

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **PATERSON BOARD OF EDUCATION RECEIVES PLAN TO TRANSITION TO LOCAL CONTROL**

*State District Superintendent calls it a monumental first step.*

PATERSON – The Paterson Public Schools Board of Education on Wednesday was presented N.J. Education Commissioner’s two-year transition plan to return the school district to local control.

“This is a monumental first step on a road Paterson schools have been wanting to travel for a long time,” said State District Superintendent Eileen F. Shafer, who is in her 27th year working in the district. “The teachers, the administrators, the staff – all of us know that we have a tremendous opportunity to bring Paterson schools back to the care of Paterson families. We’re not going to let this community down. More importantly, we’re not going to let the students down.”

“We’re at the point of the mission where we have liftoff, but it will take a lot of hard work before we can say our mission is accomplished,” said Board of Education President Oshin Castillo. “I know the board members are proud of the progress Paterson schools have made so far. I am committed to making sure this board does its part in making sure local control of our schools comes back to Paterson.”

The Paterson Public Schools District has been under state control since 1991. On May 2, 2018 the New Jersey Board of Education approved a resolution to put the district on a path to local control. Soon after that resolution was passed district and state officials began working together to complete the plan that was presented to the Board of Education tonight.

The two-year transition plan to local control lays out the terms and conditions for the return of the Paterson Public Schools District to local control. It calls for transparency and accountability on the part of Paterson Public Schools as it works to continue improvements in instruction, governance, personnel, programs, operations and fiscal responsibility.

Progress in these areas will be monitored by state-appointed highly skilled professionals (HSPs) who will be assigned to specific areas. If the district meets all of the expectations in the two-year plan, the state education commissioner will recommend the complete withdrawal of state intervention with the district in 2020.

“The administration and staff worked extremely hard to get us to this point, and we will continue to work hard until we achieve local control in 2020,” Shafer said. “Finally, after 27 years, the people of Paterson will have their voices heard in the decisions that guide how we educate our children.”

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