

先锋中英双语学校

Pioneer Valley Chinese Immersion Charter School

Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes

September 3, 2020 at 6:00 PM

School Location: PVCICS, 317 Russell Street, Hadley, MA 01035

This meeting was held via Zoom and Telephone access due to the current State mandated school closure from the Coronavirus pandemic. The host for this meeting was Board Chair Paula Quinn with co-facilitator Vice-Chair Aime DeGrenier.

In attendance: Board Chair Paula Quinn, Vice Chair Aime DeGrenier, Dan O'Shea, A. Juliet Larke, Charles "Nick" Bagley, Peter Wood, Elizabeth "Betty" Larivee, Cynthia Farmer, Edison Santana, Ying "Elaine" Wang (arrived mid-meeting), Executive Director Richard Alcorn, Principal Kathy Wang, and, Attorney Fred Dupere

Absent: Lian Duan, Scott Livingstone, and Faculty Representative Hannah Treworgy

Meeting was officially called to order by the Chair at 6:05 PM. She spoke of building a sense of community by showing the faces of Board members on the Zoom screen. Paula also recognized Vice-Chair Aime as co-facilitator of this meeting.

Public Comment: Natalia (Parent of a Grade One student) spoke about the need to have young children return to the school rather than staying on remote learning. She asked that PVCICS develop a new plan that allows for differences in re-entry standards for younger versus older students.

Administrative Items: Minutes of Previous Meeting(s):

Minutes of the August 6, 2020 Meeting were presented for review. No corrections were noted. Aime made a motion to approve the minutes; seconded by Juliet. Roll call vote for approval: Aime, Nick, Paula, Betty, Dan, Juliet, Cynthia, Edison; Peter abstained. Motion passed.

Minutes of the August 27, 2020 Special Meeting were presented for review. Aime indicated that page 2 should have some edits: (1) at the top of the page the wording "emotional responses" should be changed to "responses" and (2) the question regarding the Northampton YMCA should say "exploring partnering". Dan made a motion to approve the minutes with these two edits; seconded by Nick. Roll call vote was unanimous approval: Aime, Peter, Nick, Paula, Betty, Dan, Juliet, Cynthia, and, Edison.

The meeting schedule for this year is not ready for discussion. However, the next Regular Board Meeting will be scheduled for Thursday, October 1, 2020 at 6:00pm via Zoom and phone access.

Annual Report: Chair Paula indicated that this report was compiled by ED Richard and Principal Kathy. DESE requires this report on an annual basis and it must be submitted by July 31st. The Board is not required to approve this document. She thanked Richard and Kathy for the timely submission of the report in light of all the other documents being required by DESE.

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Evaluation of Executive Director:

- Chair Paula explained that this document was the Summative Evaluation Report for the 2018-19 school year. The previous Board Chair had compiled the evaluation results of individual Board members; however, there was a delay in getting the final summary results to the Board. These results will be transferred to the DESE formatted evaluation form and then reviewed by ED Richard. Both Chair Paula and ED Richard will sign the document and place it on file. Overall, the document gave Ed Richard scores that “MET” his goals and were “PROFICIENT” in his responsibilities. Attorney Dupere indicated that it was appropriate for the Board to accept this document as presented and ED Richard could add comments to the final document without changing any of the evaluation “scores”. Peter made a motion to accept the 2018-19 Summative Evaluation Report of ED Richard; seconded by Nick. Chair Paula was reminded that the vote for this document only involved Board members during that time period. Roll call vote for acceptance of the document: Aime, Peter, Nick, Paula, Betty, Dan, and, Juliet. Motion passed. NOTE: Cynthia and Edison were not Board members in 2018-19.
- The 2019-2020 Evaluation of ED Richard will be done in the next few months. It will follow the same process to include (1) reviewing documentation presented by ED Richard to support attainment of his goals, and (2) gathering individual evaluation responses from Board members, and (3) compiling responses into a Summative Evaluation Report. More information will be given to the Board on this matter.

Committee and Task Force Reports:

Personnel and Grievance Committee: Chairperson Peter reported:

- ✓ As the new school year starts, new annual goals will be expected from ED Richard and Principal Kathy. These will be reviewed by the committee and hopefully presented to the Board at the October meeting for final approval.
- ✓ Contracts for ED Richard and Principal Kathy continue for this school year.
- ✓ Required observations for Principal Kathy will be determined. Having the school in remote learning may create modifications to the typical observation process.
- ✓ New Board member Cynthia Farmer has been added to the Personnel Committee.

Trusteeship Committee: Chairperson Betty reported:

- ✓ The Trustee Handbook is in the process of being updated. Current Board members should review their bios as posted on the school’s website for any edits or changes.
- ✓ An ad for the one-year Board position was in the newspaper last weekend and will run for a second time this weekend. The information has also been posted on the school website. To date, there is one applicant for this position.

Finance Committee: Board Chair Paula reported:

- ✓ Committee Chair Elaine had indicated that she would be late in joining this meeting because of another commitment. Her report will be given when she joins the meeting.

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Principal's Report: Principal Kathy stated:

- The meeting of 8/27/2020 was a helpful discussion on the issue of reopening due to the engagement that occurred with families and staff.
- The staff has been putting in a lot of long hours in preparation for opening the new school year. Everyone is preparing for remote learning this fall.
- Thanks to the Board for approval of the remote learning re-opening plan.
- Parental concerns and statements, as collected during the meeting on 8/27, have been received and are being reviewed by the staff and administration.
- Building construction is ongoing to renovate some areas as well as installing bathroom partitions for covid-19 health and safety requirements.
- Regarding Natalia's statements in Public Comment: the school must work with the Safety and Health Metrics as well as input from staff and families when considering any plan for returning to the building.
- An important consideration for re-entry to the building would be the availability of "Rapid Testing". At this time, only "Mobile Units" are available for Covid-19 testing.
- The staff has reported that they are happy with the decision for remote learning. The educational program is strong and positive. Social-emotional activities will be built into the on-line lessons. Staff will be checking in with parents and older students to develop a better sense of community and insure positive educational outcomes.
- The school network has been upgraded and 100 new Chrome books have been received. Luckily, this order was placed early enough to insure delivery to PVCICS in contrast to other schools that are still on the back order list.
- Curb side pickup of curriculum and supply kits has been done. As needed and requested, computer equipment and high school science equipment has also been loaned to students.

Executive Director's Update: ED Richard reported:

- ❖ Enrollment is about 565 students. The target is 550 students for financial stability. Attrition is unknown at this moment and backfilling will be done at the elementary level. Actual enrollment will be determined the first week of school.
- ❖ There are 44 students enrolled in Kindergarten and more on the waitlist so those classes will be totally enrolled.
- ❖ The high school enrollment is expected to expand in comparison to last year as current students move up in grades. While this is positive growth, it will also create difficulty with classroom space requirements under social distancing.
- ❖ At this time, student recruitment for September 2021 is not being done. The process will start again in the late fall.
- ❖ Facility Plan and Renovations have already been discussed by Principal Kathy. Bathroom partitions are metal not plastic to insure durability. The outdoor shed will be used for storage so indoor space is opened for classroom use.

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- ❖ The retainer with Attorney Fred Dupere and Firm needs to be increased because of the amount of work that is being done for PVCICS. The current rate of \$750 per month will be increased to \$1000. This change does not require a vote by the Board.

Communications:

- ✚ PVCICS Communication Policy: ED Richard referred to the Policy as developed in 2017 and included in the Trustee Handbook. This policy delineates the oversight responsibilities of the Board and the day-to-day operational duties of the ED and Principal. He felt that some actions of the Board may be over-stepping their responsibilities in oversight and leaning into operational duties. He brought this policy to the attention of the Board for clarity on their roles and responsibilities.
- ✚ Open Meeting Law: Chair Paula brought this information to the Board for a review so we do not develop any conflicts with the law. Atty. Dupere stated that we need to understand that working groups and committees that have deliberations and make recommendations must operate under OML unless they are only collecting data that makes no recommendations.
- ✚ Vice-Chair Aime stated that she would like to clarify and probably update the 2017 Communications Policy around the use of e-mails, e-mail servers, and what constitutes a central location for storage of this information. Betty indicated that this policy could be reviewed by the Trusteeship Committee and updated in collaboration with Atty. Dupere. The Board would have final approval for any edits to the Policy.

Finance Committee: Board Chair Paula stated that Elaine had joined the meeting and would now give her report. Chair Elaine reported:

- ✓ Committee members will remain the same with Board members Nick and Dan and Community Member Harold Trazzimo.
- ✓ She has consulted with ED Richard and Business Manager Youko Parsons for information on the financial aspects of PVCICS.
- ✓ The Audit Report is due for submission in November so the committee will be meeting in October to review this report and make recommendations to the Board.
- ✓ The school Credit Card Policy and ongoing usage will be reviewed by the committee.

Board Practices and Processes: Chair Paula reported:

- E-mail accounts at “pvcics.org” have been set-up for all Board members. Concern was voiced at having another account to manage.
- Chair Paula is looking for ways to operate in a united way and to develop stronger lines of communication while doing Zoom sessions.
- At this time, the Board does not have translators or interpreters. Material regarding the Board on the website is posted only in English. Is there a way to get agendas and meeting

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minutes translated – and what are the costs? Discussion mentioned Google Translator and the possible use of high school students via their Service Club requirements.

- Board meeting agenda are created by Chair Paula and ED Richard. All Board members are encouraged to send items for consideration. Chair is looking into possibility of creating a portal for this area to better develop overt communications within the Board
- Board meetings using Zoom are being co-facilitated by Vice-Chair Aimee. Chat rooms are also being monitored. Other Board members are welcomed to volunteer as a co-facilitator.
- Recording Zoom Meetings and using Chat Room transcripts is a legal consideration. Atty. Dupere stated that there was a recent legal opinion on these topics and he would get the information to the Board.

Board Development: Chair Paula reported:

- A list of topics had been e-mailed to the Board for consideration. These will be reviewed and discussed throughout the upcoming year.
- A discussion related to staffing information was determined to be a probable conflict for the Board. All matters related to personnel are operational items; personnel issues must be handled in Executive Sessions.

Board Member Updates: None

New Business: None

Having no further business, Chair Paula read the following statement:

The PVCICS Board of Trustees will enter into Executive Session per M.G.L. Chapter 30A Section 21(a) 3: To discuss strategy with respect to litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the public body, and the Board so declares. The Board meeting will not re-convene after Executive Session.

Chair Paula made a motion to adjourn the Regular Meeting of the Board and go into Executive Session; seconded by Betty. Roll call vote was unanimous approval: Board Chair Paula Quinn, Vice Chair Aime DeGrenier, Dan O’Shea, A. Juliet Larke, Peter Wood, Charles “Nick” Bagley, Elizabeth “Betty” Larivee, Ying “Elaine” Wang, Cynthia Farmer, and Edison Santana.

Regular session of the PVCICS Board of Trustees Meeting adjourned at 8:20 pm.

Minutes approved at Board of Trustees Meeting on October 27, 2020

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