



☑ An Educated Voter's Guide to Paterson's School Board Elections

September, 2016

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*



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www.paterson-education.org

Paterson Children Need Your Vote!

After 25 years of State control, we are finally making real progress toward returning Paterson Public Schools to local control. Paterson regained control of Operations, Fiscal and Personnel. There is an expectation that the remaining 2 areas, Instruction & Program and Governance will be returned over the next 2 years.

When the Board gains control of Governance, it will have full authority to decide who will be Superintendent. Since our current Superintendent is State appointed, it's likely that we will be searching for a new candidate. The School Board members we elect on November 8 will play a critical role in this process. You have a critical role also. Your vote will count in the selection of 4 members of this 9 member Board!

In addition to hiring and firing Superintendents, the school board has many other important roles. As elected community leaders, they must listen to the community's views and incorporate our needs into their decision-making. School board members must have a vision for our children's education and must be able to share that vision. They need to understand that their role is policy and oversight, not administrative. They must be willing to collaborate with their peers and the Superintendent to move the district forward. As the district faces the crisis of continued State underfunding and resulting budget cuts, they must absolutely put the needs of the children first!

The information in this guide will help you to make an informed vote. We encourage you to read it thoroughly and also to seek out additional information. PEF's Candidate Forum will be airing on the Paterson Education Access TV channel until Election Day. We will also post it on our Facebook page. Other community organizations will likely host candidates forums. Please take advantage of every opportunity to meet the candidates face to face. Ask some of the key questions listed on our website or make a list of your own.

Candidates for 3 three year terms include incumbents Christopher Irving, Flavio Rivera and Kenneth Simmons as well as Joseph Atallo, Emanuel Capers, Stacey Coleman and Corey Teague.

Two Year –Unexpired Term: incumbent Errol Kerr and Manny Martinez.

Paterson School Board Candidates 2016

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.

Candidates for a 3 year term [2017-2020]. Choose 3.

Joseph Atallo – No Information provided.

Emanuel Capers, 155 Sherwood Avenue. Cell Phone: 973-572-5223. Email: teamecapers@gmail.com.



Employment: Founder and Director of the 4th and Inches Foundation. **Length of residence in Paterson:** 31 years. **Education:** Elementary - Dr. Martin Luther King Jr, High School - Don Bosco, College – William Paterson University, Class of 2009. .

Family: Wife, Christina Capers, two Daughters Zyira and Leah Capers. **Past and Current Involvement in the Paterson Public Schools:** High School Football Coach, Advisor and Mentor. **Civic Involvements:** I sponsored and co-sponsored programs and events, which includes Back to School Drives, Annual Essay-Writing Contest, Keep Someone Warm Drive, Thanksgiving Turkey Drives, the Westside garden Project, Sport Camps, Community panel discussions and Fundraisers. Recently I sponsored a free trip to the Liberty Science Center for the Books and Balls Camp, Also, I participated in several “Stop the Violence” rallies, which helps promote a safer

Paterson. Furthermore, my dedication to serving my community has helped me reach children and families within the City of Paterson through direct service. **Number of Board meetings attended in the last six months:** 3. **Three major issues:** (1) Quality Leadership. (2) Parental Involvement. (3) Adequate Funding.

Stacey Coleman, 299 East 31st Street. Cell: 973-814-2936. Home Phone: Email:



coleman6forboe@gmail.com. **Employment:** Social Work Supervisor, Passaic County Board of Social Services, Adjunct Professor, Department of Family and Child Studies, Montclair State University. **Length of residence in Paterson:** Lifelong. **Education:** Master in Administrative Science; Fairleigh Dickinson University, Bachelor of Arts; Political Science, Morgan State University, Graduate of Eastside HS. **Family:** Single mother of two adult sons. One granddaughter, who currently attends Paterson Public School. **Past and Current Involvement in the Paterson Public Schools:** **Civic Involvements:** Currently a Commissioner of the Paterson Planning Board for the past three years; current Executive Board Member, (PWA) Professional Workers Association Union; current member of the Passaic County College Search Committee; an active member of Alpha Kappa Alpha

Sorority, Inc. and the Founder of Saving A Child Foundation, Inc. a non-profit youth organization. **Number of Board meetings attended in the last six months:** 3. **(3). Three major issues:** (1) Improving the lines of communication: the need is to have clear, concise, respectable and open communication between the school district, city government and the community. Understanding the important issues allow for more accepting results, more parental involvement and make educating our children a group effort. (2) Fiscal responsibility: There is a need for the district to spend more money in the classrooms, to make sure our students are better equipped to compete in society. When there is a lack of supplies and teachers, our children are faced with adversity. Building maintenance is of importance as well. Children need healthy environments to be able to thrive. (3) Refine the academic curriculum for our students: Our children are missing the basic skills, phonics, penmanship, study skills, reading comprehension, and grammar. We are also faced with a disadvantage in regards to technology, financial literacy courses, intern opportunities and college readiness courses, with dual enrollment. All of our children should be given the opportunity to prepare for college, as well as given trade opportunities.

Dr. Christopher C. Irving, 113 Dundee Avenue. Cell Phone: 973-348-5002. Email:



chris4paterson@gmail.com. **Employment:** Passaic County Workforce Development Board, Executive Director. **Length of residence in Paterson:** All my life.

Education: BA Ramapo College of NJ, MA- William Paterson University, and Ed.D – Seton Hall University. **Family:** Jocelyn Irving-mom, Farrah Irving-sister, Herman Irving-brother. **Past and Current Involvement in the Paterson Public Schools:**

Current Paterson Board of Education Member (President). **Civic Involvements:** September 2011, 2012, 2014 –College and Crier Forums, June 2011, 2013, 2015-Scholarship Saturday, 2012, 2013, 2016 - Vision and Eye Glass Screening day.

Number of Board meetings attended in the last six months: All. **Three major issues:** (1) Enhancing the math and Literacy rates of All our children. These two

content areas are the cornerstone of the educational process. As a community we need to ensure that all children are able to function at grade level. (2) Ensuring that all of our schools are safe an orderly to ensure learning occur. (3) Improving the districts commitment to our parents and community to engage all in the process of education.

Flavio Rivera,

No information provided.

Corey L. Teague, 65 Prince Street. Home Phone: 973-782-4011. Cell: 973-767-5980. Email:



clewisteague@gmail.com. **Employment Title and organization, if any:**

Parent Advocate (volunteer), Behavioral Therapist, Reflexologist, Counsellor & Mentor. **Length of residence in Paterson:** Lifelong resident. **Education:**

Completed Culinary Arts Program at PCCC, earned a Certificate in Behavioral Therapy, Ordained as a Ministry 1997. Family: Married 12 years to Keshanna Teague, 2 children Kaniyah (10) and Corey (7). **Past and Current**

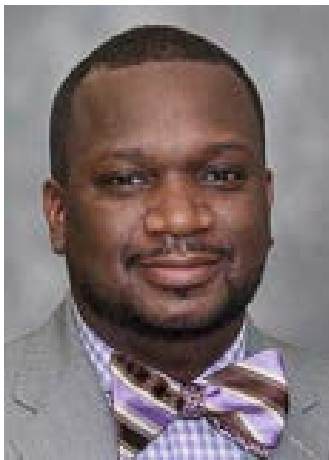
involvement in the Paterson Public Schools: Past member of the Paterson Board of Education. Attended every meeting, work with parents on a constant basis. In addition, I have made more trips to Trenton to fight for the children of Paterson in 2015 alone more than any current school board member. From opposing making PARCC a HS graduation requirement to lamenting the illegal underfunding of Paterson Public Schools. **Number of Board meetings**

attended in the last six months: 6. **(3).Three major issues** (1) Funding: We

are currently being illegally underfunded by the NJDOE. In 2018, PPS will be facing a deficit of \$186 Million dollars which will cause chaos if not corrected soon. (2) The lack of Arts Programs: Students have been systematically stripped of all arts programs. Art allows students to explore their imaginations, it allows them to express their innermost feelings. Art is essential to the overall educational experience for each student. It must be reinstated. (3) The need for Parental Involvement: This has by far been the most difficult mountain to climb. However, I have mastered it. In 2011, I fashioned a personal way to engage parents and I use it to its full potential. With a social media audience in the thousands it has become a science to me when it comes to reaching parents.

☑Vote on November 8 as if our children's futures depend on it, because they do! Look for the school board candidates section at the bottom of your general election ballot.

Kenneth L. Simmons (Coach Kenny), 76 E. 36th Street. Cell: 201-538-6143. Email:



klsimmons007@gmail.com. **Length of residence in Paterson:** Life Long Paterson Resident. **Past and Current Involvement in the Paterson Public Schools:** Current commissioner on Paterson Public School Board of Education in second term. **Civic Involvements:** Founding member and Vice President of Paterson Cares; Coach and community activist; Member of Integrity Lodge #51 Free and Accepted Masons PHA, Member of Golconda Temple #24 Prince Hall Shriners. **(3). Three major issues:** Improving curriculum and classroom instruction: Using a district wide instructional focus to meet students' needs. Practices in all classrooms that support the instructional focus, classroom setups that support the instructional focus, consistent materials, and resources used strategically to support the instructional focus, all school personnel engaged in instruction. Looking at student work and data in relation to the district/statewide Learning Standards to identify students' needs, improve assignments and instruction, assess student progress, and inform

professional development. Teachers developing exemplars of good work, displays of student work that meet standards and reflects the instructional focus, professional development based on teachers' and students' needs and peer coaching.

Candidates for a Two Year –Unexpired Term [2017-2020]. Choose 1.

Errol S. Kerr, 216 East 30th Street. Home Phone: 973-742-7042. Cell: 201-757-9966. Email:



errolesk@aol.com. **Employment:** Semi-Retired. Former Employment: Glory Global Solutions (1988-2013). **Length of residence in Paterson:** 36 years. **Education:** Ramapo College: Bachelors of Science Degree in Business Administration with concentration in Marketing. **Family:** Married: Two children and three grandchildren. **Past and Current Involvement in the Paterson Public Schools: Civic Involvements:** Member of the Paterson Board of Education from: 2006 to present; Chairman of the Fiscal Committee from 2006-2015: Also served as member of the Curriculum Committee over same period. In my work to improve quality of education in the district, I've partnered with Paterson Educational Fund (PEF) on many occasions prior to my election to the Board and during my tenure as a member of the Board. Some of the initiatives we partnered in included; traveling to New York City to observe and study the community schools model, workshops and advocacy in Trenton

for increase funding for our schools, Church: Member of the Love of Jesus Outreach Ministries 385 Broadway. **Number of Board meetings attended in the last six months:** I've not missed any of the regular meetings of the Board or workshops since the start of the calendar year. **(3). Three major issues:** (1) Flat funding: This is an issue which resonates rather deeply with me. The cost associated with instructional staffing alone represent approximately 70% of the district's operating budget. As funding remains flat, that number grows larger every year exposing the district to serious financial disaster if nothing changes. The fact is – if this trend is not reversed, sooner rather than later, our ability to provide some basic required services will be impacted severely. This must get fix and get fixed quickly. (2) Parental engagement: Research has shown that children perform at a higher level when parents are engaged in their social, emotional and educational development. Unfortunately, we are not seeing the kind of response from our parents to indicate to us that they do understand the danger they expose their children to when they are not engaged at that level. I consider this as a serious breach in our ability to move our educational system forward, and I'm committed to finding a way out of this quagmire. (3) Closing the Achievement Gap: This should be the primary purpose of all who seek to serve in this capacity. We have been experiencing a refreshing rebirth in recent times regarding improved outcomes. However, much more needs to be done to get us where we ought to be. I'm committed to getting needed technology in the hands of every child in the district.

Manny Martinez, Jr., 19 Market Street. Work Phone: 973-413-2057. Email: memartinez@optonline.net, mmartinex@ccsp.org. **Employment:** Teacher/Director of Community Schools at the Community Charter School of Paterson, Business Owner – Martinez Memorial LLC.



Length of residence in Paterson: 40 years as a Paterson resident. **Education:** Master’s Degree in Educational Leadership and a Bachelor’s Degree Mortuary Science. **Family:** Family has lived in Paterson for over 55 years. **Past and Current Involvement in the Paterson Public Schools:** Former 1st grade teacher in Paterson Pubic Schools and former Commissioner on the Paterson Board of education (2012-2016). **Civic Involvements:** Member of numerous city wide organizations including Team Hope and volunteer at countless events. **Number of Board meetings attended in the last six months:** 3. **(3). Three major issues:** (1) Curriculum Development – we must infuse a renewed sense of rigor, engagement and differentiation in all of our classrooms thus ensuring that all of our scholars are being reached. (2) The Arts – additional resources need to be allocated towards the arts.

Data indicates that students who are involved in the arts are more likely to perform better academically. One of my highlights working on the board during my first tenure was helping to bring the Paterson Music Project into Paterson Public Schools. (3) Recreation/After School Programming – our students do not have adequate access or resources or quality programming after the regular school day concludes. Wrap around services are desperately needed to ensure academic achievement as well as affording working parents the opportunity to have their children in a safe and productive environment while they are still at work.

☑ Paterson Board of Education Members 2016 Attendance

Attendance record for workshop meetings, special meetings and regular meetings, January 2016 – August 2016

Data on attendance and [lateness] is taken from official Board of Education minutes at

http://www.paterson.k12.nj.us/11_BOE/BOE.php

Term ends 2016	Workshop 5	Special 11	Regular 5	Term ends 2018	Workshop 5	Special 11	Regular 5
Christopher Irving	4	9 [1]	4	Oshin Castillo	5[1]	10 [4]	5 [1]
Flavio Rivera	3 [1]	11 [1]	2	Nakima Redmon	5	10 [1]	5
Kenneth Simmons	3	9 [1]	2				
Term ends 2017				Lateness: [x]: number indicates the number of lateness’s for each category of meetings. Members who are late can delay having a quorum to conduct business.			
Chrystal Cleaves	5	9	4				
Jonathan Hodges	5	11 [1]	5				
Lilisa Mimms	4 [2]	8 [4]	5 [2]				

☑ Visit These Websites for More Information on Education Issues That Affect Paterson Public Schools



<http://paterson-education.org/> and <https://www.facebook.com/PatersonEducation/>



www.paterson.k12.nj.us The district's official website.



www.state.nj.us/education Contains all the rules governing our schools and our School Progress Reports.



www.edlawcenter.com For information on the School Funding Reform Act of 2008 and other NJ Education policy issues.



<http://www.dignityinschools.org> challenges the systemic problem of pushout in our nation's schools and advocates for the human right of every young person to a quality education and to be treated with dignity.

☑ What the Board of Education Does

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. The School Board’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.

Current Board of Education Members



Dr. Christopher C.
Irving,
President



Ms. Chrystal
Cleaves,
Vice President



Ms. Oshin
Castillo



Dr. Jonathan
Hodges



Mr. Errol S.
Kerr



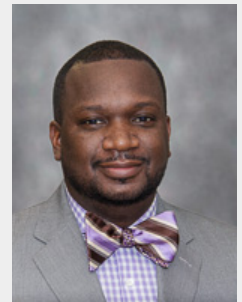
Dr. Lilisa
Mimms



Ms. Nakima
Redmon



Mr. Flavio
Rivera



Mr. Kenneth
Simmons

☑ The NJ School Board Oath of Office

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

“I do solemnly swear (or affirm) 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 this State, under the authority of the people. So help me God.

I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I possess the qualifications prescribed by law for the office of member of a board of education and that I will faithfully, impartially and justly perform all the duties of that office 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.



An Educated Voter's Guide to Paterson's School Board Elections

Questions about this guide may be addressed to Rosie Grant, PEF, 973-881-8914.

School Board Election Day is November 8, 2016.



Vote

As if your children's futures depend on it.

Because they do!

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Our Children Can't Vote but You Can!