00 p.m. – 5:15 p.m., up to and not to exceed a total of eighty-one (81) days.

1 Lead Teacher at \$65.00 an hour x 81 days x 1.25 hours per day = \$6,581.25  
**Account#** 20.231.100.101.653.083.0000.001 Up to and not to exceed: \$6,581.25

**K. DISTRICT/SCHOOL PROGRAM HIRING - N/A (CONT.)**

**K2.** Action to hire staff members for Posting #10779 and #10788 – Saturday ELA and Math Student Support Program for Grades 3-8 Students for nine (9) Saturdays starting March 2025 to May 2025. Program will run for two (2) hours for teachers and students on Saturdays from 11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. Lead Teacher/Principal will work two and a half (2.5) hours on Saturdays from 11:15 a.m. – 1:45 p.m.

1 Lead Teacher x \$65.00 an hour x 9 Saturdays x 2.5 hours = \$1,462.50

13 Teachers x \$35.00 an hour x 9 Saturdays x 2 hours = \$8,190.00

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Title</b>
1	Cotto, Florita	Principal/Lead Teacher
1	Watley, Janiki	ELA Supervisor
2	Slopey, Diana	Math Supervisor
3	Cordova, Evelyn	Special Ed Teacher
4	Ehrenberg, Dawn	Language Arts Teacher
5	Vizcaino, Kathryn	ESL Teacher
6	Mc Anuff, Michelle	Special Ed Resource Teacher
7	Crawford, Constance	Special Ed Teacher
8	Rodriguez, Ayana	Teacher Grade 4
9	Naqi, Saira	Teacher Grade 4
10	Anton, Lauren	Teacher Grade 3
11	Zak, Robert	Special Ed Teacher
12	Puente, Natalie	Teacher 3rd Grade
13	Drakeford, Coletta	Teacher Grade 2
	Fabian, Vianel-Substitute	ESL Teacher

**Account#** 20.238.100.101.653.183.1024.001 Up to and not to exceed: \$9,652.50

**K3.** Request to compensate **Julia Hishmeh, Ryan Kelly, Afreita Dervishi, Nour Nalah, Andres Paez** and **Elizabeth Speizer** as teachers for the Afterschool STEAM Program at Joseph A. Taub School. The program will operate on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays from 3:15 p.m. – 5:15 p.m. The duration of the program is from January 27, 2025 through May 29, 2025. Each Teacher’s rate is \$35.00 an hour from 3:15 p.m. – 5:15 p.m. up to and not to exceed a total of eighty-one (81) days.

6 Teachers x \$35.00 an hour x 81 days x 2 hours per day = \$34,020.00

**Account#** 20.231.100.101.653.083.0000.001 Up to and not to exceed: \$34,020.00

**L. STIPENDS**

**L1.** Action to compensate (5) Social Studies Teachers a 6<sup>th</sup> period stipend at the prorated amount as per the PEA contract. Not to exceed \$9,000.

**William Towns, Michael Gordon, Scott Santora, Ali Senman, Franco Dettore**

**L2.** Request to hire **Andre Blackwood** as an Athletic Coach for the winter season of school year 2024-2025 beginning, November 25, 2024 through March 9, 2025, dates subject to change pursuant to NJSIAA. JobID: 10321 – Basketball (Girls) 1<sup>st</sup> Assistant Coach – Step 2 / Stipend \$7,779.

**Account#:** 15.402.100.100.051.053.0000.000                      Not to exceed: \$7,779.00

**L3.** To request a stipend for Teacher **Marbel Tamayo PC# 1686**, to complete the assigned task of lesson planning and grading student' work and inputting grades in Infinite Campus during the long term absence of the classroom teacher.

3 hrs per wk beginning 3/10/25 until 6/15/25 – 14 weeks. 42 hours at \$35.00 = \$1,470.00

**Account#** 15.140.100.101.051.053.000.0000

**L4.** Approval requested to compensate teacher who has to teach a sixth period during their supervisory or preparation period to be paid as per negotiated contract for Eastside High School. Effective 3/10/25. **Idalia Sanchez PC# 385** - \$4,500 annual stipend

**L5.** Request to compensate **Ms. Jin-Young Ahn** (Employee ID: 120040) for teaching a sixth period. \$4,500 annual stipend.

**L6.** To provide contractual \$7,293.00 to Scholl Treasurer, **Roman Kharchuk**, for the 2024 school year, effective September 1, 2024 until June 30, 2025.

**L7.** Request to compensate **Ms. Kenia Nunez** for teaching a sixth period: 1031 Algebra I Honors - \$4,500 annual stipend.

**L8.** Action requested to stipend the following administrators for QBS Safety Care Training on Saturday March 1, 2025 (Virtual) and Saturday, March 8, 2025 (In-person) from 8:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.                      **John Super**

1 Administrator x \$40 x 6 hours x 2 days= \$480.00 (excluding one hour per day for lunch)

**Account#** 11.000.221.100.749.053

**L9.** Action requested to stipend the following teachers for QBS Safety Care Training on Saturday, March 1, 2025 (Virtual) and Saturday, March 8, 2025 (In-person) from 8:30 a/m/ - 3:30 p.m.

**Sarah Langan, Agustin Castillo, Joseph Feoli, Lindsay Scianna, Mary Jo Bancroft, Sherly Brun, Angel Barber, Fe Belaclac, and Tracy Pearson**

9 Teachers x \$35 x 6 hrs x 2 days = \$3,780.00 (excluding one hour per day for lunch) Saturday March 8, 2025 (In-person) from 8:30a.m.–3:30p.m. ONLY (virtual completed 1/11/25)                      **Rosa Valdez- Montes**

1 Teacher x \$35 x 6hrs x 1 day = \$210.00 (excluding one hour per lunch)

**Account#** 11.000.221.100.749.053

**L. STIPENDS / CONT.**

**L10.** Action is requested to assign **Veronica Ricigliano** as Interim Supervisor of Special Education and Services effective April 28, 2025 with stipend of \$750.00 per month.

**L11.** Action requested to give stipend to the following IA's and PA's for QBS Safety Care Training on Saturday, March 1, 2025 (Virtual) and Saturday, March 8, 2025 from 8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

**Yetunde Osho, Letitia Simon, Teresa Torres-Castillo, Shelumiel Hill, Farhana Aziz, Jaqueline Cordova, Brian Stringfellow, Luz Nunez, Jamilla Gray, Joseph Deodato, Lisbeth Ortega, Yolanda Dock, Vanessa Castillo, Rosie Cox, & Mariana Perez**

15 Instructional Assistants and Personal Assistants x \$25 x 6hrs x 2 days = \$4,500 (excluding one hour for lunch). Saturday, March 8, 2025 (in-person) from 8:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. ONLY (virtual completed 1/25/25)

**Marianela Carbajel & Surelys Aloï**

2 Instructional Assistants and Personal Assistants x \$25 x 6hrs x 1 day = \$300.00 (excluding one hour for lunch)

**Account#** 11.000.221.100.749.053

**L12.** Request to compensate **Kelli A. White** for administrator for the School No. 27 – Spring Saturday Reading Program. The program will run on Saturdays from March 15, 2025 through May 10, 2025. Principal White will be compensated at a rate of \$65.00 an hour, from 8:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. (4.5 hours for eight (8) Saturdays).

Substitute: **Edwin Camacho** (rate of Pay: \$40.00 an hour)

1 Administrator x \$65.00 an hour x 4.5 hours x 8 Saturdays = \$2,340.00

**Account#** 20.230.200.100.653.0183.1027.001 Up to and not to exceed: \$2,340.00

**L13.** Request to compensate **Kathryn Bracy, Edwin Camacho, Jennifer Jaworowski, Starmecca Grier, Katelyn McCann, Kathleen Pavey**, as teachers for the School No. 27 – Spring Saturday Reading Program. The teachers will work eight (8) Saturdays from March 15, 2025 through May 10, 2025 for four (4) hours each session not to exceed thirty-two (32) hours at a rate of \$35.00 an hour from 8:15 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.

Substitute: **Stephanie Bueno**

6 Teachers x \$35.00 an hour x 4 hours x 8 Saturdays = \$6,720.00

**Account#** 20.238.100.101.653.183.1027.001 Up to and not to exceed: \$6,720.00

**L14.** To hire eighteen New Jersey Youth Corps students to receive an incentive stipend at \$25/day-flat fee for participating in community service-learning activities according to the guidelines and procedures of funded programs FY 2024-2025. Amount not to exceed \$1,750 per student.

**Account#** 20.606.200.110.410.000.0000.002 Not to exceed: \$31,500.00

**L15.** Action to request stipend for the Secretary, **Alicia Williams**, to provide the school with additional secretarial responsibilities for the amount of \$500.00 a month. (Due to resignation of other secretary – **Monica Acevedo Reyes**).

**Account#** 11.422.100.101.708.053.0000.000 (Funding will come from this acct into salary acct)

**Account#** 15.000.240.105.052.053.0000.000 (Payroll)

**L. STIPENDS /CONT.**

**L16.** Action is requested to stipend the K-8 Afterschool STEAM Program Lead Teachers (In Person) to provide site supervision and set up afterschool program on days when program is running from Mondays through Fridays, from 3:10 p.m. – 4:10 p.m. Program will commence from September 2024 through May 2025, at various schools, not to exceed seventy-five (75) hours per Lead Teacher at a rate of \$40.00 per hour. Additionally, each Lead Teacher will be compensated two (2) hours of Professional Development at a rate of \$40.00 per hour.

4 Lead Teachers x \$40.00 an hour x 75 hours = \$12,000.00  
 4 Lead Teachers x \$40.00 an hour x 2 hours = \$320.00

	Full Name	Location	Date Comp.
1	Albanese-Benevento, Katherine	21	2/1/2025
2	McComb, Tonya	2	1/18/2025
3	Monto, Ilmadeliz	20	2/14/2025
4	Rodriguez, Carlita	19	2/20/2025

**Account#** 20.231.100.101.653.083.0000.001 Up to and not to exceed: \$12,320.00

**L17.** Action is requested to stipend the K-8 Afterschool STEAM Program Teachers (In Person) to provide academic instruction to our students after school on days when the program is running from Mondays through Fridays, from 3:10 p.m. – 4:10 p.m. Program will commence from September 2024 through May 2025, at various schools, up to and not to exceed seventy-five (75) hours per Teacher at a rate of \$35.00 per hour. Additionally, each Teacher will be compensated two (2) hours of Professional Development at a rate of \$35.00 per hour.

3 Teachers x \$35.00 an hour x 75 hours = \$7,875.00  
 3 Teachers x \$35.00 an hour x 2 hours (PD) = \$210.00

	Full Name	Location	Date Comp.
1	Albanese-Benevento, Katherine	21	
2	Bautista, Franklin	5	2/07/2025
3	Monto, Ilmadeliz	20	2/14/2025

**Account#** 20.231.100.101.653.083.0000.001 Up to and not to exceed: \$8,085.00

**L18.** Action to pay stipend for two chaperones **Ms. Nancy Rivera (PC# 1726)** and **Mr. Jorge Salas (PC# 6526)** due to Dominican Celebration at City Hall Event on February 26, 2025. **Ms. River (PC# 1726)** 5:30 p.m.-7:30p.m. – 3 hours x \$35ph =\$105  
**Mr. Salas (PC# 6526)** 5:30 p.m.-7:30p.m. – 3 hours x \$35ph = \$105 for a total of \$210

**Account#** 15.401.100.101.024.053.0000.000 Teacher  
\$210.00

Not to exceed:

**L. STIPENDS /CONT.**

**L19.** Approval requested to compensate teacher who has volunteered to teach a sixth period during their supervisory or preparation period to be paid as per negotiated contract for Eastside High School. Effective 2/03/25. **Mayra Pinatelli** -\$4,500 annual stipend

**L20.** Action is requested to stipend the K-8 Before School Math Program Teachers (In Person) to provide math instruction to our students before school on days when the program is running from Mondays through Fridays, from 7:15 a.m.-8:15 a.m. Program will commence September 2024 through May 2025 at various schools, up to and not to exceed seventy-five (75) hours per Teacher at a rate of \$35.00 per hour. Additionally, each Teacher will be compensated for two (2) hours of Professional Development at a rate of \$35.00 per hour.

4 Teachers x \$35.00 an hour x 75 hours = \$10,500.00

4 Teachers x \$35.00 an hour x 2 hours (PD) = \$280.00

	<b>Full Name</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Date Comp.</b>
1.	Baca, Amanda	16	2/21/2025
2.	Deleon, Sandy	1	3/11/2025
3.	Gary-Maple, Pamela	13	2/13/2025
4.	Ruberte, Ileana	16	2/20/2025

**Account#** 20.231.100.101.653.083.0000.001 Up to and not to exceed: \$10,780.00

**L21.** Action is requested to stipend the K-8 Afterschool STEAM Program Teachers (In Person) to provide academic instruction to our students after school on days when the program is running from Mondays through Fridays, from 3:10 p.m.-4:10 p.m. Program will commence September 2024 through May 2025, at various schools, up to and not to exceed seventy-five (75) hours per Teacher at a rate of \$35.00 per hour. Additionally, each Teacher will be compensated for two (2) hours of Professional Development at a rate of \$35.00 per hour.

3 Teachers x \$35.00 an hour x 75 hours = \$7,875.00

3 Teachers x \$35.00 an hour x 2 hours (PD) = \$210.00

	<b>Full Name</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Date Comp.</b>
1.	Pinckney, Lynette	1	3/04/2025
2.	Ruberte, Ileana	16	2/20/2025
3.	Williams, Brianna	MLK	3/04/25

**Account#** 20.231.100.101.653.083.0000.001 Up to and not to exceed: \$8,085.00

**L22.** To compensate Teacher **Matthew Caruso** for IB Core Coordinator After Hours at International High School. 140 hours x \$40 = \$5,600.00

**Account#** 15.140.100.101.055.053

Not to exceed: \$5,600.00

**L23.** To hire eighteen New Jersey Youth Corps students to receive an incentive stipend at \$25/day-flat fee for participating in community service-learning activities according to the guidelines and procedures of funded programs FY 2024-2025. Amount not to exceed \$1,750.00 per student.

**Account#** 20.606.200.110.410.000.0000.002

Not to exceed: \$31,500.00

**L. STIPENDS /CONT.**

**L24.** Action is requested to stipend staff members to organize and present to parents workshops that are focused on academic topic to support student success with parental involvement and engagement workshops. This request aligns to the Parental Engagement Goal of the Annual School Plan which is to increase parental involvement strategies for student achievement through workshop topics that include, but are not limited to: Social-Level Parent and Family Engagement Policy, School-Parent Compact, Title I Annual Meeting, Parent’s Right-to-Know, homework, Math, ELA, ESL, Science, Social Studies, curriculum, student and parent portals, etc. Workshops can be presented by remote and/or in person to remove any barriers for parent and family engagement.

Staff members are to be stipend as follows:

- Principals at \$65.00 an hour
- Vice Principals at \$40.00 an hour
- Supervisors at \$40.00 an hour
- Teachers at \$35.00 an hour
- Instructional Assistants at \$25.00 an hour
- SCPC at \$19.00 an hour
- Secretary at \$17.50 an hour
- Guidance Counselors at \$35.00 an hour
- Non-Bargaining – Rate to be Determined

The workshops may occur withing the months from August 2024 through June 2025.

	<b>Full Name</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Date Comp.</b>
1	Almanzar, Laura	Teacher	1	2/5/2025
2	Barber, Angel	Teacher	4	2/25/2025
3	Barrientos, Delia	Teacher	18	2/27/2025
4	Calenda, Briget	Teacher	1	3/7/2025
6	Castillo, Agustin	Teacher	EHS	1/9/2025
7	Cole Jones, Tonia	Teacher	1	2/12/2025
8	De Leon, Sandy	Teacher	1	3/11/2025
9	Finley, Shirley	Teacher	18	2/27/2025
10	Fresolone, Sibel	Teacher	18	3/1/2025
11	Golaub, Ramesha	Teacher	18	2/27/2025
12	Kopic, Rosa	Teacher	18	2/27/2025
13	Patel, Jennie	Teacher	Newcomers HS	3/11/2025
14	Robles, Gloria	Secretary	18	3/3/2025
15	Santana, Daisy	Secretary	EHS	12/6/2024

16	Serrano de Avila, Joly	Secretary	18	3/6/2025
17	Severino, Kristen	Teacher	18	2/27/2025
18	Sledge, Brian	Teacher	EHS	12/6/2024
19	Vicente, Michelle	Teacher	1	2/23/2025
20	Visco, Jade	Teacher	18	3/4/2025
21	Wolfe, Jeffrey	Teacher	1	2/28/2025

**Account#** 20.231.200.100.653.080.0000.001

**M. AMENDMENTS**

**M1.** Action requested to amend **PTF# 24-1785** to add the following Instructional Assistant as a Bus Monitor/Aide from September 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025 at the stipend rate of \$25.00 per hour. **Yessenia Camacho Diaz**

**Account#** 11.000.270.107.685.062.0000.000 Not to exceed: \$45,000.00

**M2.** Amend action requested to correct hourly rate to \$47.28 for 21<sup>st</sup> CCLS After School Programming at School 2 and 16 for data entry staff retroactive from October 2024 through June 2025. Posting# 10352. **Sakena Thompson** (1 Data Entry Staff x \$47.28/hr x 150hrs= \$7,092)–(\$41.96/hr (old rate) x 150 hrs= \$6,294) = \$798

**Account#** 20.474.200.100.815.000.0000.001 Not to exceed: \$798 (hourly rate increase)

**M3.** Action is requested to amend PTF to add one (1) substitute teachers for the Spanish for Educators Program in the Full Service Community Schools (FY 23) Grant at Schools 10, JAT and EHS from March – June 2025 for up to and not to exceed the hours and rates listed below. Posting #10152. **Julia Hishmeh** 1 Teacher x 15 hrs x \$35= \$1,050

**Account#** 2A.460.200.100.815.053.0000.001 Not to exceed: No additional funds needed

**M4.** Action is requested to amend the YES Advisors action to add one (1) Substitute Teacher as approved in the Full Service Community Schools (FY 23) Grant for up to and not to exceed twenty (20) hours per teacher at \$35/hr from February 2025 – June 2025. Posting # 10157. **Amal Ileiwat** 1 Teacher x 20 hours x \$35/hr = \$700

**Account#** 2A. 460.200.100.815.053.000.001 No additional funds needed.

**N. ATTENDANCE INCENTIVES**

**O. SICK/VACATION DAY PAY OUT**

**O1.** Request to process payment for four (4) employees for sick/vacation days due to resignation/retirement/termination/deceased/RIF. Asper contractual agreement. Effective 3/01/2025.

**NEW HIRES ON OR AFTER JUNE 8, 2007 WOULD BE HELD TO THE \$15,000.00 CAP FOR SICK DAYS PAYMENTS FOR ALL GROUPS**

**March 2025**

Name	Hire	Bargain	Title	Term.	Term.	Vac	Sick/	Salary	Daily	Total
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	date	Unit		Date	reason	atio n	Persona l		Rate	
Arana, Ronald	3/30/2000	PCMA	Maintenance Worker	3/1/25	Retirement	15		\$74,955	\$312.31	\$4,684.69
Campo, Yesid	5/17/1999	PCMA	Chief Custodial	3/1/25	Retirement		85	\$97,150	\$404.79	\$34,407.29
Campo, Yesid	5/17/1999	PCMA	Chief Custodial	3/1/25	Retirement	36		\$97,150	\$404.79	\$14,572.50
Downey, Kristen	12/09/2024	NON BARG	Supervisor	3/1/25	Resignation	5		\$90,000	\$375.00	\$1,875.00
Torres, Luis	8/05/2002	PCMA	Maintenance Worker	3/1/25	Retirement	13		\$74,055	\$308.56	\$4,011.31
									<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$59,550.79</b>

Account# 11.000.291.299.690.058.0000.000

Not to exceed: \$59,550.79

**P. WITHHOLDING OF INCREMENTS**

**Q. HEALTH BENEFITS**

**R. MISCELLANEOUS**

**R1.** Action to compensate the following list of employees who were approved during Spring 2025 Equivalency. Effective February 1, 2025.

First Name	Last Name	Location	Title	PC	TO LEVEL	TO STEP	New Base Salary	LONG	NEW SAL TOTAL
Emily	Regino	School #28	Teacher Special Ed Resource	2409	MA	3	\$62,820.00	\$0.00	\$62,820.00
Maria	Gonzalez	East Side High School	Teacher Social Studies Bilingual	2987	MA	12	\$69,585.00	\$700.00	\$70,285.00
Myrna	Gonzalez	School #28	Teacher Preschool	5229	MA	3	\$62,820.00	\$0.00	\$62,820.00
Marquette	Burgess	Kennedy High School	Teacher Coordinator	2817	MA	11	\$105,737.00	\$8,200.00	\$113,937.00
Jessica	Campos	Roberto Clemente School	Teacher Grade 2	2149	MA	11	\$67,585.00	\$4,900.00	\$72,485.00
William	Towns	International High School	Teacher IB Social Studies	6506	MA	8	\$64,090.00	\$0.00	\$64,090.00
Maryan	Al-Houssein	School #25	Vice Principal	1016	PHD	1	\$90,083.00	\$2200 + \$2,000	\$94,283.00

								phd	
Alicia	Scott	Dr. Frank Napier School	Teacher Special Ed Resource	490	PHD	13	\$72,485.00	\$0.00	\$72,485.00
Geraldine	Javier	Edward W. Kilpatrick School	Teacher Art	9000	MA+30	16	\$82,925.00	\$0.00	\$82,925.00
Anyelis	Diaz	International High School	Teacher Social Worker	456	MA+30	14	\$74,635.00	\$3,200.00	\$77,835.00
Mercy	Bernal	School #8	Teacher Kindergarten Bilingual	1887	BA+30	7	\$63,120.00	\$0.00	\$63,120.00
Jacqueline	Ellis	School #27	Instructional Aide Kindergarten	1725	ASST V	14	\$53,804.00	\$4,450.00	\$58,254.00
Lydeasha	Crawford	International High School	Personal Aide	1823	ASST V	10	\$43,546.00	\$0.00	\$43,546.00
Nasir	Crawford	Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. School	Instructional Aide Special Ed/ERI	2411	ASST IV	7	\$36,411.00	\$0.00	\$36,411.00
Yolanda	Ortiz	School #2	Instructional Aide Special Ed/Autism	2760	ASST V	6	\$36,536.00	\$0.00	\$36,536.00
									Total Difference

**R. MISCELLANEOUS (CONT.)**

	Last Name	First Name	School/Location	Title	Salary	Reason
<b>R2</b>	English	William	PS 20	Teacher SPED/Autism	\$62,670.00	Salary/Step Adjustment
<b>R3</b>	Sierra Castillo	Elizabeth	PS 15	Personal Aide	\$33,911.00	amendment to PTF 25-1229 - salary adjustment

**R4.** The New Jersey Department of Education regulations require the assignment of a mentor to all Alternate and Traditional Route Teachers. Payroll deductions should start for the following novice teachers to fulfill payment due at the end of the mentoring process. The spreadsheet reflects the amount of deductions each provisional teacher needs. These fees are taxable. The fee will be deducted in equal installments starting as soon as possible through June 30, 2025.

First Name	Last Name	Cert	Full Amt. Needed	Acct #
Rachel	Curtis	CE	\$1,000.00	11.140.100.101.690.110
Sarah	Melli	CE	\$1,000.00	11.140.100.101.690.110
Ileana	Ruberte Cartagena	CE	\$1,000.00	11.140.100.101.690.110
Elisabetta	Bracer- Berrie	Limited CE	\$1,000.00	11.130.100.101.690.110
Ryan	Koppel	CE	\$1,000.00	11.140.100.101.690.110
Jason	Mcquilla	Limited CE	\$1,000.00	11.130.100.101.690.110
Elaine	Reyes Ovalles	Limited CE	\$1,000.00	11.130.100.101.690.110
Shanice	Anderson	CE	\$1,000.00	11.140.100.101.690.110
Boris	Von Faust	CE	\$1,000.00	11.140.100.101.690.110
Arlene	Ramirez Diaz	CE	\$1,000.00	11.140.100.101.690.110
Jennifer	Matias	Limited CE	\$1,000.00	11.130.100.101.690.110

**S. MISCELLANEOUS (FUNDING.)**

**T. ADDITIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES**

**U. Administrative Longevity**

**V. RESTORE INCREMENTS**

**W. NEGOTIATIONS**

**X. JOB DESCRIPTIONS**

**Y. Grievance Settlements**

**Y1.** Action to compensate **Robin Caprio (PC# 1578)** the sum of \$3,500 minus appropriate deductions for the compensation lost as a result of her transfer to School # 18, in full and final settlement of grievance 24-08.

**Account#** 11.000.230.820.604.000.0000.000

Not to exceed: \$3,500.00

**Y. Grievance Settlements (CONT.)**

**Y2.** Request to process payment for ten (10) employees due to a grievance settlement 20-08. Effective 3/1/2025 .

LAST NAME	First Name	Location	Union (PEA, PFSA, PCMA)	Calendar Group	Position	Amount	A or D (Approved or Denied)
Alcalde Guardia	Grace	026	PEA	10	Teacher	\$ 500.00	A
Aleman	Adrian	307	PEA	10	Teacher	\$ 500.00	A
Balboa	Yvette	009	PEA	10	Teacher	\$ 500.00	A
De Nicola	Gayle	012	PEA	10	Teacher	\$ 500.00	A
Dinnerman	Steven	307	PEA	10	Teacher	\$ 500.00	A
Mosley	Arleen	036	PEA	10	Personal Aide	\$ 500.00	A
Omar	Dwayne	030	PEA	10	Teacher	\$ 500.00	A

Sherman	Kara	307	PEA	10	Teacher	\$ 500.00	A
Vancheri	Cindy	010	PEA	10	Teacher	\$ 500.00	A
Velez	Francis	015	PEA	10	Teacher	\$ 500.00	A
<b>TOTAL</b>						<b>\$</b>	
						<b>5,000.00</b>	

**Account #** 11.000.230.820.605.000.0000.000

Not to exceed \$5,000.00

### Resolution No. 3

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

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

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

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

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

### CONFERENCE/WORKSHOP REQUESTS

STAFF MEMBER	CONFERENCE	DATE	AMOUNT
Sakena Thompson Program Manager/FSCS	NJSACC Conference: New Jersey's Annual Conference on Afterschool Princeton, NJ	April 4, 2025	\$272.88 (registration, transportation) Grant Funded
Randa Saleh Teacher Coordinator/Adult School	Learning and the Brain: The Science of Learning New York, NY	April 25-27, 2025	\$1,484.23 (transportation, lodging, meals) Grant Funded for PD Only
June Gray Business Administrator	NJASBO Annual Conference Atlantic City, NJ	June 3-6, 2025	\$1,195.98 (registration, transportation, lodging, meals)
Katori Walton Comptroller	NJASBO Annual Conference Atlantic City, NJ	June 3-6, 2025	\$1,195.98 (registration, transportation, lodging, meals)
Melissa Espana Assistant Superintendent	Men of Color in Education Leadership Charlotte, NC	July 15-17, 2025	\$1,634.37 (registration, transportation, lodging, meals)

\*FOR RATIFICATION

**Total Number of Conferences: 5**  
**Total Cost: \$5,783.44**

### Resolution No. 4

WHEREAS, ratifying the addendum to add an additional one to one aide, additional mileage and additional days for the routes listed below needed providing transportation for a student out of Paterson from in district and out of district for student transportation service will support Priority 4, efficient and responsive operation Goal 1, increasing accountability for performance: and

WHEREAS, the Paterson Public School District has identified vendors adding additional one-to one aide, additional mileage and additional days for the routes listed below providing transportation for a student out of Paterson for the remainder of the 2024-2025 school year; and

BE IT RESOLVED, the Superintendent supports the Department of Transportation's recommendation in amending the number of days the route is granted to the lowest quote that was submitted for the transportation of special needs students; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the vendor has been notified that no goods or services will be provided to the District without first receiving a fully executed purchase order; and that the terms on the purchase will be honored completely; if the vendor does not agree with the terms on the purchase order, the vendor will not provide any goods or services to the District until such time a new purchase order is completed and delivered with terms the vendor will honor; and the vendor being awarded this contract, has complied with all Affirmative Action requirements.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, this resolution is to ratify an additional one-to-one aide, additional mileage and additional days for the routes listed below providing transportation for a student outside of Paterson for the remainder of the 2024-2025 school year. This shall take effect with the ratification of the Board of Education.

<u>Contractor</u>	<u>School</u>	<u>Route #</u>	<u>Additional Aide Cost/Mileage/Day Cost</u>	<u># of Days</u>	<u>Total Cost</u>
SEE ATTACHED LIST					
SPED ACCT#110002705146850000000000					<u>\$125,467.53</u>
REG-ED ACCT#110002705116850000000000					<u>\$ 66,673.50</u>
TOTAL					\$192,141.03

### Resolution No. 5

WHEREAS, approving the following quoted routes for student transportation service will support Priority 4, efficient and responsive operation Goal 1, increasing accountability for performance, and

WHEREAS, the Paterson Public School District has identified a need to provide transportation for the 2024-2025 school year;

BE IT RESOLVED, the Superintendent supports the Department of Transportation recommendation in awarding the route to the lowest quote submitted for the transportation; and

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

with terms the vendor will honor; and the vendor being awarded this contract, has complied with all Affirmative Action requirements.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, this resolution, to provide quoted transportation to various schools listed below that are in district and out of district students. This shall take effect for the 2024-2025 school year with the ratification of the Board of Education.

<u>Contractor</u>	<u>School</u>	<u>Route #</u>	<u>Per Diem Cost</u>	<u># of Days</u>	<u>Total Cost</u>
SEE ATTACHED LIST					
SPED ACCT#110002705146850000000000					\$62,248
REG-ED ACCT#1100027D5116850000000000					\$69,288
<b>TOTAL</b>					<b>\$133,536.00</b>

### Resolution No. 6

WHEREAS, the Paterson Public School District encourages open public bidding for goods and services; and

WHEREAS, the Paterson Public School District recognizes the need for obtaining the lowest responsible bid for goods and services; and

WHEREAS, approving the following routes for student transportation services will support Priority 4, efficient and responsive operation, Goal 3, Increase Accountability for Performance; and

WHEREAS, formal public bids were solicited for student transportation services for the 2024 2025 school year for special needs students and regular education students; and

WHEREAS, the solicitation was made by a public notice advertisement in the Herald News on Friday, March 7th, 2025. Sealed bids were opened and read aloud on Tuesday, March 18th, 2025, at 10:00 a.m. during a Zoom meeting. WHEREAS, the Department of Transportation as per attached bid analysis, recommends that the bid for student transportation services for the remainder of the 2024-2025 school year, using PPS Bid#565-25 be awarded to the lowest responsible and responsive bidder; and second and third bidders in the event that the lowest bidder cannot perform as stated in our bid specifications

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

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that this resolution to award contracts to the lowest responsible bidder to transport special- needs and regular education students to in-district and out-of-district schools is stipulated on the attached page(s). This shall take effect with the ratification of the Board of Education. The approximate cost for the PPS Bid#565-25 for the list below of contractors and routes is \$49,779.00 for the 2024-2025 school year.

<u>Contractor</u>	<u>School Name</u>	<u>Route #</u>	<u>Per Diem Cost</u>	<u># of Days</u>	<u>Total Cost</u>
Bright Future Trans.	Deron School of NJ	DERMON2	\$257.00	51	\$13,107.00

Blue Bird Trans.	Community Charter School, Rosa Parks H.S.	MCV41	\$140.00	48	\$ 6,720.00
Blue Bird Trans	School 6, Alonzo Moody	MCV46	\$130.00	48	\$ 6,240.00
Royal USA Trans.	Alexander Hamilton Academy	AHAS3	\$295.00	48	\$14,160.00
WR Trans.	Community Charter School, Passaic Arts & Science	MCV45	\$199.00	48	<u>\$ 9,552.00</u>
				<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$49,779.00</b>

**Resolution No. 7**

WHEREAS, approving the following quoted routes for student transportation service will support Priority 4, efficient and responsive operation Goal 1, increasing accountability for performance, and

WHEREAS, the Paterson Public School District has identified a need to provide transportation for the 2024-2025 school year;

BE IT RESOLVED, the Superintendent supports the Department of Transportation recommendation in awarding the route to the lowest quote submitted for the transportation; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the vendor has been notified that no goods or services will be provided to the District without first receiving a fully executed purchase order; and that the terms on the purchase will be honored completely; if the vendor does not agree with the terms on the purchase order, the vendor will not provide any goods or services to the District until such time a new purchase order is completed and delivered with terms the vendor will honor; and the vendor being awarded this contract, has complied with all Affirmative Action requirements.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, this resolution, to provide quoted transportation to various schools listed below that are in district and out of district students. This shall take effect for the 2024-2025 school year with the ratification of the Board of Education.

<u>Contractor</u>	<u>School</u>	<u>Route #</u>	<u>Per Diem Cost</u>	<u># of Days</u>	<u>Total Cost</u>
SEE ATTACHED LIST					
SPED ACCT#110002705146850000000000					\$14,659.00
REG-ED ACCT#110002705116850000					\$11,353.00
				<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$26,012.00</b>

**Resolution No. 8**

WHEREAS, approving the following quoted routes for student transportation service will support Priority 4, efficient and responsive operation Goal 1, increasing accountability for performance, and

WHEREAS, the Paterson Public School District has identified a need to provide transportation for the 2024-2025 school year;

BE IT RESOLVED, the Superintendent supports the Department of Transportation recommendation in awarding the route to the lowest quote submitted for the transportation; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the vendor has been notified that no goods or services will be provided to the District without first receiving a fully executed purchase order;

and that the terms on the purchase will be honored completely; if the vendor does not agree with the terms on the purchase order, the vendor will not provide any goods or services to the District until such time a new purchase order is completed and delivered with terms the vendor will honor; and the vendor being awarded this contract, has complied with all Affirmative Action requirements.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, this resolution, to provide quoted transportation to the routes listed below that are in district and out of district students. This shall take effect for the 2024-2025 school year with the ratification of the Board of Education.

<b>Contractor</b>	<b>School</b>	<b>Route #</b>	<b>Per Diem Cost</b>	<b># of Days</b>	<b>Total Cost</b>
A3 SCHOOL TRANS	NORTH HUDSON ACADEMY	NHAS4Q	\$135	25	\$3,375.00
GIGI TRANS	JOSPEPH A TUAB & SCHOOL 10	JATS10Q	\$219	24	\$5,256.00
SAFEGUARD	BERGEN CENTER FOR CHILD DEV	BCDDS2Q	\$205	25	\$5,125.00
STELLAR	BCSS VENTURE	VENS2Q	\$209	23	\$4,807.00
<b>TOTAL</b>					<b>\$18,563.00</b>

**Resolution No. 9 was pulled.**

### **Resolution No. 10**

WHEREAS, the DECA students at Rosa Parks School of Fine and Performing Arts are competing at the DECA International Career Development Conference in Orlando, Florida at the Orange County Convention Center, 9800 International Drive, 32819.

WHEREAS, during the six-night, five-day trip from April 25, 2025 to April 30, 2025, RPHS DECA will participate and compete in competitive events as one strategy used in assisting students to develop the competencies needed to prepare and advance in marketing, management, and entrepreneurship within the context of fine and performing arts careers. The two students that qualified to attend did so by having won competitive events at the state level as well as scholarships from NJ DECA.

The NJ DECA competitive events directly correlate with Paterson Public Schools Goal area #1 which creates high quality opportunities and real-world experiences for our students. In addition, the competitive events program and leadership workshops are congruent with sound educational practices and address cross content workplace readiness skill. They support

Standard 9.4 Career and Technical Education (GTE) Marketing Career Cluster which can fluidly transfer important skills sets that can assist students of the fine and performing arts to consider careers outside of the traditional thespian or fine and performing arts constructs. Furthermore, they are also aligned with the District's Strategic Plan and Teaching and Learning which provides students the opportunities to have real world experiences via independent studies and exposure to a variety of post-secondary institutions.

WHEREAS the trip will include 2 students and 2 teachers. It is being organized by the RPHS DECA Chapter which is newly formed (2nd Year) and currently the only high school of fine and performing arts with a chapter of DECA in the state of New Jersey, with lodging planning guidelines being provided by New Jersey State DECA

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Paterson Public School District approves this educational opportunity for the DECA students of Rosa Parks School of Fine and Performing Arts.

### **Resolution No. 11**

WHEREAS, the Board of Education recognizes that the presentation of a school calendar is essential to orderly planning and to the efficient operations of the district; and

WHEREAS, the annual school calendar for Board of Education consideration in collaboration with union associations was approved on April 24, 2024; and

WHEREAS, the 2024-2025 School Calendar satisfies the requirement for staff employed on a ten-month basis, and a minimum 180 days for student contact, and in the event the district is closed due to inclement weather or other emergencies, days may be added extending the school year beyond the last day of school noted in this calendar, and

WHEREAS, the district will implement a delayed opening schedule when either weather or other emergent conditions are imminent, which will allow for the timely and safe arrival of students and staff and provide for additional time to reconsider full closure based on developing weather conditions, and

WHEREAS, due to inclement weather thus far, there has been one (1) districtwide school closure day (February 2025), that requires the district to make up, and due to a fire at School No. 26, there is a total of three (3) additional days that the school must make up, and

WHEREAS, the administration, in collaboration with the union groups, has recommended extending the school year in June to make up the districtwide closure day (June 23, 2025 for students, June 24, 2025 for teachers) as a make-up day, and utilizing three (3) Saturdays as make up days for School No. 26 (April 26, May 3, May 10, 2025), with a half day schedule, now

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education approves the implementation of the revised 2024-2025 School Calendar.

### **Resolution No. 12**

WHEREAS, on May 17, 2024, a broadcast was released from the NJ Department of Education (NJDOE), see attached, with guidance on the late liquidation for ARP ESSER funds. While both the NJDOE and the United State Department of Education (USE) encourage districts to spend and liquidate these funds with urgency, the USED acknowledges that some grantees may require flexibility liquidating the remaining ARP ESSER funds under the ARP act that are properly obligated by the September 30, 2024, deadline; and

WHEREAS, accordingly the NJDOE is offering a liquidation extension request process for immediate use by districts. The approval process required the district to file the late liquidation application in the EWEG system. All EWEG applications were submitted to NJDOE by no later than June 28, 2024; and

WHEREAS, NJDOE submitted all late liquidation requests to USED on behalf of districts approved to request late liquidation. The NJDOE approved Paterson Public Schools for late liquidation; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education accepts the late liquidation of ARP ESSER funds in the amount of \$10,959,555 and the request to drawdown on the funds.

**It was moved by Comm. Nieves, seconded by Comm. Rosado that Resolution Nos. 1 through 12 be adopted.**

Comm. Simmons: I have a question on Resolution No. 12. Is this money we're receiving or is this just an application?

Comm. Ramirez: Do we have someone from the BA's office that can answer that question?

Mr. Lance Gaines: This is the late liquidation from the ESSER funds. This is just an application for us to be able to draw down.

**On roll call all members voted in the affirmative, except Comm. Freeman who voted no and Comm. Simmons who voted no on 1-11 and yes on 12. The motion carried.**

### **Paterson Board of Education Standing Abstentions**

#### Commissioner Valerie Freeman

- Self
- Family
- Paterson Cares, Inc.
- Paterson Community Health Center

#### Commissioner Eddie Gonzalez

- Self
- Family
- New Jersey Community Development Corporation (NJCDC)
- Community Charter School of Paterson

#### Commissioner Della McCall

- Self
- City of Paterson

#### Commissioner Hector L. Nieves, Jr.

- Self
- City of Paterson

#### Commissioner Joel D. Ramirez

- Self
- City of Paterson
- Passaic County Community College
- State of New Jersey

#### Commissioner Mohammed H. Rashid

- Self
- City of Paterson

Commissioner Kenneth Rosado

- Self
- City Housing Authority
- City of Paterson
- Paterson Restoration Corp.

Commissioner Kenneth L. Simmons

- Self
- Family

Commissioner Corey L. Teague

- Self
- Paterson Police Department
- Paterson Policing

**GENERAL BUSINESS**

**Items Requiring a Vote**

***Instruction and Program***

Comm. Ramirez: Thank you, Mr. President. Instruction and program met on the first at 5:32. I presided over the meeting and I had Comm. Gonzalez and myself present. It was a very robust discussion over all items that will be presented for a vote at the regular meeting. The minutes have been uploaded to the drive. They're pretty detailed item by item. We discussed things like some of the ESSER issues with the funding and then some program cuts for the summer. We are going to maintain programming that is essential for the students during the day and after-school programs throughout the year. We are hoping for no additional cuts, but we are preparing in case these things happen. The meeting was adjourned at 5:59 p.m. The minutes have been uploaded to the drive. If anyone has any questions, please feel free to reach out to me or the Superintendent. Thank you.

***Operations***

Comm. Nieves: Operations was held on March 26. Myself, along with Mr. Gonzalez, Mr. Rashid and Mr. Ramirez were present. We spoke about general security. Also, we talked about transportation and Hinchcliffe Stadium in regards to committee meetings.

Comm. Teague: I was looking at Quality Behavioral Solutions. What exactly does that entail? It talks about providing training for employees. What personnel are they referring to when they're saying training? This is O-26. \$3,196 is going to a company called Quality Behavioral Solutions to train. I'm just trying to figure out who's actually going to be doing the training, who is being trained, and what they're doing this for.

Ms. Joanna Tsimpedes: This is done on behalf of the Department of Special Education. We have trainers within the district, and we have postings out for any staff member who's interested to help. It's open to the district. This is our second year of providing training. We do multiple sessions of them so that we have more staff trained in the city to work with our students who may need some restraints and teaching teachers how to be properly trained in providing this level of training.

Comm. Teague: Does this fall under ABA services?

Ms. Tsimpedes: No. This is separate and open to not just SPED teachers.

Comm. Teague: So it's outside the scope of special education?

Ms. Tsimpedes: Yes.

### ***Fiscal Management***

Comm. Gonzalez: The fiscal committee met on March 25 at 5:30. The facilitator was Ms. Gray, our School Business Administrator. In attendance was myself, Comm. Rosado, Comm. Ramirez and Comm. Nieves. The items on the resolutions to be voted on are in your packet. The minutes are presented to you presently and they were also shared on the drive. We discussed a few things, resolutions to do an RFP for our broker for our health insurance. We talked about the Church Street property in downtown Paterson. We talked about the budget next steps, which some of you already have because you have already seen the presentation. The meeting ended at 6:52 p.m. Are there any questions?

### ***Personnel***

Comm. Ramirez: Personnel met on April 1 at 4:30 p.m. Members present were myself presiding, Comm. Gonzalez, Comm. Nieves and Comm. Rosado. The Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent Rojas were also present. We discussed the Superintendent's personnel recommendations, all of the vacancies, which we are now down to only 65, and the items that are presented for the regular meeting. All of the minutes have been uploaded into the drive. The meeting concluded at 5:00 p.m.

### ***Governance***

Comm. Gonzalez: There was no governance meeting this past couple weeks.

### **Committee Report**

#### ***Facilities***

Comm. Nieves: Facilities met on March 18 and 26. We discussed updating the agreement in regards to rentals of our facilities. We spoke about Church Street properties, repairs to School No. 10, the Sage building for restoration for rooms B-1 and B-3, and also the cosmetology classroom update.

#### ***Family & Community Engagement***

Comm. Gonzalez: We had a robust meeting on March 18 with many district staff under Family and Community Engagement. Present was myself, Comm. Rashid and Comm. Nieves. We spoke about an overview of parent coordinators and Full-Service Community Schools. We talked about PTO leadership and the relationship between the Board administration and our PTOs. Ms. Arrick gave a very detailed report as to the structure of the PTO leadership, members involved, their goals and things of that nature. That was done on March 18. Are there any questions?

Comm. Freeman: What exactly is happening with Church Street?

Comm. Nieves: We discussed possibly looking to sell buildings or possibly entering into a partnership with the county.

Comm. Freeman: What would the partnership consist of?

Comm. Ramirez: Thank you for the question, Comm. Freeman. The county has proposed a partnership where they would have a youth bed family shelter and also a homeless hub, or assistance hub. They would provide medical services, mental health services, youth beds and family sheltering for individuals facing displacement. They're looking to partner up with the district where they will repair the building and offer services for our students. If I'm not mistaken, we have currently about 500 students who are experiencing some type of homelessness or displacement. We're exploring that partnership or that intergovernmental agreement.

Comm. Simmons: How does that work? I'm not sure that we can collect any rents. Would we just be giving that space away?

Comm. Ramirez: The Superintendent and her team are still working out the details of what the proposal is from the county. Nothing has been finalized.

Comm. Gonzalez: Just for clarity, and the Superintendent will speak on that, it's just looking at options of what we can do with the property, who may be interested and what would be best for the district overall. Nothing has been discussed in great detail. The county approached the school district with an idea and it's just being entertained as to the potential partnerships that we can get into. Nothing has been said. Again, it's just a proposal that we're engaged with them, just to have these very high-level discussions to see what it is that they're interested in. That doesn't mean that we're committing to anything at all at this time.

Comm. Simmons: I know in the past we have looked at buildings where there are current tenants and there were issues with this entity collecting rents or being a landlord.

Dr. Newell: Agreed. It is proposed and we're looking at everything. We've also been working with one of the partners from SSW, who has reviewed the communication that has come through so far.

### ***Policy***

Comm. Gonzalez: Policy hasn't met.

### ***Technology***

Comm. Rashid: Technology will schedule a meeting for April 8 before our meeting.

Comm. Gonzalez: What we have here is the minutes that were provided. Mr. Saleh introduced 2 resolutions at the time that included Solar Winds and Classlink to upgrade our technology equipment.

### **OTHER BUSINESS**

**It was moved by Comm. Rosado, seconded by Comm. Rashid that the Board goes into Executive Session to discuss issues that warrant confidentiality, as consistent with NJSA 10:4-12 for matters of Attorney/Client Privilege, Contracts, Legal, Litigation, Negotiations, Personnel and Student Matters. The minutes will be made available to the public upon request, when the confidentiality of the**

**subject is no longer warranted. On roll call all members voted in the affirmative, except Comm. Freeman, Comm. Simmons and Comm. Teague who voted no. The motion carried.**

The Board went into executive session at 10:14 p.m.

**It was moved by Comm. Nieves, seconded by Comm. McCall that the Board reconvenes the meeting. On roll call all members voted in the affirmative. The motion carried.**

The Board reconvened the meeting at 10:25 p.m.

Comm. Gonzalez: We're going to put a motion on the floor for what was discussed in governance committee on March 11, 2025. Present was Comm. McCall, Comm. Nieves, Comm. Ramirez and myself. We discussed our general counsel and we had put out an RFQ for bids for other legal firms to put in to provide services for the school district. There's a request to make that motion to suggest a new counsel.

WHEREAS, the Board of Education went out for requests for qualifications, which is an RFQ for legal services; and

WHEREAS, it is recommended that the contract awarded for legal services, General Counsel, be awarded to Buglione, Hutton, and DeYoe; and

WHEREAS, all bills shall be forwarded to the Superintendent of Schools or designee for review and recommendations prior to processing of payment; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education, approves retaining Buglione, Hutton, and DeYoe, LLC as General Counsel for all legal services for the 2025-26 school year, and as special counsel effective immediately for the transition period for a total amount not to exceed \$450,000.

**It was moved by Comm. Ramirez, seconded by Comm. Nieves that the above mentioned resolution be adopted.**

Comm. Simmons: Two things. You're awarding a contract from an RFQ and didn't go out for RFP? Madam Superintendent, is this your decision?

Dr. Newell: This is the Board. I have not been involved.

Comm. Simmons: So we should be voting on your recommendation. This is not the Board's recommendation.

Comm. Gonzalez: It's professional services for the Board. It's not professional services for the Superintendent.

Comm. Simmons: No. It's general counsel for the district.

Comm. Gonzalez: For the Board.

Comm. Simmons: It's not. It's for the district. General counsel services are for the district.

Comm. Gonzalez: General counsel is for the Board. Legal services are additional firms that have submitted. They were numerous and they were all being put on a pool so that everyone would have access to any of our requests for legal services. But for the general counsel, the governance committee has recommended this.

Comm. Freeman: On what grounds? Are there packets? Do you have information and packets on the other law firms? Do you have those packets?

Comm. Gonzalez: Yes. Packets were received. By law, they had a deadline. I believe it was the fifth. Then they were opened and reviewed. Thereafter, we scheduled the governance committee to discuss it and it was recommended through the governance committee.

Comm. Freeman: Where are the packets? Are we not privy to these packets?

Comm. Simmons: You basically made a decision for the entire Board.

Comm. Gonzalez: No.

Comm. McCall: Wait a minute. I want to say something here because I was in that meeting, and I said to our committee that this should go to the entire Board. Before a resolution was made, we should have made sure that every Board member was made aware of it so that they too can have their input. This is not, to me, the proper way that this should be done. I think that when you're talking about removing counsel that represents this Board of Education and the district, this has to be transparent. This has to be open. This has to be a discussion. This has to also be something that needs to be said. I said this in the meeting that this had to be brought before the entire Board. We cannot continue to work like this, guys. We have to work together.

Comm. Freeman: Why are you cutting her off, Eddie?

Comm. McCall: No. I'm going to say what I have to say because this has to be done right. I'm up for changes. Do I agree with this change? No, I don't, but I will say this is a Board decision. This is not a committee decision. The committee is so that you can prepare for the Board, so that we'll all be abreast to it. You do the legwork, and we take it from there. Every Board member should have received a packet from every person that was considered. They should have some input to who they want to be representing the Board as a body. I said that at the meeting.

Comm. Gonzalez: This is why we are here. We had an executive session scheduled in the last governance committee. On that agenda was for us to discuss this in this executive session, which we went in and came right back out and didn't have it. We can have that discussion, but the intent was to share that information. The documents are public. They're not privy just to the committee or anything. Once it was opened, it became public. Based on the last report I gave on governance, it was said that it's to be discussed in executive session, which we attempted to do. Most of the board didn't want to go further with the discussion so we came back out and it's going to be a motion that we have on the floor right now. It was seconded. We can discuss it.

Comm. Simmons: Hold on. Stop. How are we awarding a contract from a Request for Qualifications, and not a Request for Proposals?

Comm. Gonzalez: What was presented was a Request for Qualifications for the pool of candidates.

Comm. Simmons: But you cannot award a contract from a RFQ.

Comm. Gonzalez: We're not doing an RFQ for the legal services. This is an RFP for general counsel.

Comm. Simmons: When did we approve an RFP for general counsel? When did we vote on that?

Comm. Gonzalez: From my understanding, that has been done in the past. When you and others were in leadership you did the same process. We followed the guidance from the district on how we should go about this.

Comm. Simmons: We still did an RFP to award the contract.

Comm. Freeman: I think we should just table this whole situation.

Comm. Gonzalez: We just followed the same procedures when you and others were President. We're going based on recommendations that were given to us.

Comm. Simmons: You're about to award a contract that has not gone out to RFP.

Comm. Freeman: It's not going to work. It's not going to go down like that.

Comm. Simmons: That's what you're trying to do. You put a motion on the floor to award a contract.

Comm. Gonzalez: Correct.

Comm. Simmons: We have not approved the motion to go out to RFP for general counsel services and we have not received bids or proposals.

Comm. Gonzalez: They're right here in front of me.

Comm. Simmons: That's for the RFQ.

Comm. Gonzalez: You're not listening. There are two separate things. There was an RFP for general counsel.

Comm. Simmons: When did we take that vote? When did the Board approve going out to RFP for general counsel?

Comm. Gonzalez: I don't know that we had to, based on prior knowledge.

Comm. McCall: We have to.

Comm. Gonzalez: Can you clarify that for us?

Comm. Simmons: This is what you did. We talked about an RFQ. You then went behind the Board's back and called it an RFP.

Comm. Gonzalez: Let's get clarification.

Comm. Freeman: We're talking about what you did. We need to let them know what you did and then we will address it.

Comm. Gonzalez: Maybe the terminology might be wrong. Let's get clarification.

Comm. Simmons: No. You knew the terminology was right because I brought it up in that very meeting.

Comm. Gonzalez: You weren't in that meeting.

Comm. Simmons: I brought up RFQ and RFP when you put it on the floor the first time.

Comm. Gonzalez: No. I think this was a meeting that you were the only one that was not present. There were 8 members present and you weren't there.

Comm. Simmons: I brought it up on the floor when you first talked about the RFQ.

Comm. Gonzalez: Can we get clarity as to the process and what was done in the past?

Ms. Williams: For legal services you don't need...

Comm. Simmons: I know what you don't have to do.

Ms. Williams: You don't have to go out for RFP or RFQ for legal services.

Comm. Simmons: I know what you don't have to do.

Comm. Gonzalez: Are we within our right based on what we did?

Comm. Simmons: You're not within your right to make the decision for the entire Board.

Comm. Gonzalez: That's why we're here to vote. You can vote it up or down. I'm not saying that we're going anywhere. This is what the process is.

Comm. Freeman: Is this Dr. Newell's recommendation? Is this your recommendation, Dr. Newell?

Comm. Ramirez: Mr. President, there's a motion and a second on the floor.

Comm. Simmons: And we're in discussion.

Comm. Freeman: Dr. Newell, is this your recommendation?

Dr. Newell: This was done at the Board level.

Comm. Freeman: Dr. Newell, I need a clear answer. Is this your recommendation that we go out for new legal counsel?

Dr. Newell: This was the Board's decision. That is what I've maintained.

Comm. McCall: That is not the Board's decision. It is the committee's decision.

Comm. Freeman: It's the committee's decision, not the full Board. You're not going to force me to vote on whether we go with a new legal counsel at this dais today. I have

not seen anything from any other. We need to be a committee of the whole. I make a motion for a committee of the whole. We're not voting. This meeting will be adjourned, and we will not be voting on this tonight. I don't care about a motion on the floor. We will not be voting on this tonight. If you don't want to discuss this with the full Board, there will be no vote.

Comm. Gonzalez: We attempted to and you chose not to.

Comm. Freeman: Because it needs to be done in the public. You give us all the information ahead of time. Don't put me in an executive session and expect me to come out here and vote for something that I haven't seen.

Comm. Gonzalez: The documents are public and it was discussed at the last meeting. Lower your voice.

Comm. Freeman: You five individuals, do not, and I repeat, do not run this Board. If you cannot bring it to the full Board, then it's not going to work. Everybody is one vote. Dr. Newell, is this your recommendation?

Comm. Gonzalez: There was an attempt to do it in public session, which was discussed at our last Board meeting. It's on the record. It was on the record that we would discuss it in executive session, and it did not happen.

Comm. Freeman: Do you think it's okay that you do that to us? Do you think, President of the United States Gonzalez, that you do this to me? Do you think it's fair? Answer the question. Do you think it's fair?

Comm. Gonzalez: Clarity was given.

Comm. Freeman: Do you think it's fair? Do you think it's fair? Do you think it's fair?

Comm. Gonzalez: You can vote it up or you can vote it down. I think it's fair that we went to executive session to discuss this.

Comm. Freeman: No. Do you think it's fair?

Comm. Gonzalez: Don't yell at me.

Comm. Freeman: I can say what I want to.

Comm. Gonzalez: You can say it. You can't yell at me.

Comm. Freeman: I can say what I want to say to you and I'm going to say it how I want to say it. You stood on the steps of City Hall, and you said you wanted to dominate this Board. And guess what? The community allowed you to do it. But it's no way in hell if you think for one second that I'm going to allow you to dictate how I vote, when I vote, and what you give me to see. Do you understand me? You need to understand it. And the four of you that's with him, you need to be checked too.

Comm. Simmons: Be careful.

Comm. Freeman: There's no be careful.

Comm. Simmons: Not you. In light of the fact that this is not the Superintendent's recommendation and she did put this on the agenda in January and it was pulled off, I will be filing ethics charges.

Comm. Gonzalez: That's fine. Thank you so much.

Comm. Teague: That's serious business.

Comm. Gonzalez: Thank you so much.

Comm. Freeman: It was pulled at the reorganization meeting and it was never put back on the agenda. It was never put back on the agenda. You are not going to get roll call. You're not going to get a cooperative meeting. I'm telling you right now. I don't care. I don't care what nobody says. I'm not shutting up. It will not be business as usual. It will not be business as usual. I will keep talking. As long as it's my turn, I will keep talking. Somebody is going to get tired. I've been here long enough. I'm going to keep talking. I'm not finished talking. I'm not finished talking. I'm not finished talking.

Comm. McCall: Do not continue with the roll call, Eddie. This is wrong.

Comm. Teague: Just so you all are clear, this vote essentially gets rid of Khalifah tonight.

Comm. Freeman: They want to get rid of Khalifah Shabazz, our legal counsel.

Comm. Teague: That's what that vote is about.

Comm. Freeman: For what? Why?

Comm. Teague: Probably for informing me that I had the right to rescind the middle school model.

Comm. McCall: I don't know who all the people are and I went to the meeting.

Comm. Freeman: Why do you want to get rid of Ms. Shabazz' law firm?

Comm. Teague: Now they want to get rid of her because she told me the truth.

Comm. Freeman: Why do you want to get rid of Ms. Shabazz' law firm? What did she do that she wasn't asked to do? What are your reasons for wanting to get rid of her? What are your reasons for wanting to get rid of Khalifah Shabazz and her law firm?

Comm. Teague: Because she told me the truth.

**On roll call all members voted as follows:**

Comm. Freeman: What is your reasoning for this? What are your reasons for wanting to get rid of Ms. Shabazz? What is your reasoning? What is your reasoning? What is your reasoning? I want to know the reasoning.

Comm. Teague: They want to get rid of Khalifah.

Comm. Nieves: Yes.

Comm. Ramirez: Yes.

Comm. Rashid: Yes.

Comm. Rosado: Yes.

Comm. Simmons: No.

Comm. Teague: Hell no.

Comm. Freeman: Dr. Newell, I'm disappointed in you. I'm disappointed in you. When they come for you, I hope you got somebody to fight for you. That's it.

Comm. McCall: My vote is no.

Comm. Gonzalez: Yes.

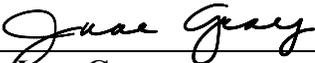
**The motion carried.**

Comm. Freeman: You better know, when they come to get rid of you, do you think you got these five votes? Wait till you see. Wait till you see what they do to you.

Comm. McCall: You guys know this is so unethical what we're doing right now. This is not right.

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

The meeting was adjourned at 10:45 p.m.

  
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**Ms. June Gray**  
**Business Administrator**