

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Paul Brubaker

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973-518-2298

**PATERSON PUBLIC SCHOOLS ENDORSED AS THE OWNER OF
OLD SCHOOL NUMBER 5**

Sale of property is imminent and will bring \$1 million to the district

PATERSON – Paterson Public Schools officials announced today that its Board of Education is the rightful owner of 383-391 Totowa Avenue, a.k.a. “the Old School 5 building,” according to the title company working on the property’s pending sale.

The Chicago Title Insurance Company endorsed the district’s title of ownership on the basis of an argument made by attorney Barry M. Marell of the law firm Apruzzese, McDermott, Mastro and Murphy, PC. Marell had noted that school boards were first created through a 1903 New Jersey statute. The law included a provision that automatically transferred the titles of school properties to the newly created school boards.

The title company’s endorsement resolves the conflict that arose when a deed was found citing the City of Paterson as the property owner, while the tax assessor’s office had listed the Paterson school board as the property owner.

It also paves the way for the pending \$1 million sale of the property, which the Paterson school board approved on May 16, 2018. That transaction is presently moving forward, and the revenue from the sale will be applied to the 2019-20 budget.

“This is a great big win for Paterson Public Schools and the families we serve,” said State District Superintendent Eileen F. Shafer. “We own the building. That means we’ll soon be tapping resources from its sale to continue bettering our programs for the children and families of Paterson.”

“To find out today that our schools will be receiving \$1 million is to find out that we are \$1 million closer to realizing our hopes for our students in Paterson. This is money that can be directed into our classrooms to benefit our students,” said Board of Education President Oshin Castillo. “I want to congratulate Ms. Shafer, Mr. Murray and everyone on the legal team who worked so hard to make this happen.”

“I’m very pleased with this result, but I must say that I’m not all that surprised,” said Robert E. Murray, general counsel for Paterson Public Schools. “Barry and his team did an outstanding job that included some great research. I know that the superintendent will do everything she can to make the most of this tremendous opportunity on behalf of Paterson’s students.”

“This is great news for Paterson’s school system,” said Marell. “I’m glad that the title company saw the logic and credibility of our argument so that Paterson schools will be able to realize some much-needed revenue.”

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