

For Immediate Release

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Paterson Board of Education Appoints New Leadership for 2026

Commissioner Joel D. Ramírez and Commissioner Della McCall assume roles of Board President and Board Vice President, respectively

Paterson, NJ (January 8, 2026) – The Paterson Public Schools Board of Education is pleased to announce the appointment of Commissioner Joel D. Ramírez as President of the Board of Education and Commissioner Della McCall as Vice President of the Board following its annual Organization Meeting on January 7, 2026. Commissioner Ramírez succeeds former President Eddie Gonzalez, who departs after serving as Board President in 2025. In addition to the leadership appointments, the Board welcomed newly-elected Commissioner Alex Mendez Jr., who will serve a three-year term.

“We are grateful to everyone who participated in our first Board meeting of the new year, as we organized for the year ahead and reaffirmed our shared commitment to serving the students and families of our community,” said Superintendent of Schools Dr. Laurie W. Newell. “Congratulations to the newly elected and returning commissioners. I am looking forward to working with this Board as we continue to move this district forward and deliver a learning experience that the students of Paterson deserve.”

Vice President McCall was sworn in by New Jersey Governor-Elect Mikie Sherrill, returning Commissioner Valerie Freeman was sworn in by Dennis Hickerson-Breedon, Esq., and Commissioner Mendez Jr. was sworn in by Assemblyman-Elect Kenyatta K. Stewart, Esq. The swearing-in ceremony took place at International High School in Paterson, New Jersey.

“I thank my colleagues for placing their trust in Vice President McCall and I to lead this Board,” said President Ramírez. “We have made meaningful progress under the leadership of our Superintendent through a shared focus on strong academic decision-making, and we will continue that work.”

Paterson Public Schools looks forward to another productive and collaborative year under the Board’s new leadership. The Board of Education expresses profound gratitude to Superintendent Dr. Laurie W. Newell for her steadfast commitment to advancing educational excellence and championing student success throughout the district.

“I want to thank my fellow board members for electing me to this position,” said Vice President McCall. “It is time now for us to work in the best interests of our children.”

For more information visit our website at www.paterson.k12.nj.us

About Paterson Public Schools

Paterson Public Schools serves over 22,000 students from pre-K to 12th grade in New Jersey's third-largest city. About 71% of the student population is Hispanic, 16% are Black, 6% are Asian, and 5.0% are Caucasian. Recognizing its proud traditions, diverse community, and strong partnerships, the mission of Paterson Public Schools is to provide an academically rigorous, safe, and nurturing educational environment that meets the social, emotional, and academic needs of all students. The district is committed to preparing students for post-secondary education and careers. Despite the Paterson community being classified as low-income, many of its students achieve high academic success. A growing number of elementary school students are reading at or above grade level, and more high school students are earning college credits through Advanced Placement exams and enrolling in college-level courses before graduation. Paterson Public Schools is distinguished as one of only 17 school districts in New Jersey to offer the competitive International Baccalaureate program and is among just four districts with a P-TECH high school. In collaboration with IBM and Passaic County Community College, the P-TECH program allows students to graduate with an associate degree in applied science and valuable tech sector experience. For more information, visit www.paterson.k12.nj.us

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