



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Paterson Public Schools Completes Filling Leadership Roles Amidst School Reorganization

The Paterson Public Schools district is welcoming a new Deputy Superintendent to its administration starting in early December. Rodney Henderson, Ed.D. is the latest addition to the Cabinet of Superintendent Laurie W. Newell. In addition, there are two new assistant superintendents that have been added. Nahed Badawy started in October and Melissa España just this month. The addition of the two new assistant superintendents are part of Superintendent Newell's reorganization plan which is underway. In it, schools will be divided into new units under the assistant superintendents to facilitate better alignment, communications, and operations between school and district administrators.

Coming from Baltimore City Schools, Dr. Henderson served as the Executive Director of Instructional Leadership for two years. Before his assignment in Baltimore, he spent nearly thirty years in the Prince George's County Public Schools district, where he held positions as a school principal and leadership coach. His other professional experience includes being an adjunct professor at Morgan State and Howard universities from 2019-2021. Dr. Henderson received his Doctorate in Educational Leadership And Policy Studies from Howard University. He was the finalist of a committee that handled the search for the position and was chosen on his experience and track record in fostering improvements within his previous districts. "I was looking for a candidate with proven results in moving achievement levels," said Superintendent Newell.

Assistant Superintendent Nahed Badawy will be supervising the elementary schools. She was promoted from within the District, serving as the principal of the Dr. Hani Awadallah School from 2019 to 2023. She has been with the District since 2009, entering as a Special Education teacher, but has over twenty years of teaching experience. She earned her Masters in Educational Leadership from Montclair State University. Badawy is also the first Arab-American assistant superintendent of the District; Paterson has the second largest Arab-American population in the nation. "It is an honor to continue to serve and now help lead the District," said Assistant Superintendent Badawy. "I feel excited about the opportunity to contribute to its overall success, as well as to enhance teaching and learning. I believe in creating a culture of belonging and fostering districtwide approaches to enhance student achievement, wellness, and equity. I am enthusiastic about working collaboratively with the Paterson community to achieve our common goals and foster a positive learning environment for all."

Assistant Superintendent Melissa España will be supervising the high schools of the District. She has over twenty years of experience in education. She came from Perth Amboy Public Schools where she held positions as principal and director since 2015. Previously, España started her career in the Elizabeth school district as a teacher, then as a vice-principal, before briefly serving in East Orange. She currently holds a Masters in Instruction and Curriculum from Kean University, but is expected to complete her Doctorate next year. Assistant Superintendent España said of coming to Paterson, "I am thrilled to embrace this opportunity. I always keep with me the belief that with every new challenge comes the chance to soar higher. I welcome this new chapter of growth and the endless possibilities to show the greatness of Paterson."

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“When I applied for Superintendent of Schools, it was with a belief that the students of Paterson Public Schools have great potential to realize,” said Superintendent Newell. “Upon accepting the responsibilities of leading the District, I knew that the challenges ahead would require the right people in place to best serve our children’s growth. I have spent my first few months reviewing the organizational and personnel needs of the District. With the addition of these seasoned professionals to the District’s leadership team, we can continue to make greater gains in improving the education of Paterson’s children.”