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Contacts: Paul Brubaker (Paterson Public Schools)  
[pbrubaker@paterson.k12.nj.us](mailto:pbrubaker@paterson.k12.nj.us)  
973-518-2298

Jane Dollinger (SodexoMagic)  
[Jane.dollinger@sodexo.com](mailto:Jane.dollinger@sodexo.com)  
520-247-9985

## **Paterson Public Schools and SodexoMagic Announce Food Service Partnership**

**PATERSON, N.J.** – Paterson Public Schools and SodexoMagic, the joint venture between Magic Johnson Enterprises and Sodexo, Inc., announced their food services partnership. SodexoMagic will provide nutritional services, including breakfast and lunch, to the district’s students, while the district’s Food Services Department will continue to be the School Food Authority providing oversight and monitoring of the overall operations of food services in schools. The Board of Education commissioners approved the partnership on December 14, voting in favor of partnering with SodexoMagic for the remainder of the school year.

“As we showed during the pandemic shutdown, the district is committed to ensuring our students have access to nutritious meals so they can be at their best every day,” said Superintendent of Schools Eileen F. Shafer. “The food services management company combined with the experience and expertise of our Food Service Department professionals enables the district to provide to our students nourishing meals that will appeal to their appetites and look appetizing.”

SodexoMagic is excited to celebrate Paterson’s diversity. With the community in mind, SodexoMagic will feature culturally diverse menus such as Green Chili Chicken with Spanish Rice, Jollof Rice, and other culturally diverse menu options. Outreach and communication materials will also be translated to encourage inclusion and participation from students and parents, helping achieve SodexoMagic’s goal of ensuring all students have access to fresh, healthy foods while in school while also uplifting and advocating for the communities they serve.

“We are proud to partner with Paterson Public Schools and deliver culturally diverse nutritious meal solutions. We are dedicated to supporting the Paterson community through food equity initiatives that combat food insecurity, health and nutrition education, and economic empowerment,” Earvin “Magic” Johnson said. “This is at the heart of our commitment to the communities we serve every day, and we are honored to be on this winning team with teachers, staff, and school leaders.”

SodexoMagic will work to enhance community engagement, partnering with the district to curate a community engagement program each year to assist Paterson Public Schools in achieving its community impact goals. The partnership will be built around elevating the student culinary experience, enhancing student engagement, and training, transition and transformation of staff.

“Our mission is to empower communities, so we are proud to be an integral part of this diverse community in Paterson,” Selena Cuffe, president of SodexoMagic, said. “We know our nutritious menus, student engagement, and celebration of culturally affirming, sustainable foods make a big difference in kids’ lives. We also remain committed to building local economic development through our strong relationships with small businesses and diverse suppliers.”

### **About Paterson Public Schools**

Paterson Public Schools serves 25,000 students pre-K to 12th grade in New Jersey’s third-largest city. While the Paterson community may be classified as low-income, many of its students are high-achieving. More elementary school students are reading at or above grade level, and more high school students are earning college credits through Advanced Placement exams and taking college-level courses before graduation. Paterson Public Schools stands out as one of only 17 school districts in New Jersey that offer the competitive International Baccalaureate program, and one of only four districts with a P-TECH high school, a program that, in collaboration with IBM and Passaic County Community College, graduates students with an associate degree in applied science and practical tech sector experience.

### **About SodexoMagic**

SodexoMagic was formed in 2006 through a joint venture between Magic Food Provisions (MFP), which is owned by NBA all-star Earvin “Magic” Johnson, and Sodexo Inc. to provide food and facilities management services to businesses, hospitals, schools, and universities. SodexoMagic was founded with the purpose of empowering the communities it serves, creating opportunities by hiring locally, and purchasing goods and services from minority and women-owned businesses. With a 51 percent ownership interest by MFP, SodexoMagic has been certified as a minority-owned and managed company by the Minority Supplier Development Council and the Southern California Minority Business Development Council, Inc. The joint venture employs over 6,500 people at approximately 1,500 locations across the United States.

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