



Newark Board of Education

Where Passion Meets Progress

Committee Report

Committee Name: Personnel Committee

Location	Date	Time
Virtual	Tuesday, September 19th, 2023	5:30 PM
Board Members		
Hasani Council – Committee Chairperson	Dawn Haynes – Committee Member	
Josephine C. Garcia - Committee Vice Chairperson		
District Liaison & Superintendent Representative		
Dr. Yolanda Mendez		
Other District Staff		
Alice M. Best	Carlos Reyes	
Scott Carbone	Randy Schrader	
Justine Carter	Dimple Patel	
Meeting Summary		



Personnel Committee Chairperson Hasani Council opened the meeting at 5:30PM.

Dr. Mendez Welcomed all Board Members

Dr. Mendez reviewed **Staffing Updates**, which included vacancies for instructional positions categorized by job title and categorized by (SLTs).

It was reported that there were currently **77** instructional vacancies.

Committee members were reminded that this number should be viewed in context of the additional **211** Budgeted Instructional Positions added during our budget season.

Furthermore, it was reviewed that **14** vacancies were reported by schools as being covered by certified individuals at the schools, which makes the true vacancies at the moment as **63**.

The Personnel Chair Hasani Council thanked the committee for providing that information and the context behind it. He added that he was impressed with the continued movement of filling vacancies at the schools.

The meeting progressed to review the non-instructional vacancies, active non-instructional job postings, Civil Service Commission (CSC) hires, and reassignments. As Notification of Certification lists are received, HRS works diligently with hiring managers to place eligible candidates into permanent roles.

The meeting moved on to the review of Personnel Voting Actions, which included:

- Appointments
- Co-Curricular Activities
- Transfers
- Renewals
- Separations
- Worker Compensation Settlements, MOUs for Interns

- And Resignations/Retirements which were reviewed by Director Schrader who reviewed that during the 6-month period of:
 - May to October 2023 vs. May to October 2022: there were:
65 fewer Resignations and **2** fewer Retirements.It was reviewed with the committee that we are seeing clear evidence of retention in the district this year.
Board Member Garcia stated that this was very good news.

The committee recommended moving all voting resolutions to the entire board for approval.



The meeting then moved on to:

Other/New Business:

Committee Retreat Goals were reviewed: It was agreed that as per our Strategic Plan as a committee, we would like to continue to focus on:

- **Recruitment/Retention Strategies:** As per year four of the district's strategic plan, we look forward to:
 - Continue to increase and improve pipeline programs with local colleges and universities, HBCUs, and Hispanic-serving institutions. and
 - Continue to provide high-level customer service by utilizing user-friendly, efficient, and transparent tools to deliver cost-effective resources to all employees.

Ms. Haynes then asked to review the Resignation /Retirement data shared in the previous month and specifically asked to discuss data related to blacks. She asked what the district planned to improve the retention rate amongst blacks.

Dr. Mendez drew attention to the data and stated that the data pointed to the following:

- ◇ Blacks represent a majority of the NBOE instructional staff.
- ◇ Over the past five years, Black instructional staff have been retained at rates higher than other ethnicities in the NBOE instructional population.
- ◇ Blacks comprise over a third of all NBOE instructional staff and have been retained at higher rates than their counterparts.
- ◇ Over the last five years, the data demonstrates that Black instructional staff longevity is more extended than their counterparts.
- ◇ There was an increase in the number of instructional staff in every demographic in 2022-2023
- ◇ The overall resignation rate during the last five years has remained relatively stable except for 2019-2020, when the total number of resignations declined significantly due to COVID, which was the case for all organizations nationwide.

The meeting then moved to the Benefits review portion of the meeting.

Director Schrader shared comparison data from last year and this year, demonstrating that as a result of all the proactive measures we have taken, we are projecting premium savings for the district, which we expect will be an eventual savings for our employees.



This starkly contrasts many districts in the state suffering from increased premiums, which will more than likely result in employee increases.

It was shared that we can take advantage of these cost savings and continue to provide at no cost to our employees ongoing wellness programs such as Maven menopause and ongoing care and dedicated mental health supports. It was also shared that these savings will yield long-term benefits to our employees as we continue to increase wellness programs for our employees. It was explained that this includes enhanced diabetes programs. It was further explained that Self-insurance has demonstrated more visibility to data, and the costliest to our district is the diabetes conditions of our employees; therefore, we will implement more support in this area. Again, these programs will be at no cost to our employees.

It was also shared that HRS will host our first NBOE Health Wellness fair on Saturday, October 21st, at Rafael Hernandez School from 9:30-12:30.

During this time, all our Health and Wellness providers will provide information to our employees. And Aetna will be sponsoring breakfast!

Open enrollment will run from November 1st through November 20th.

New Health and wellness Flyers were shared with the committee, featuring some of our Principals! The committee shared how lovely the flyers were and how much they loved having our Principals represented!

The committee also shared last week's Vital Check program hosted at the Central office. We reviewed the Vital Check wellness program as a program- that ensures that our staff (especially those who generally do not get preventative carecheck—ups) can contact them by the district bringing them directly to them at a school site.

It was reviewed that Vital Check will be expanded from 8 schools to 25 schools this year to continue to grow the program until all schools can provide the Vital Check program at their site. Ultimately, we hope to ensure our employees are well and engaging in yearly preventative care examinations.

The committee was also reminded that the benefits team will present at two national conferences. The first is the American Association of School Personnel Administrators (AASPA), the National Organization for School HRS Officers, and the other is the Council of Great City Schools, both in October. We will present how the district Transformed our Medical Benefits to Effectively Delivery Employee Health and Wellness Through Communication, Automation, and Data Transparency.

Mr. Schrader, Dr. Mendez, and two other benefits team members will present how the district's benefits have evolved into a self-insured managed process these last five years and how we have successfully saved money for the district and our employees. We will also review how our Benefits package has emerged as a new recruitment tool for the district since it adds value to the



salary package. The Benefits team continues to build on the wellness program and is very excited about upcoming events in the new school year.

Committee Member Garcia shared with the committee how proud she was that we provide such Grade A benefits and wellness programs for our employees. She also wished that other organizations that serve public employees could benefit from such excellent benefits.

The meeting then moved to report on our Recruitment and retention efforts.

Recruitment Director Carlos Reyes shared how the office has been working diligently to support all offices and schools to fill all vacancies. It was reported that the district's recruitment plan continues to improve as we work with our partners (Wallace Foundation and New Leaders) to ensure a positive process as we engage in ensuring that our leader and teacher recruitment process is rigorous and efficient all the while focusing on the district's strategic plan.

Director Reyes shared that.

- We are prepping for a hiring fair to be held in October to assist with vacancies at the high school level. All teacher candidates are welcome to attend.
- We are attending a Career Fair at Kean University next week.
- We also plan to recruit teachers at the NJEA Teachers convention in November. he reminded the committee that we were the only district that participated last year to recruit and shared that it was a successful endeavor, so we will continue to do so again this year and spread the word that NBOE is hiring the best teacher candidates to join our movement.

Committee President Council thanked the committee for a job well done, and the meeting adjourned at 6:09.



Roger León
Superintendent

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