

# Paterson

# EDUCATION

## Fund Report

March 15, 2010

*The Paterson Education Fund (PEF) is a not-for-profit organization whose mission is to stimulate community action for change so that the Paterson Public Schools ensure that all Paterson children achieve high standards.*

### *Our Goals*

*To build our community's civic capacity to support monitor and advocate education reform.*

*To educate and enable community leadership to understand and act on changing educational needs.*

*To provide a forum for the community to effectively participate in the decision making processes concerning education*

*Paterson Education Fund is a member of the Public Education Network (PEN), founded in 1991. The mission of PEN is to build public demand and mobilize resources for quality education for all children through a national constituency of local education funds and individuals. The Paterson Education Fund is a founding member.*

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Public involvement. Public education. Public benefit.

## **An Educated Voter's Guide to Paterson's School Board Elections:**

### **Educating ALL Our Children: What will Paterson decide?**

**State Superintendent Donnie Evans believes that ALL Paterson**



**children can learn. He has an aggressive agenda of changing our high schools and creating community schools that will bring more success to Paterson's children. If you agree, then the vote you cast on April 20 is very important. Who sits on the Board of Education and how they carry out their duties is critical to our students' success.**

**Our Board of Education members must carry out their duties faithfully within the law. Each time they don't, Paterson takes a step backwards. In order to receive local control, our board members must report their finances, participate in training and follow the standards for ethical behavior. Above all, they must act to improve our children's educational attainment.**

**Additionally, the School Board members we elect must work collaboratively with our new State Superintendent and the current members of the Board: Erroll Kerr, Dr. Jonathan Hodges, Wendy Guzman, Pedro Rodriquez and T. J. Best.**

**Candidates for 3 three years term include: Rodney Devore, William Escobar, Christopher Irving, Donna R. Ivy, Domingo Alex Mendez and Kenneth Simmons.**

**Vote on April 20<sup>th</sup>**

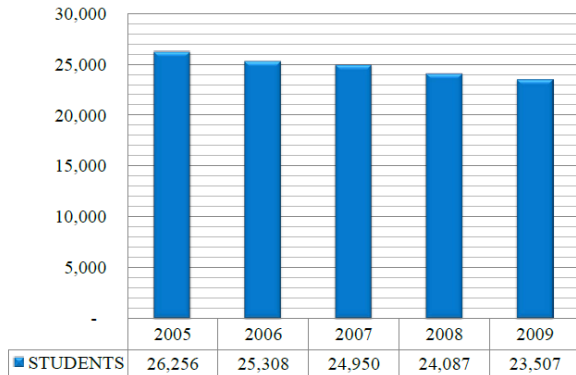
**as if our children's futures depend on it,**

**because they do!**

# What Every Voter and School Board Candidate Should Know About Our Schools

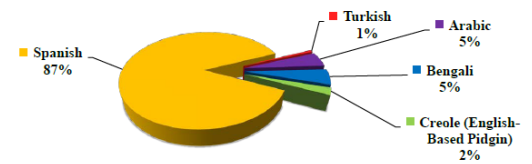
## 1. Who attends the Paterson Public Schools?

### District Profile: Student Enrollment



	2007-2008	2008-2009
Number of English Language Learners	2,871	2,980
Percent of English Language Learners	11.92%	12.68%

### Language Diversity



### District Profile: Special Education

	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009
Number of Classified Students in District Schools	3,285	3,271	3,220
Number of Classified Students in Out-of-District Placements	455	427	355
<b>Total Classified Students</b>	<b>3,740</b>	<b>3,698</b>	<b>3,575</b>
District Enrollment	25,370	24,591	23,507
<b>Percentage of Students Receiving Special Education Services</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>15.4%</b>	<b>15.2%</b>

### Early Childhood Education

Enrollment						
	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Preschool Population 3 year olds & 4 year olds	3,402	3,657	3,524	3,469	3,586	3,531
Number of Preschool Teachers	234	248	247	244	248	246

Preschool Centers (Community Providers)						
	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Number of Preschool Centers	45	43	44	42	41	36

## 2. What do we teach our children?

Our children study the Core Curriculum as defined by the State of New Jersey: Language Arts Literacy [Reading and Writing], Math, Science, Social Studies, World Languages, Visual and Performing Arts, Health and Physical Education, Technology and Career Education, Consumer, Family and Life Skills. Paterson students receive instruction in Language Arts and Math in 90 minute blocks. To see the Paterson Public Schools K-12 Curriculum frameworks, go to <http://www.paterson.k12.nj.us/departments/curr/curriculum/index.htm>

For more information on Paterson 's new Strategic Plan, go to : <http://www.paterson.k12.nj.us/departments/superintendent/strategic-plan.html>

You can also find individual school report cards on the NJ Department of Education website, [www.nj.gov/education](http://www.nj.gov/education).

# Paterson School Board Candidates 2010

The following information was provided by the candidates. Where there is no information, the candidate did not respond. PEF has not verified the information but publishes it as a public service.  
Address questions directly to the candidates or to Irene Sterling, PEF at 973-881-8914.

## Candidates for a 3 year term. Choose 3.

**Rodney De Vore**, 234 Lexington Avenue, Home phone: 973-904-3757. Work Phone: 973-389-7220. Fax: 973-389-7204. Email: Rodde48@msn.com. Employment: Discipline Coordinator, Passaic County Technical Institute. Length of residence in Paterson: 40 years. Education: PS#10, Eastside High School. William Paterson University, '92 B.A. Family: Married 18 years, wife (Deanna) and two kids: Bryanna & Jared. Past and Current Involvement in the Paterson Public Schools: Former School Leadership Committee/PTA member for PS#27 ('05-'08), Current PTA member for BUILD Academy. Civic Involvement: Ordained Clergy, Member Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc., Big Brother/Big Sister Mentor, Voter Registration. Number of Board meeting attended in the last six months: Five (5). Three major issues: The phrase, "It takes a village to raise a child" is often heard. It is incumbent on all of us as adults and citizens of this great city of Paterson to "Train up our children in the way that they should go..." As a father, I understand the importance of



**Parental Involvement** as it relates to student's performance. As an Educator, I believe we as the community of this great city should make sure that there is a **Well-designed Curriculum** to fully equip our children with tools to succeed on all levels. However, I have witnessed students entering high school below the acceptable standards. I believe that our students should be on an **Acceptable Reading and Writing Level** that is at or above competing levels. Our children are the most precious and valuable investment there is. Invest in them and their education, and they will never lose their worth.

**William E. Escobar**, 286 Maryland Avenue. Home phone: 973-742-3173. Work phone: 201-968-6813. Email: wescobar@principium.us.com. Employment: Principium Payroll Management LLC, Principal. Length of residence in Paterson: 25 years. Education: BA-Psychology, Montclair State University, AS-Finance, PCCC, AS- Computer Science, PCCC, Human Resources Studies, Cornell University. Family: Married, wife, Maria, children: Gaida and William Jr. Past and Current Involvement in the Paterson Public Schools: Up to this moment, I have no formal involvement in the Paterson Public School System, yet, I feel my experience as a parent and business professional can provide useful in the board process. I am eagerly looking forward to participate and bridge the Gap between the community and the education system. Number of Board meetings attended in the last 6 months: One. This encounter has awakened a giant desire to actively participate in the administrative process. I plan on attending meetings on a regular basis and hope to be able to assist the current members in a constructive manner. Civic Involvements: Membership: New Jersey State Commission on New Americans, American Payroll Association, Society for Human Resources Management, Peruvian American Political Action Committee. Three major issues: (1) Academic Improvement including Extra-Curricular Activities. (2) Funding resources. (3) Elevate Professional Credibility. Current budget cuts are eminent and we need to procure a manner in which revenues can be secured to enhance current educational platforms without burdening tax payers or penalizing educational staff. These funding sources will be helpful in improving academic standings and provide a positive infusion to the credibility of our educators.



**Christopher C. Irving, “Chris”**, 184 Lafayette Street. Home phone: 973-580-5890. Email:



[Chris4paterson@gmail.com](mailto:Chris4paterson@gmail.com). Employment: Executive Director & CEO of the Ceceilyn Miller Institute for Leadership and Diversity in America. Length of residence in Paterson: 25 years. Education: B.A. Political Science from Ramapo College of NJ, M.A. Public Policy and International Affairs from William Paterson University, Doctorial Student – Seton Hall University. Family: Herman and Jocelyn Irving – Parents, Vian, Farrah, Herman III – Siblings. Past and Current Involvement in the Paterson Public Schools: Rosa L. Parks High School Graduate: Class of 2000. Civic Involvements: NAACP Youth and College Division, Omega Psi Phi Fraternity Inc., Leadership New Jersey “09”. Number of Board meetings attended in the last six months: 4. Three major issues: (1) Paterson is closer than ever to regaining its right to govern for itself and if we are to gain local control our kids will need confident, intelligent, and caring leadership on the Board of Education. (2) Reengaging Parents – Board members must find/create effective

means of getting parents more engaged in their children’s education. It will take town hall meetings, Youtube videos, letters, facebook, and more to make sure that ALL parents understand that they are the key to the door of success for these kids. (3) Using Technology Effectively: There are ways to use technology in an effort to make our district more effective and efficient. This means saving more money on operations and giving that to our kids directly.

**Donna Nelson-Ivy**, 549 East 27<sup>th</sup> Street #55. Home phone: 973-341-2565 Work phone: 413-537-8414.



Email: [divy@elm-associates.com](mailto:divy@elm-associates.com). Employment: ELM & Associates, president & CEO. I work with the United Way of Passaic County in the capacity of Director of Community Impact; I am an adjunct professor with William Paterson University. Length of residence in Paterson: born & raised in Paterson. As an adult my husband, son and I relocated to Springfield, MA, where we lived for several years. I have been home nearly 10 years and incredibly excited to be back. Education: PS#6, PS#5, John F. Kennedy High School, Bachelor of Arts, Ramapo College, M.Ed. Cambridge College, Management major. Family: Son, Malcom & Daughter-In-Law. Past and Current Involvement in the Paterson Public schools: In addition to being a proud graduate of our public schools, through my United Way work assignment, I actively develop and implement programs for our students attending

Eastside High School, Urban leadership Academy and the former PS#17. Annually we provide backpacks filled with school supplies to every student attending an elementary school, collaborated with the District to promote elementary and high school students with Earth Day Art Work, District School Safety Advisory task Force, the High School renewal Advisory Committee. Civic Involvements: Board member of Friends of Hinchliffe Stadium, Passaic County Workforce Investment Board, WIB One-Stop Oversight Committee Interim Chairperson, WIB Faith-Based Committee, Passaic County African American Women 100 +, Inc. Number of Board meetings attended in the last six months: 3-5. Three major issues: 1. Increasing high school graduation rates is so near and dear to my heart, I would like to see us focus specifically on bringing clergy, community, elected officials, parents, businesses and educators together to provide every high school student with a mentor. I believe high school graduation rates will increase significantly. 2. Strengthening parental/family involvement is something that must happen sooner rather than later. The issue here is the “how” – how do we help our 21<sup>st</sup> century families to re-engage with their students, prioritizing their children’s education. I want to help strategize and implement new methods and techniques to encourage our families to re-connect with their children and their education. 3. Last but not least, I will bring effective strategic planning, managerial and leadership skills to the school board table and I will prove to be a valuable resource with helping our current board’s continued focus on re-gaining local control.

**Vote on April 20<sup>th</sup> as if our children’s futures depend on it, because they do!**

**Alex Mendez**, 266 East 29<sup>th</sup> Street. Cell Phone: 973-930-1436. Email: alexmendez2010@gmail.com.



Employment: Currently President of my transportation company in Secaucus, NJ. Length of residence in Paterson: 10 years. Education: In 1998, I graduated from UTESA, Santiago, dom. Rep. with BA in Marketing with Minor in Accounting. I continued my studies and received a certificate of completion from Industrial Psychology, Santo Domingo, Rep. Dom. In 2001, I began my English studies in JFK High School and supplemented the course at UCEDA English School on Saturdays for 2 years. At the beginning of 2002 I assisted Rutgers University on a certificate program on securities and finance to become a financial planner and at the end of 2006. I studied real estate at Fox School of Real Estate and completed the program for licensure. Civic Involvements: I am an active member of DOPOR and in charge of the press and publicity for this institution. This civic political organization is involved in the Paterson community and identifies the problems and possible solutions for our citizens and challenges the local government to

provide and listen to the voices of minorities and their families. I am currently the President of the Paterson Bilingual/ESL Parents Advisory Committee. Number of Board meetings attended in the last six months: Almost every meeting. Three major issues: One of the major issues is the massive dropout rate. Due to the dropout rate our children are on the streets, causing more corruption and delinquency on our streets. Second issue of importance is the lack of security inside and out of our schools. The students and gangs invade our schools with metal objects and make our schools system a dangerous place to be. It makes it very difficult for the children to concentrate and focus on their studies. Last but not least important of our worries is the low grades and test scores that our students are receiving in our school system. A perfect example of this is the results from the NJ ASK testing results: 4<sup>th</sup> grade Science state average for 2008 was at 85% and our district scores for this subject and year was way below theirs at 56%. These results are unacceptable.

**Kenneth L. Simmons**, “Coach Kenny” 8 Linden Road, 07514. Home: 973 754-7060 Work: 201 784-6187



Email: [ksimmons007@optonline.net](mailto:ksimmons007@optonline.net). Employment: Systems Engineer, Pearson Education. Length of residence in Paterson: Lifetime. Education: Devry, BS in Computer information Systems. Family: Married 9 years to Tammie Harrell-Simmons 6 children: Mone't, Aysha, Chynah, Zhyeir, Zion and Zachai. Past and Current involvement in PPS: Graduate of PS#4 and Eastside High School, Member of the School Renewal committee, served as community advisor on committee to recruit EHS Basketball coach. Member of Integrity Lodge #51 F&AM, Golconda Temple #24 A.E.O.N.M.S. Co-founder of Paterson first African Heritage Festival and Parade. 20 year Coach of Football, basketball, track&field. Number of Board meeting attended in Last six month: 3. Three Major Issues: 1. Academic achievement. All children can learn, we must remember that our children now compete in a global society. A variety of strategies, inside and outside of the classroom that instill in students an appreciation of and desire for learning will help students realize the intellectual success that our global society demands 2. Safe Teaching and Learning environments: Our students and staff deserve to learn and work in an environment that is safe and secure. It is difficult for anyone to learn or work when fearful and apprehensive 3. Parental and community involvement: we must get parents and the community on a whole involved in the educational process. We have to make education a priority again.

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# Paterson Board of Education Members 2009-2010 Attendance

Attendance record for workshop meetings, special meetings and -regular meetings, May – Jan

Data on attendance is taken from official Board of Education minutes at

<http://www.paterson.k12.nj.us/board/meeting-minutes-08-09.html>

Term ends 2010	Work Shop-8	Special 7	Regular 8	Term ends 2012	Work shop -8	Special 7	Regular 8
Eddie Gonzalez	7	7	8	Errol Kerr	8	5	8
Danilo Inoa	7	6	8	Pedro Rodriguez	8	7	8
Waheedah Muhammad	8	7	7	Willa Mae Taylor	8	7	7
Term ends 2011							
Theodore Best	7	6	8				
Wendy Guzman	7	4	5				
Jonathan Hodges	8	6	8				

## 3. How do we pay for our schools?

Our budget in 2009-2010 was planned for \$536 million. Paterson’s local tax portion of the school budget, \$43.5 million, is only sufficient to run our two comprehensive high schools, Eastside and Kennedy. *If the State of New Jersey and the federal government took their funds away, Paterson would have to close all its elementary schools, pre-schools and academy high school programs.*

## 4. How do we return to local control?

[New Jersey Statutes Annotated \(N.J.S.A.\) 18A](#) contains new education law, signed into law in December 2005 regarding the monitoring of schools. It is known as NJQSAC or the NJ Quality Single Accountability System. Part of this law sets out the way that any state operated school district may return to local control.

→ **Paterson does not receive any financial benefit from being state-operated.** [It did under the original law, but that was amended more than 10 years ago.] Our support from the State of New Jersey is provided by the School Funding Reform Act of 2008, see [www.edlawcenter.org](http://www.edlawcenter.org) for details.

→ **Paterson will not lose any aid when we return to local control.**

## 5. What can the board of education do?

Under the Constitution of the State of New Jersey, the State is responsible for providing education for its citizens [the “thorough and efficient system of free, public schools” clause]. The State establishes local school boards and requires them to run the schools under its [the State’s] rules. The powers of the School Board are limited; it operates under a very comprehensive set of regulations known as NJ Administrative Code 6A. As a state-operated district, the Paterson School board is advisory and has no power over personnel. It’s actions can be vetoed by the State Superintendent.

→ **The School Board’s most important role is to hold the school system accountable for educating Paterson children.**

## 6. What does the oath of office mean?

Every member of the Board of Education takes the following oath of office:

*I do solemnly swear that I will support the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the State of New Jersey, and that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same and to the governments established in the United States and in this state, under the authority of the people, so help me God.*

*I do further solemnly swear that I will impartially and justly perform all the duties of the office of according to the best of my ability. So help me God.”*

While school board members are elected by local citizens, they are responsible to the State of New Jersey. Under the New Jersey Constitution, they are responsible for providing a “thorough and efficient” education. Our State Supreme Court has interpreted that to mean an education that makes them competitive in the market place and able to be good citizens.



## 7. How do I get more information?

There is lots of information about the Paterson Public Schools on the following websites:



[www.paterson.k12.nj.us](http://www.paterson.k12.nj.us) contains local information.



[www.state.nj.us/education](http://www.state.nj.us/education) contains all the rules governing our schools and our School Report Cards.



[www.edlawcenter.com](http://www.edlawcenter.com) for information on the School Funding Reform Act of 2008.

For further information, call Irene Sterling at the Paterson Education Fund, 973-881-8914



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152 Market St. Suite 208  
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**2010 Educated Voters Guide  
to School Board Elections  
April 20, 2010**