

Paterson **EDUCATION**

Fund Report

November 3, 2004

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.

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

Putting Paterson on "The College Track"

It is the 21st century imperative: Paterson schools must graduate every Paterson child. All our children must leave high school prepared for further technical training or college. We must put every Paterson child on "the college track."

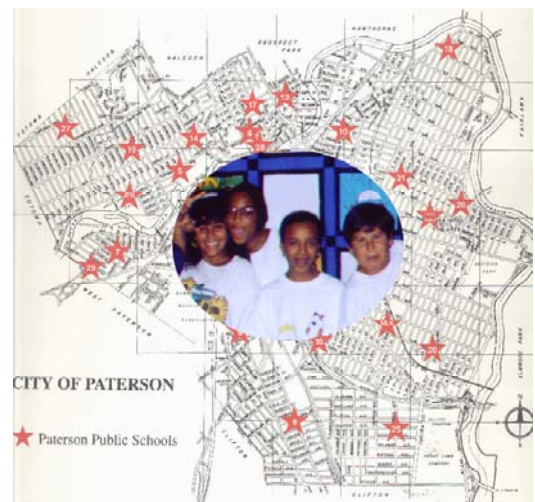
The global economy has erased all the 20th century options, especially the kinds of jobs that built Paterson's glory days. Strong backs and willing hands can no longer sustain a city's economy or a family's future. Our children must be able to contribute to the knowledge economy or be sentenced to dependence for life.

Paterson's schools were built and organized on the factory model that fueled a great city. But our nostalgia for Paterson's glory days cannot blind us to the reality that our schools must change. The rote learning that worked in the past, the 50% graduation rate that was acceptable in the past, can no longer continue. Our schools must now teach all our children to think critically, work in teams and use technology to create new knowledge. In other words, Paterson's children must be prepared for "the college track."

Since only 8% of Paterson residents have obtained a 4 year college degree or higher, few Paterson children have a college graduate in the family or the neighborhood. It makes the idea of going to college seem something that other people do.

We must change that notion.

In partnership with William Paterson University and other community partners, PEF is using the PBS series, "The College Track" to raise awareness and help people discern next steps for themselves and their networks and institutions. There is work to do in our schools to change both practice and attitudes. There is work in our community to engage parents, children and community institutions to practice the habits that lead children to the college track.



Together, we can assure that Paterson children are on the college track. We invite you to take action.

Paterson Education Fund

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Paterson Implements Abbott 2004

As we enter the seventh year of implementing the Abbott decision, the Commissioner of Education and the districts continue to battle over funding levels and regulations. As this issue of the PEF report goes to press the NJ Supreme Court is hearing arguments about the failure of the DOE to fully fund the 2004 Abbott preschool program. The Commissioner has also filed a motion with the Court to change whole school reform implementation.

Even with the ongoing wrangling, the Abbott mandates continue to garner national attention. The Education Trust's "The Funding Gap 2004" names New Jersey as one of a handful of states that has eliminated the funding gap and is showing academic success. The Abbott mandate is part of the basis for Congressional legislation, the "Student Bill of Rights" sponsored by Senator Dodd and co-sponsored by Senators Corzine and Lautenberg as well as Congressman Pascrell.

Paterson Public Schools have reached the following benchmarks in Abbott implementation for 2004.

Early Childhood: Full day four year old program: 1,735 [-67 from 2003]
Half day three year old program: 1,505 [-22]
All day Kindergarten: 2,083 [-5]

Facilities: Hazel/Marshall School under construction; International HS out to bid for construction; HARP Academy in design; the new Panther Academy opened in September 2004; the new Roberto Clemente School will open in Spring 2005.

Assessments and Testing: The testing changes required by the federal law, No Child Left Behind, make the data reporting too complex to summarize here. For the first time, we are able to follow the progress of limited English as well as Special Education students. Those students' scores are also now included in the district's overall scores. PEF will publish a more detailed, easy to read and understand report in early 2005.

Charter Schools

Paterson Charter School for Urban Leadership still seeking to regain its charter; currently operating under the Paterson Public Schools.

Paterson Charter School for Science and Technology, opened September 2003, now has 176 students.

Great Falls Charter Schools was denied its charter in August, but opened as a private school.

Two charter applications are under review for 2005.

PEF is a member of the Paterson Coalition for Our Children's Schools which provides details of school construction in Paterson. Call or e-mail PEF for more information.

Creating a College Bound Culture: Create Awareness

PEF is training Paterson residents to lead community discussions using PBS "The College Track" videos as the tool. Narrated by Andre Braugher, "The College Track" looks at the



barriers to college for many students and highlights the momentum of some schools and communities that are breaking down those barriers. It is an honest look at how race, ethnicity and poverty impact students as they attempt to be the first members of

their families to attend college. "This film is so powerful," says Anthony Davis, 1st Ward Councilman and director of PCCC's College bound program, "everyone should see it. Children try to meet the expectations of the important adults in their lives. If parents, family members and friends

believe that college is in a child's future, a child will believe it also."



PEF will begin training facilitators in both English and Spanish in January. Interested community members can attend either a Saturday January 8th session or two Thursday sessions on January 13 and 20. Another two trainings are scheduled for February. Call PEF at 973-881-8914 to register for the training. Facilitators will show the film and lead discussions in faith communities, schools, social clubs, libraries and other organizations.

In Schools, Engage Students in Their Learning

Placing Paterson children on the college track takes a special kind of teaching and learning. PEF is proud to announce four Paterson 2004/05 Champions of Active Learning [CAL] grants. CAL is a national program of the JP Morgan Chase Foundation. CAL engages students in hands-on discovery and experiential learning activities. This year's Paterson winners are:

Gladys Melendez, Build Academy, "Erasing the Lines Through Hip-Hop." Forty middle grades students from Paterson and Montclair will collaborate to create artistic expressions including dramatic performance, sculpture and dance for performance and exhibition at Montclair State University.



Lynn M. Menna and Marguerite Sullivan, PS # 18, "Facing History and Ourselves." One hundred and sixty students will research bias crimes throughout history including the Holocaust.



Sarah Sterling-Laldee, PS #2, "River Development Project." Seventy-five 8th graders will use Graphic Information Systems (GIS) software to create proposals for sustainable development of the Paterson riverfront and its effects on the economic and environmental well being of the habitat.



Lynn Tarrant and Barbara Jarosz, Charles Riley PS #9, "The Good - The Bad - The Ugly Truth About Drugs." One hundred and twenty students will create and perform original skits/role-plays/raps to depict how substance abuse affects their own lives and the society in which they live.



Since 1997, PEF partners with the JP Morgan Chase Foundation and the Public Education Network to reward middle grade teachers with \$5,000 for active learning projects.