



*Camden City School District  
Office of the Superintendent*

201 N. Front Street,  
Camden, New Jersey 08102  
Tel. (856) 966-2000 ext. 38706 Fax (856) 966-2138

Paymon Rouhanifard  
Superintendent

Margaret J. Nicolosi  
Senior Advisor

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Contact: Marlene Coleman, Communications Department

[mcoleman@camden.k12.nj.us](mailto:mcoleman@camden.k12.nj.us)

## **February Board Meeting to Feature Greater Seating Capacity, More Time for Public Comment**

*Will foster more openness and community input*

**February 20, 2014--Office of the Superintendent, Camden, NJ** – Superintendent Paymon Rouhanifard and Board President Kathryn Blackshear announced today that the February Advisory Board meeting will take place in a new location that allows more people to attend. Scheduled for February 25 at 5:30 p.m., the Advisory Board will now meet in the auditorium of the Dudley Elementary School, located at 2250 Berwick Street in Camden.

In addition, Superintendent Rouhanifard and Board President Blackshear announced a new speaking policy that will ensure more community members have the opportunity to share feedback. Instead of two rounds of 10 people speaking for up to three minutes each, future Board meetings will reserve up to 90 minutes for public comment, with each speaker allotted three minutes. This change will increase the time devoted to public comment by 50 percent.

“Camden Public Schools are committed to becoming more family-friendly, and we want to make it as easy as possible for students and families to share feedback,” Rouhanifard said. “Everyone benefits when more people can engage in a constructive conversation about how to improve our schools.”

Past Board meetings were held in the Broadcast Center, located at 1600 Pine Street, which has a capacity of about 80. By comparison, the Dudley auditorium has a capacity of more than 500. Advisory Board meetings will still be recorded and aired on the Camden Public Schools public access station, Comcast Channel 19 and Verizon Fios Channel 30.

The new public speaker policy is effective immediately. The Board can vote to expand the time for public feedback beyond 90 minutes, at 30-minute increments, if the limit is reached.

**more**

These changes follow last month's release of [the Camden Commitment](#), which outlined five promises based on community suggestions. The five promises include:

- Safe Students, Safe Schools
- 21<sup>st</sup> Century School Buildings
- Student Support, Great Teaching and Learning
- Serving Parents
- Central Office Effectiveness

*For additional information, please contact Marlene Coleman from the Camden City School District Department of Communications at [mcoleman@camden.k12.nj.us](mailto:mcoleman@camden.k12.nj.us).*