

先锋中英双语学校

Pioneer Valley Chinese Immersion Charter School

Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes

December 2, 2021 at 7:00 PM

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

This meeting was held via Zoom and Telephone access in accordance with current State guidelines regarding the Coronavirus pandemic. The host for this meeting was Executive Director Richard Alcorn.

In attendance: Board Chair Cynthia Farmer, Vice-Chair Mike Rooney, Sujane Wu, Dan O'Shea, Peter Wood, Gina Ocasion, Elizabeth "Betty" Larivee, Ying "Elaine" Wang, Frank Soleimani (joined meeting at 7:20pm), Faculty Representative Greg Rota, and Student Representative Augusto Schwanz. Absent: Edison Santana and Ann Kochis.

Others in attendance: Executive Director Richard Alcorn, Principal Kathy Wang, and Previous Board Member Charles "Nick" Bagley.

Meeting was officially called to order by the Chair at 7:01 PM. Chair Cynthia completed a roll call for attendance of Board members.

Public Comment: None

Administrative Items:

Minutes of the October 28, 2021 Board Meeting were presented for review. No corrections were noted. Mike made a motion to approve the minutes; seconded by Dan. Roll call vote: Approval from: Cynthia, Betty, Elaine, Mike, Gina, and Sujane; abstaining from the vote due to not attending this meeting: Dan, Peter, and Greg.

Committee Appointments: Chair Cynthia announced that Juliet Larke had resigned from the Board effective on 11/10/21 so an opening existed on the Personnel Committee. She had spoken with Gina Ocasion about this committee and Gina agreed to be a member. Chair Cynthia also wanted to fill a position on the Trusteeship Committee. She asked Elaine Wang to consider the position; Elaine accepted the appointment. In accordance with the Bylaws, a motion was made by Cynthia and seconded by Peter to accept Elaine as a member of the Trusteeship Committee; roll call vote was unanimous approval: Cynthia, Dan, Betty, Elaine, Peter, Gina, Mike, Sujane, and Greg.

Committee and Task Force Reports:

Trusteeship Committee: Chairperson Betty reported:

- ✓ The committee held a meeting on November 18, 2021.
- ✓ Editing of the Board Handbook has finally been completed and it has been e-mailed to all Board members.
- ✓ The committee began work on the Board Self-Evaluation document. There was a lot of discussion about revisions. Work will continue on the document at the next meeting.

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- ✓ Spring recruitment for new Board members will start in February 2022. There will be five (5) vacancies that can be filled in Class A for 2022-2025. Further information on recruitment will be presented to the Board in the coming months.
- ✓ The committee held an election for a new Chair and Frank Soleimani was elected.
- ✓ Backfilling of the current Board vacancy due to Juliet's resignation was discussed but no action was taken.

Finance Committee: Chairperson Elaine reported:

- ✓ The budget is in good shape with no concerns at this time.
- ✓ The committee recommends that staff members get an End-of-Year bonus payment up to \$1000 in accordance with their FTE. This recommendation will include ED Richard and Principal Kathy. Kathy immediately spoke up and stated that she would not accept the bonus payment; ED Richard stated the same. Betty made a motion to approve the pro-rated staff bonus payment; seconded by Elaine. Roll call vote was 9 in favor: Cynthia, Dan, Betty, Elaine, Peter, Gina, Mike, Frank, and Sujane; Greg abstained due to Conflict of Interest.
- ✓ ED Richard stated that some staff have been doing extra duties and will be paid at an hourly rate for this extra work. This work and payment is separate from the EOY Bonus.

Personnel and Grievance Committee: Peter gave the committee report:

- ✓ The committee held a meeting on September 30th and elected Juliet as the new committee chair. However, she resigned as of 11/10/21 so there is no current Chair for the committee. As the previous Chair, he will schedule a meeting for a new election.
- ✓ Principal Kathy has submitted her 2020-21 Summative Evaluation Report and her 2021-22 Annual Goals. These documents will be reviewed by the committee and brought to the Board for approval.
- ✓ As discussed at the last Board meeting, the 2021-22 Annual Goals for ED Richard were reviewed, edited, and approved by this committee; they were also previously sent to Board members for their review. There was no discussion or questions so Peter made a motion to accept the 2021-22 Annual Goals for ED Richard; motion seconded by Betty. Roll call vote was unanimous approval (10 votes).

Principal's Report: Principal Kathy reported via a PowerPoint presentation:

- The current school year is only in-person learning for all K-12 students. Sixty-one days (a third of the school year) has been completed.
- Current enrollment is 572 students with families located all over the Pioneer Valley. October 1st SIMS Report to DESE shows that the ethnic breakdown is (1) White, (2) Multi-Racial, (3) African-American, and (4) Asian.
- Covid testing (Pooled and Test/Stay) has been approved at the school and will be starting for the 400 or so students that have returned permission slips.
- An increase in Covid cases during the winter months is expected so mitigation strategies will remain in place as aligned with DESE, CDC, and DPH guidelines and requirements.

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- Students that are sent home due to Covid-related issues are considered as “excused absences”; other students staying at home are not excused absences because there is no remote learning allowed at this time by DESE.
- Betty asked about the status of reviewing MCAS and other testing reports. Principal Kathy said the data is available and will be discussed at the next Board meeting.
- Betty also asked about a review of the Family Handbook which the Board has not approved since October 2019. Principal Kathy said this lengthy document was recently updated and is posted on the school website so Board members have access to it; it can be reviewed at the next Board meeting. Betty commented on the responsibilities of the Board in reviewing this document to approve the Procedures and Policies used at PVCICS.
- Principal Kathy asked Faculty Rep. Greg Rota to address school athletics because he is the Athletic Director. Greg said: Fall sport season has closed; the school changed from the River Valley Athletic League to the MIAA League so students are no longer traveling great distances for games or competitions; Cross Country and Boys Soccer had winning seasons as State Champs; students are participating on Co-Op Teams with other schools because PVCICS does not have enough students for some Teams; a late bus to the Springfield area would be advantageous for athletes to return home. ED Richard said this may be a possibility – Greg should develop a proposal that could be discussed with the bus company.

Executive Director’s Report: ED Richard reported:

- ❖ There are currently 73 applications on file for fall 2023 in grade K to 6 and 9; 27 of these are for siblings of current students. The first lottery will occur in March 2023.
- ❖ The Enrollment Policy was previously approved by the Board. As of 10/28/21, it appeared that all revisions were completed and complied with current requirements so the document was submitted for final approval although there may still be some “technical changes” as requested by DESE. They did request that (1) PVCICS have limited lotteries for enrollment and (2) backfilling of students does not occur in grades 7, 8, 10, and 11 so applications should not be accepted for these grades.
- ❖ State Rep Dan Carey will be visiting the school on Dec. 16th. ED Richard will discuss school expansion with him.
- ❖ The Director of Education Cynthia Wong from TECO in Boston will be visiting the school on Dec. 17th. She wants to make a connection with the staff from Taiwan for possible cultural and educational exchanges.
- ❖ The Asia Society will no longer be supporting our Confucius Classroom. They have passed this responsibility to a new contact. PVCICS has developed a sister-school relationship with Chengdu Shade High School.
- ❖ Betty asked questions about the Financial Report dated 9/30/21 and e-mailed to the Board on 12/1/21. She questioned (1) the line item termed “Suspense” on page two of the

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Balance Sheet; (2) the 99% expenditure of the line item for Paraprofessional Salaries when only three months of the school year has elapsed in this report; and similarly (3) the 46% expenditure in Consultant expenditures. She noted that although the bottom line is very solvent, these are the same line items that were questioned and seriously over spent in previous years. ED Richard stated that some salaries may be charged to the wrong line item – he will work with Anita Maloney to address these questions.

Evaluation of Executive Director: Chair Cynthia stated that she has not yet compiled all the responses for ED Richard's 2020-2021 Evaluation. She will work on this document and have it prepared for the January Board Meeting.

New Business:

- None

Having no further business, Chair Cynthia thanked everyone for their participation in tonight's meeting which was a bit lengthy due to the cancelled November meeting. She then read the following statement: The PVCICS Board of Trustees will enter into Executive Session per Chapter 30A Section 21(a) 6 – To consider the purchase, exchange, lease or value of real property. Open session will not reconvene at the conclusion of the Executive Session.

She called for a motion to adjourn the Regular Meeting and move into Executive Session. Peter made the motion; seconded by Betty. Roll call vote was unanimous approval (10 votes). Meeting adjourned at 8:49pm.

Minutes approved by the Board of Trustees on January 6, 2022

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