

New Jersey Department of Education
Comprehensive Accountability Office for State Supervised School Districts

Transition Plan for the Return of Local Control to Paterson Public Schools

Comprehensive Accountability Office Report—October 2019 Report

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DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



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SUMMARY

This report is the first of three reports over a 24-month period of the Comprehensive Accountability Office (CAO) concerning the final phase of the transition of the Paterson Public Schools (PPS) from being a state supervised school district to full local control. It reports on the district's progress in meeting metrics described in an "Accountability Scorecard that is part of the Transition Plan to local control. The CAO finds that the PPS is on its way to achieving "substantially implemented" to "fully implemented" scores on most of the required metrics, but still has several "partially implemented" metrics that require improvement.

BACKGROUND

After more than nearly two decades under full supervision by the State Department of Education, Paterson Public Schools (PPS) continued its migration to full local control with the New Jersey State Board of Education's approval of a transition plan that took effect on September 6, 2018. The return of full local control, however, is predicated upon the district successfully meeting requirements of the Transition Plan (Plan).

The Plan "is predicated on optimism that progress will continue in the future." Since 1991, the District has demonstrated academic progress and improvements across the five areas measured by the New Jersey Quality Single Accountability Continuum (NJQSAC) evaluation system. This has led to progress in all of the NJQSAC areas, more specifically in the areas of Operations, Fiscal Management, and Personnel; all of which were returned to local control in 2014 and 2016 respectively. However, it also acknowledges that focus is heavily emphasized in the areas of Governance and Instruction & Program, each returned by the NJSBOE on May 2, 2018 subject to the completion of this Plan. The plan created an "Accountability Scorecard" to measure the district's success in implementing these improvements.

The Plan notes that over the last few years the District has seen significant success in achieving its goals and demonstrating that progress is sustainable. At the end of the long process, the Plan requires the Department to continue its monitoring to ensure the plan is successfully implemented and is sustainable. The Plan is scheduled to expire on September 6, 2020, but the State Board of Education must find that PPS has satisfied all components of the Plan before the transition to local control is complete.

To support the transition effort, the state has appointed three "Highly Skilled Professionals" (HSPs) to assist in the implementation of the plan. The State has appointed a Technical HSP (Governance), an Instruction & Program (I&P) HSP, and a Special Education (SPED) HSP. In addition, the State has placed a school business administration budget manager in the District to assist the School Business Administrator to oversee District finances.

A final element of support is the State's "Comprehensive Accountability Office" role in monitoring the Accountability Scorecard. Taken together, these elements, working in concert with the District and its Board of Education and the board-appointed Superintendent are expected to lead the way to continued success for the students of Paterson.

THE COMPREHENSIVE ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE

The Plan called for the State and the District to work with its previously established Comprehensive Accountability Office (CAO) that has “the capacity to collect, analyze, and publish data regarding the ongoing operations and performance of school districts and boards recently exited from State intervention and returned to local control.” The PPS is the second district the CAO is tasked to support (Newark Public Schools was the first one).

In 2018 the Commissioner of Education, who oversees the work of the CAO, engaged the Bloustein Local Government Research Center, a unit of the Rutgers University Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy to serve as the CAO under a contract with the Department. Bloustein Local is composed of individuals with deep experience in New Jersey state and local government activities, along with an understanding of public school administration that enables them to perform this task. The Commissioner has expressed full confidence in the capacity of Bloustein Local to fulfill the unique position of the CAOs¹.

The CAO is charged with gathering and analyzing data from the District and State (supported by the HSPs) to monitor progress and compliance with the metrics established in the Plan’s Accountability Scorecard “to determine if the expectations for sustained progress and continual improvement continue to be met.”

Specifically, the CAO is responsible to:

1. Compile relevant data and information to establish the annual status of the District compared to the Scorecard metrics and providing information necessary to assess annual progress on the Plan.
2. Publish and present the data to the Department and to the public in a credible, digestible, and actionable way, such as through the development of an easy to understand dashboard of District performance that will be publicly available.

The CAO is to present observations and findings based on evidence, but not to express value interpretations concerning Scorecard compliance. Under the Plan, the CAO report findings (along with other inputs), if warranted, allows the Department to establish interventions to address concerns or deficiencies.

This report is the first of two required annual reports under the Plan. The CAO is also required to create a website that contains this report and samples of the evidence it relied upon to reach its conclusions. The CAO website is found at: <http://go.rutgers.edu/NJSDScorecard>. This report, a web “dashboard” version of it, including links to documentary evidence is found at that site.

THE SCORECARD AND ITS EVALUATION

The Accountability Scorecard is the core of the CAO’s role. This table represents the expectations contained in the Transition Report on which the CAO conducts its efforts. Specifically, it is “to track and measure the District’s progress toward implementing this transition plan, and a timetable for activities relating to and leading to the withdrawal of State intervention, which identifies and sequences the benchmarks laid out throughout this Plan in the appropriate sections.”

¹ The biography of the CAO’s Principal Investigators, Marc Pfeiffer and Leila Sadeghi are included as an Appendix to the report.

The Scorecard tracks the Plan through five sections:

- Part 1 – Fundamental Considerations
- Part 2 – Governance
- Part 3 – Instruction and Program
- Part 4 – Fiscal Management
- Part 5 - Personnel

The Scorecard covers most, but not all the requirements in the Plan. It includes specific metrics and mechanisms for measurement that are aligned with the Plan. The work of the CAO is built on top of it. The Plan requires the CAO to assess compliance with the metrics through its measurement standards. The CAO's assessment is to be accompanied by documentation that supports its observations.

The Plan notes that it is not only the Scorecard, but that the Plan itself should be "seen as a complimentary process to the QSAC²." The District filed for "equivalency" of Instruction and Program Indicators during the 2016-2017 school year and approval was given by the Department. While it took place after the initial one year period this report covers, in November of 2019, the District filed for "equivalency" of Instruction and Program Indicators for the 2018-2019 school year.

The Plan calls for each metric to be evaluated on the following scale:

- 1 - Not Implemented: There is no significant evidence that the standard is implemented.
- 2 - Partially Implemented: A partially implemented standard is being met in only a limited way.
- 3- Substantially Meeting: Most elements of the metric are being met and are sustainable.
- 4 - Fully Implemented: All elements of the standard are substantially implemented, are sustainable, and have a process for ongoing evaluation.

For metrics rated less than 3, the CAO is obligated to provide an explanation of the District's progress and gaps. These explanations are noted in *italics* in the report.

Given the timing of this report and the expected phase-in of various plan elements, the CAO has added to the list a Not Applicable (NA) category, indicating that the metric cannot be measured at this time, but is expected to be measurable for subsequent reports.

The full Scorecard with the evaluation results as of this time is provided as Table 1.

CAO REVIEW AND OBSERVATIONS

The Plan requires the CAO report to "score" the District's efforts toward maintaining "substantial and sustained" progress toward meeting the expectations of the Plan. In its agreement with the Department, the work of the CAO does not include any interpretation or analysis of the data (i.e., could something have been done differently, or evaluating the quality of a presentation). It further reflects that the CAO "must remain neutral and not engage in interpretation, other than its role to ensure, to the extent reasonably possible, the reliability of the data."

² QSAC, the "Quality Single Accountability Continuum" is the N.J. Department of Education's monitoring and district self-evaluation system for public school districts. www.state.nj.us/education/genfo/qsac/

While the Plan's expectation of the CAO to not interpret data is conceptually well-intended, in practice, the obligation to evaluate the status of each metric requires some level of limited judgment. Judgment, however, is inherent when it comes to meeting the intent and requirements of the project. The CAO has taken care to remain neutral in making these assessments. Upon review of the online documentation, interested parties may have different interpretations, as reasonable people may view content, data and observations from different perspectives.

In conducting its task, the CAO relied heavily on the HSPs to gather and provide documentation for evaluation, as well as observations on district activities. Some judgment was exercised to request supplemental data as determined necessary to make observations. Further, while the Plan anticipated that district officials would provide certain reports, it was found that the routine activities of these individuals (such as the Superintendent or School Business Administrator) did not result in the specific reports anticipated by the Plan. In these cases, the CAO relied on documentation provided by their offices to reflect their actions or requested supplemental information.

Outside of an initial meeting with District senior staff and the three HSPs, the CAO conducted two conference calls with the HSPs and one conference call with the state appointed budget manager assigned to the District. Over this time, the HSPs provided the CAO with a wide range of reports, documents and presentations as evidence of the District's efforts. The conference calls were to review submitted documents and CAO requests for additional information. All other communications were through email inquiries and responses. Thus, the CAO's evaluation is based on the several meetings, the CAO's review of PPS documentation provided by the HSPs and supplemental information requested by the CAOs, all intended to reflect the "Mechanism for Measurement" for each metric.

EVALUATING AND SCORING EACH METRIC

The specific observations of the CAOs are reflected on the following tables. There is a separate table for each metric. Each metric is shown by category and Plan element, along with the associated Mechanism for Measurement. The [website](#) contains a documentation list for each metric; these are the documents the CAOs used to reach its observations. In some cases, the table combines two related metrics in the same section (but separately scored) as they are closely linked.

Each metric includes an "Evaluation Comment" and "Finding" on the metric; this is the CAO's observation on the information and the conclusion reached. This is reflected in the 1-4 numeric score (referred to earlier) assigned to the metric. As required, items scored less than 3 have additional information (shown in *italics*).

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The CAO expresses its appreciation of the HSPs and District senior staff in their support and assistance in providing information.

PPS Transition Metric Analysis

Part 1: Fundamental Considerations		Score
<i>Section 4: State Engagement with the District During Transition</i>		
Metric # 1	The Board and Superintendent provide the HSP with a sufficient level of access and transparency into decision-making activities such that the HSP can monitor the progress of plan implementation and have adequate information to meet its responsibilities as liaison to the state regarding the Board's ethics practices.	4
Mechanism for Measurement	Observation and report by HSP. The CAO may additionally verify this information through conversations with the Superintendent and board members.	
Evaluation Comment: HSP's have been provided sufficient access to weekly cabinet and leadership meetings, in addition to monthly board and fiscal meetings. The HSPs attended the summer cabinet retreat and the three board retreats. HSPs also attend meetings with staff under their areas of oversight including instruction and programs, and special education/support services. HSPs presented at the Administrator's Institute.		
Finding: The district is fully compliant at this time.		

Part 1: Fundamental Considerations		Score
<i>Section 7: Consequences for Not Meeting the Expectations of the Full Transition Plan</i>		
Metric # 2	The Board commits zero violations of the School Ethics Act.	3
Mechanism for Measurement	Observation and report by HSP, School Ethics Commission Report.	
Evaluation Comment: The Board has received and signed a Code of Ethics for Board of Education Members, received training by the NJSBA and participated in additional trainings and workshops throughout the year. In 2018, ethics charges were filed with the New Jersey School Ethics Commission against one board member and is an active case. Also in 2018, a second board member was charged with an ethics complaint that was later dismissed.		
Finding: As this metric requires a continuing effort, the district is substantially meeting it at this time.		

Part 1: Fundamental Considerations		Score
<i>Section 7: Consequences for Not Meeting the Expectations of the Full Transition Plan</i>		
Metric # 3	The Board maintains appropriate oversight, without inappropriate interference, into personnel decisions.	3
Mechanism for Measurement	Observation and report by HSP.	
Evaluation Comment: The Board appears in compliance as there is no reported evidence that members engage in inappropriate interference with personnel decisions. The board has a personnel committee which meets on a monthly basis with the Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources, Labor Relations and Affirmative Action to discuss personnel matters prior to each board meeting.		
Finding: As this metric requires a continuing effort, the district is substantially meeting it at this time.		

Part II: Governance		Score
<i>Section 2: Ethics Training for BOE and Senior Officials</i>		
Metric # 4	All board members complete all the training programs required by N.J.S.A. 18A:12-33 within one month of the applicable deadlines.	4
Mechanism for Measurement	Sign-in sheets, transcripts from New Jersey School Boards Association, observation and report by HSP	
Evaluation Comment: Board members are required to attend NJ School Board Association Governance training in the first, second and third years of a board member's first term, and in the first year of a re-elected or reappointed term. The training is monitored and scheduled by the Superintendent's office. All board members are current in terms of completion of training programs as prescribed by the NJSBA.		
Finding: At this time the Board is in full compliance with this Metric.		

Part II: Governance		Score
<i>Section 2: Ethics Training for BOE and Senior Officials</i>		
Metric # 5	The Superintendent, in cooperation with the HSP, develops a training module to be provided to all board members at a retreat that addresses the components and subject areas listed on pages 17-18 of Section 2 of the Plan.	4
Mechanism for Measurement	Training module, Sign-in sheets, observation and report by HSP.	
Evaluation Comment: The Superintendent, in collaboration with the Board, has conducted seven board retreats from September 2018 through August 2019. These retreats focused on ethics, Donaldson administrative leadership training, goal setting, high school review, strategic planning, PTECH state initiative, organizational chart, roles and responsibilities of the Board, board governance and best practices, and other related topics. Additionally, the NJSBA facilitated one of the retreats.		
Finding: At this time the Board is in full compliance with this Metric.		

Part II: Governance		Score
<i>Section 3: Professional Development for the BOE and District Leadership Regarding Governance Best Practices</i>		
Metric # 6	All board members, the Superintendent, and Senior Officials attend a professional development session regarding governance best practices.	4
Mechanism for Measurement	Sign-in sheets, observation and report by HSP.	
<p>Evaluation Comment: Board members, the Superintendent and senior officials attend professional development seminars year-round on a variety of topics including governance best practices. Examples include meetings with newly elected Board members to review the yearly meeting schedule, board trainings, role of a Board member, the policy process, relevant bylaws and policies, NJ QSAC, and district information. A retreat outlining Board Roles and Responsibilities, Board Goals, and Board Self-Evaluation in August 2019 was facilitated by a representative of NJSBA.</p>		
<p>Finding: District is in full compliance with this Metric.</p>		

Part II: Governance		Score
<i>Section 7: Search for Successor Superintendent</i>		
Metric # 7	The superintendent search met all requirements in conducting the search, as described in the Plan.	4
Mechanism for Measurement	Information provided by the District to the Department.	
<p>Evaluation Comment: Documents of the process used by the district to hire the Superintendent show that this metric was met during the process that resulted in the hiring of the Superintendent.</p>		
<p>Finding: District fully complied with this Metric.</p>		

Part II: Governance		Score
<i>Section 7: Search for Successor Superintendent</i>		
Metric # 8	The Board and search committee <u>substantially</u> meet timelines and deadlines laid out in the Plan.	4
Mechanism for Measurement	Board minutes, information provided by the District to the Department.	
<p>Evaluation Comment: Reports, timelines, meeting minutes, emails, attendance sheets, and time stamped letters support compliance with this metric.</p>		
<p>Finding: This metric has been fully implemented.</p>		

Part III: Instruction and Program		Score
<i>Section 2: Student Performance Data</i>		
Metric # 9	The District analyzes its student achievement data in line with the current NJQSAC Instruction and Program Indicators.	3
Mechanism for Measurement	Meeting agenda(s), observation and report by HSP.	
Evaluation Comment: The district has a process in place to analyze student performance data, and to present and disseminate these data to the board, school district administrators, personnel, and the community. These data are aligned with NJQSAC and disaggregated to identify further needs.		
Finding: While this metric requires a continuing effort, the district is substantially meeting it at this time.		

Part III: Instruction and Program		Score
<i>Section 2: Student Performance Data</i>		
Metric #10	The District makes a decision and communicates to the State by November 1, 2019 about whether to apply for an extension of its equivalency or its intention to be evaluated going forward by the current NJQSAC Instruction and Program Indicators.	4
Mechanism for Measurement	District's NJQSAC submission to the County Office or submission of an equivalency to the Commissioner.	
Evaluation Comment: The district submitted an equivalency application to the state Department of Education that includes a set of proposed equivalency adjustments under NJ QSAC in 2017. A subsequent equivalency application was approved by the board and submitted to the State Department of Education in November of 2019.		
Finding: This metric has been fully implemented.		

Part III: Instruction and Program		Score
<i>Section 3: Expectations for Continued Focus on Academics</i>		
Metric # 11	The District has a process in place for the ongoing review of district curricula that is based on: 1) student performance data; 2) a monitoring process; and, 3) a system of continual feedback.	3
Mechanism for Measurement	District policy, observation and report by HSP.	
Evaluation Comment: The district has a curriculum review process in place that consists of a Standard Operating Procedure. The district provides a password-protected, online curriculum data warehouse that consists of K-12 curricula and is accessible to school personnel. The district uses student performance data to inform curricular decision making. Assigned content area supervisors are charged with overseeing teacher performance, conduct walk-throughs, and submit bi-weekly reports and feedback on progress and curricula needs/changes.		
Finding: While this metric requires continuing efforts, the district is substantially meeting it at this time.		

Part III: Instruction and Program		Score
<i>Section 3: Expectations for Continued Focus on Academics</i>		
Metric # 12	All Board approved curricula contain the components required by N.J.A.C. 6A:13-2.1.	4
Mechanism for Measurement	Curricula, observation and report by HSP.	
<p>Evaluation Comment: The district’s curriculum guides are aligned with NJSL as required. Further, the Board has approved all curricula as required by the state board’s rules. The district has a five-year curriculum plan in place through 2024 that includes NJ QSAC indicators, pacing, assessments, and other indicators and benchmarks.</p>		
<p>Finding:: The district is fully compliant at this time.</p>		

Part III: Instruction and Program		Score
<i>Section 3: Expectations for Continued Focus on Academics</i>		
Metric # 13	The District has a process in place to continually collect, analyze and utilize student performance data to make data informed decisions.	3
Mechanism for Measurement	District policy, observation and report by HSP.	
<p>Evaluation Comment: The district continuously collects and makes accessible student data through the use of a digital data warehouse for all teachers and administrators. The system includes reports that contain unit assessments, NJSLA, running records, and demographic and behavioral data for remediation, intervention and enrichment purposes while providing data to assist in budgetary and resource decision-making.</p>		
<p>Finding: While this metric requires a continuing effort, the district is substantially meeting it at this time.</p>		

Part III: Instruction and Program		Score
<i>Section 3: Expectations for Continued Focus on Academics</i>		
Metric # 14	The District is implementing a system to identify causal factors for achievement gaps for student groups and individual students and to provide targeted interventions to remedy them.	4
Mechanism for Measurement	District policy, observation and report by HSP.	
<p>Evaluation Comment: The district uses needs assessments, surveys, and data collection, to address the needs of students and families. It also employs measures such as assessment data, social/emotional learning curricula, intervention and referral services, and school-based services to look for causal factors of student achievement gaps.</p>		
<p>Finding: The District is meeting the requirements of this Metric at this time.</p>		

Part III: Instruction and Program		Score
<i>Section 3: Expectations for Continued Focus on Academics</i>		
Metric # 15	The District continues to review and improve its procedures to meet the needs of students with IEPs and Section 504 Plans.	3
Mechanism for Measurement	Observation and report by HSP, status of corrective action plans.	
<p>Evaluation Comment: The district monitors compliance and implementation through school-based supervisory support to Child Study Teams, teachers and guidance counselors via monthly IEP compliance reports, Supervisor/Teacher Meetings, Professional Learning Communities, and job embedded professional development that occur weekly. Professional development is provided to school personnel and administration. SOPs are in place for the review and placement of IEP and 504 plans.</p>		
<p>Finding: While this metric requires a continuing effort, the district is substantially meeting it at this time.</p>		

Part III: Instruction and Program		Score
<i>Section 4: Professional Development for the BOE and Senior Staff Regarding Instruction and Program Best Practices</i>		
Metric # 16a	All trainings are completed on time by a quorum of the board members.	4
Metric # 16b	All trainings are completed by each member of the full BOE within 1 month of the deadline.	4
Mechanism for Measurement	Sign-in sheets, Observation and report by HSP.	
<p>Evaluation Comment: 16a) Board members are completing trainings on time. All board members are current in terms of completion of training programs as prescribed by the NJ School Boards Association, and as documented by the Board of Education Yearly Training Schedule.</p> <p>16b) Board members are completing their required training on time. The district routinely keeps track of compliance.</p>		
<p>Finding: At this time the Board is in full compliance with both metrics.</p>		

Part IV: Fiscal Management		Score
<i>Section 2: Basic Fiscal Obligations: Budget Requirements and Best Practices</i>		
Metric # 17a	The District prepares a balanced annual budget based on expense analysis, discussions with individual departments, and incorporation of anticipated new needs and cost increases.	2
Metric # 17b	The Board approves a balanced budget on time.	3
Metric # 17c	The Board engages appropriately with the District in the development of the Budget.	2
Mechanism for Measurement	Board meeting and Finance Committee minutes, observation and report by HSP, report by Superintendent, report by School Business Administrator and Chief Financial Officer.	
<p>Evaluation Comment: The district is in technical statutory compliance with these metrics for SY 19-20. The Board approved the district budget on time and was engaged in the development of the budget. The District balanced budget was prepared through cooperation of the Superintendent, school leadership, department staff, the board, and supplemented by a Department of Education appointed budget manager. A budget calendar is reviewed with the district cabinet and the Board fiscal committee and then distributed to the full board. The community is also engaged during the budgetary process through public forums.</p> <p><i>Evidence review shows that while the parameters were technically met for SY 19-20, Metrics 17a and 17c are found to be partially implemented and additional progress is necessary to substantially meet this metric. The Board fiscal committee and the administration meets regularly to discuss budgetary projections and needs. The meetings are substantial and robust on many issues, particularly on operational issues, but limited on academic and school issues. In addition, the district faces an unusually large number of operating budget issues (e.g. employee health insurance, facilities, unfilled positions). While there is progress, the time and attention they take deprives the administration and board from addressing the larger challenges related to I&P issues. The continued assistance of the state appointed budget manager is expected to help improve this process.</i></p>		
<p>Finding: This metric is partially implemented. The district is currently engaged in activities that will eventually fulfill the metric.</p>		

Part IV: Fiscal Management		Score
<i>Section 2: Basic Fiscal Obligations: Budget Requirements and Best Practices</i>		
Metric # 18	Schools are allocated funding based on school-based budgeting focused on equity and transparency in school allocations.	2
Mechanism for Measurement	Sign-in sheets, observation by HSP.	
<p>Evaluation Comment: Budget process documents show that the district introduced a weighted student funding formula that supports the needs of special populations on a per school basis. The weighting allocates more money to special populations, while a per pupil allocation was utilized for the remaining population based on enrollment and grade level. However, this metric is found to be partially implemented.</p> <p><i>The budget process at the individual school level lacks maturity and effective sophistication, including an institutionalized decision-making process that ensures effective input from building principals. Implementation of a system is evolving and needs additional attention and consistency to meet implementation goals.</i></p>		
<p>Finding: This metric is partially implemented. The district is currently engaged in activities that will eventually fulfill the metric.</p>		

Part IV: Fiscal Management		Score
<i>Section 2: Basic Fiscal Obligations: Budget Requirements and Best Practices</i>		
Metric # 19a	The monthly Board Secretary's report is completed and reconciled without exceptions as described in the Plan.	4
Metric # 19b	Three times a year the District presents a fiscal forecast for the remainder of the year to the Board, as described in the Plan.	2
Mechanism for Measurement	Board meeting minutes.	
<p>Evaluation Comment: 19a) The Board Secretary provides a monthly report to the board. 19b) The District presented a fiscal forecast review before the full board one of the required three time during the school year but can fulfill the metric with two more submissions over the remaining school year.</p> <p><i>Since the Transition Plan was adopted, there have been two presentations in November of 2018 and 2019*. The frequency of these reports needs to be increased to meet the metric's requirement. This will also assist with the budget process and focus attention on budget challenges reflected in Metric 17.</i></p> <p><small>*The 11/19 presentation took affect after the reporting for this report closed but included here for relevance.</small></p>		
<p>Finding: While 19a is fully implemented, 19b is partially implemented. The district is currently engaged in activities that will eventually fulfill the metric.</p>		

Part IV: Fiscal Management		Score
<i>Section 2: Basic Fiscal Obligations: Budget Requirements and Best Practices</i>		
Metric # 20	At least monthly, the district prepares and analyzes fiscal year cash flow management for all funds, all payments are made on a prompt basis, and reimbursement requests for federal grant awards are submitted in a timely manner for the actual amount of incurred expenditures.	3
Mechanism for Measurement	Observation and report by HSP, Report by School Business Administrator.	
Evaluation Comment: The district prepares a monthly cash flow analysis to monitor cash flow and payment obligations. The school business administrator has commenced meeting with the business services team and the federal grants team to review reimbursements vs. spending. A monthly report is generated and emailed to the state as evidence of federal reimbursement requests for grant awards.		
Finding: While this metric requires a continuing effort, the district is substantially meeting it at this time.		

Part IV: Fiscal Management		Score
<i>Section 2: Basic Fiscal Obligations: Budget Requirements and Best Practices</i>		
Metric # 21	The District ends the year with no deficit balances and no line item over appropriated expenditures by more than 10% in the general fund, special revenue fund, capital projects fund or debt service fund (other than permitted under state law and GAAP).	N/A
Mechanism for Measurement	Review of District's budget files.	
Evaluation Comment: The audited CAFR for SY 18-19 is necessary to confirm balances and spending and was not available as of the time this report was prepared. This metric will be reviewed as part of the interim report in six months.		
Finding: None.		

Part IV: Fiscal Management		Score
<i>Section 3: Professional Development BOE and Senior Staff Regarding Fiscal Management Best Practices</i>		
Metric # 22a	All trainings are completed on time by a quorum of the board members.	3
Metric # 22b	All trainings are completed by each member of the full BOE within 1 month of the deadline.	
Mechanism for Measurement	Sign-in sheets, Observation and report by HSP.	
<p>Evaluation Comment: 22a) Board members have attended fiscal management best practices training according to state requirements. According to the district's training status tracker, 'Finance' is taken by board members during 1st Term, 2nd full year of service.</p> <p>22b) At this time a majority of board members have completed the course.</p>		
Finding: The district is currently engaged in activities that will eventually fulfill both metrics.		

V: Personnel		Score
<i>Section 4: Expectations Regarding Additional Personnel Initiatives</i>		
Metric # 23	The District continues to implement AchieveNJ. This includes training school leaders to rigorously and fairly evaluate teachers, supporting teachers based on their evaluations, and exiting low-performing staff when appropriate.	4
Mechanism for Measurement	Observation and report by HSP.	
<p>Evaluation Comment: The district is implementing AchieveNJ to track and evaluate teachers, followed by remediation, and ultimately removal of low performing teachers. Supervisors and teachers (current and new) receive training in the evaluation process. The district communicates actions to remove teachers due to low performance or to withhold increments through the Henderson hearing process. The district also communicates teacher evaluation data to the NJDOE annually.</p>		
Finding: The district is currently engaged in activities that will eventually fulfill the metric.		

ACCOUNTABILITY SCORECARD

RESULTS AS OF OCTOBER 2019 OBSERVATION

The Department of Education anticipated that the PPS was moving ahead to implement the Plan and anticipated progress on the metrics. The scores bear out this anticipation.

PLAN SECTION	#	METRIC	STATUS
Part I: Fundamental Considerations			
Section 4: State Engagement with the District During Transition	1	The Board and Superintendent provide the HSP with a sufficient level of access and transparency into decision-making activities such that the HSP can monitor the progress of plan implementation and have adequate information to meet its responsibilities as liaison to the state regarding the Board's ethics practices.	4
Section 7: Consequences for Not Meeting the Expectations of the Full Transition Plan	2	The Board commits zero violations of the School Ethics Act.	3
	3	The Board maintains appropriate oversight, without inappropriate interference, into personnel decisions.	3
Part II: Governance			
Section 2: Ethics Training for BOE and Senior Officials	4	All board members complete all the training programs required by N.J.S.A. 18A:12-33 within one month of the applicable deadlines.	4
	5	The Superintendent, in cooperation with the HSP, develops a training module to be provided to all board members at a retreat that addresses the components and subject areas listed on pages 17-18 of Section 2 of the Plan.	4
Section 3: Professional Development for the BOE and District Leadership Regarding Governance Best Practices	6	All board members, the Superintendent, and Senior Officials attend a professional development session regarding governance best practices.	4
Section 7: Search for Successor Superintendent	7	The superintendent search met all requirements in conducting the search, as described in the Plan.	4
	8	The Board and search committee <u>substantially</u> meet timelines and deadlines laid out in the Plan.	4

PLAN SECTION	#	METRIC	STATUS
Part III: Instruction and Program			
Section 2: Student Performance Data	9	The District analyzes its student achievement data in line with the current NJQSAC Instruction and Program Indicators.	3
	10	The District makes a decision and communicates to the State by November 1, 2019 about whether to apply for an extension of its equivalency or its intention to be evaluated going forward by the current NJQSAC Instruction and Program Indicators.	4
Section 3: Expectations for Continued Focus on Academics	11	The District has a process in place for the ongoing review of district curricula that is based on: 1) student performance data; 2) a monitoring process; and, 3) a system of continual feedback.	3
	12	All Board approved curricula contain the components required by N.J.A.C. 6A:13-2.1.	4
	13	The District has a process in place to continually collect, analyze and utilize student performance data to make data informed decisions.	3
	14	The District is implementing a system to identify causal factors for achievement gaps for student groups and individual students and to provide targeted interventions to remedy them.	4
	15	The District continues to review and improve its procedures to meet the needs of students with IEPs and Section 504 Plans.	3
Section 4: Professional Development for the BOE and Senior Staff Regarding Instruction and Program Best Practices	16	All trainings are completed on time by a quorum of the board members.	4
		All trainings are completed by each member of the full BOE within 1 month of the deadline.	4
Part IV: Fiscal Management			
Section 2: Basic Fiscal Obligations: Budget Requirements and Best Practices	17	The District prepares a balanced annual budget based on expense analysis, discussions with individual departments, and incorporation of anticipated new needs and cost increases.	2
		The Board approves a balanced budget on time.	3
		The Board engages appropriately with the District in the development of the Budget.	2
	18	Schools are allocated funding based on school-based budgeting focused on equity and transparency in school allocations.	2

PLAN SECTION	#	METRIC	STATUS
Part IV: Fiscal Management			
Section 2: Basic Fiscal Obligations: Budget Requirements and Best Practices	19	The monthly Board Secretary's report is completed and reconciled without exceptions as described in the Plan.	4
		Three times a year the District presents a fiscal forecast for the remainder of the year to the Board, as described in the Plan..	2
	20	At least monthly, the district prepares and analyzes fiscal year cash flow management for all funds, all payments are made on a prompt basis, and reimbursement requests for federal grant awards are submitted in a timely manner for the actual amount of incurred expenditures.	3
	21	The District ends the year with no deficit balances and no line item over appropriated expenditures by more than 10% in the general fund, special revenue fund, capital projects fund or debt service fund (other than permitted under state law and GAAP).	N/A
Section 3: Professional Development for the BOE and Senior Staff regarding Fiscal Management Best Practices	22a	All trainings are completed on time by a quorum of the board members.	3
	22b	All trainings are completed by each member of the full BOE within 1 month of the deadline.	3
Part V - Personnel			
Section 4: Expectations Regarding Additional Personnel Initiatives	23	The District continues to implement AchieveNJ. This includes training school leaders to rigorously and fairly evaluate teachers, supporting teachers based on their evaluations, and exiting low-performing staff when appropriate.	4

PPS Transition Metric Analysis

APPENDIX

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Leila Sadeghi is a New Jersey based consultant with over 15 years of experience in education spanning K-12 and higher education. Dr. Sadeghi has published extensively in education policy over the years and taught graduate courses in teacher and administrative training in state higher education systems. She most recently headed a government affairs institute for a former Congressman, and is currently in her second career as a business development consultant where she works for clients in a variety of sectors.

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Research Interests

Municipal Governments

Finance and Property Taxation

Public Contracting

Shared Government Services

Technology

Energy management

Marc H. Pfeiffer retired in 2012 from a 37-year career in New Jersey local government administration, having served as a municipal administrator in several municipalities, and 26 years of service in the State's local government oversight agency, the Division of Local Government Services. At DLGS he served as Deputy Director for 14 years, and periodically as Acting Director. He is now in this third public service career at the Bloustein School where he continues to assist state and local government officials and the public on a range of public policy and administrative matters.

Marc has broad experience in many areas of local government policy and administration, including specific expertise in areas such as finance and property taxation, public procurement, shared services and consolidation, technology, energy, labor relations, and general local and state government administration. He also has deep experience in the legislative process and as a regulatory officer.

In addition to participating in Bloustein Local, Marc makes his extensive government experience available as a guest lecturer, conference presenter, and other collaborative efforts. He is also assisting the Rutgers School of Public Affairs and Administration with the State's Certified Public Manager Program in curriculum development and instruction.

He also serves as the Principal Investigator for Bloustein Local in its capacity as the N.J. Department of Education's Chief Accountability Office for state supervised school districts in the process of exiting state supervision

The Bloustein Local Government Research Center

New Jersey is served by more than 1,500 distinct local government agencies: municipalities, school districts, utilities, counties, and more. Yet, even with this wealth of opportunity, precious little substantive research has been done within the local government environment to inform some of our state's most pressing policy issues.

The **Bloustein Local Government Research Center**, or **Bloustein Local** <http://blousteinlocal.rutgers.edu/> serves as a focal point and engages in a range of services, including:

- Encouraging and conducting applied and academic research on local government fiscal and administrative issues, emphasizing application and support to New Jersey local government.
- Developing resources that can assist others in conducting research and analysis.
- Organizing and hosting conferences and symposia on New Jersey local government fiscal and administrative issues.
- Supporting New Jersey local government fiscal and administrative policy development, implementation, and analysis through contract research and on-call advice for organizations and institutions that engage in local government policy setting and policymaking.
- Promoting and increasing public understanding of local government issues by partnering with and supporting civic and media organizations that inform and educate the public on local government matters.

A list of the Center's current projects may be found online at <http://blousteinlocal.rutgers.edu/projects/>.

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