

先锋中英双语学校

Pioneer Valley Chinese Immersion Charter School

Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes

August 5, 2021 at 6:00 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, Elizabeth “Betty” Larivee, Mike Rooney, Frank Soleimani, Sujane Wu, Ann Kochis, A. Juliet Larke (joined the meeting at 6:06pm), and Gina Occasion (joined meeting at 6:17pm).

Absent: Ying “Elaine” Wang, Vice-Chair Edison Santana, Peter Wood, and Dan O’Shea.

Others in attendance: Executive Director Richard Alcorn, Principal Kathy Wang, and Student Representative Sebastian English. There was also one parent that listened to the meeting.

Meeting was officially called to order by the Chair at 6:01 PM.

Public Comment: None

Administrative Items:

- ✚ Minutes of the June 22, 2021 Meeting were presented for review. No corrections were noted. Betty made a motion to approve the minutes; seconded by Mike. Roll call vote: Unanimous approval from Sujane, Frank, Mike, Ann, Betty, and Cynthia.
- ✚ For the position of Vice Chair: The current Vice-Chair was absent from this meeting. No nominations or self-nominations were put forth. The Board’s consensus was to postpone the election for this position until the next meeting.
- ✚ Introduction of Board members: Chair Cynthia apologized for not doing this last month. She then called on each Board member to introduce themselves.
- ✚ Trusteeship Committee Appointment: Chair Cynthia indicated that the committee would be comprised of Edison, Betty, Sujane, Frank, and Cynthia. No other Board members indicated an interest or self-nominated. Mike made a motion to approve the committee members; seconded by Ann. Roll call vote was unanimous approval: Sujane, Frank, Mike, Gina, Ann, Juliet, Betty, and Cynthia.
- ✚ Other Committees: Per Board Bylaws, the Finance Committee will be developed by Treasurer Elaine; Dan is currently a member. This committee requires a minimum of two Board members and also currently has two Community Representatives. The Personnel Committee does not have any requirements for the number of members. This committee will be Peter, Juliet, Betty, Mike, and Cynthia.
- ✚ At this time, Gina and Ann have yet to be assigned to a committee.

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Committee and Task Force Reports:

Trusteeship Committee: Chairperson Betty reported:

- ✓ All new Board members have received a copy of the Board Bylaws
- ✓ Editing of the Board Handbook is currently being completed and will be distributed in the next few weeks.
- ✓ The committee will hold a meeting in the next few weeks to elect a new Chair and develop a schedule for work to be completed this year.

Finance Committee: Chairperson Elaine was absent so ED Richard reported:

- ✓ The FY'22 Budget was completed and approved at the June 24th Board meeting.
- ✓ Updated financial numbers were included in the Annual Report as submitted to DESE by July 30th.
- ✓ Grant money has been, and still is, being received.

Personnel and Grievance Committee: Chairperson Peter was absent to Chair Cynthia reported:

- ✓ The new 2021-2025 contract for Principal Kathy was sent to all Board members.

Alternate Lease: ED Richard reported:

Due to ongoing space constraints with the school building, for the past two years the school has rented off site space of 1000 sq. feet for the Business Office as used by ED Richard and Business Manager Youko Parsons. DESE has now indicated that this space must be designated as “educational space” in the renewal paperwork and Charter Amendment. Given that no educational or academic services are provided at this space, the lease and request for a Charter Amendment for this space will be terminated. Youko will be working remotely and Richard will find a desk space within the school building.

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

- The Charter Renewal Request was submitted to DESE as required by July 30th.
 - DESE expects to be on-site to complete classroom observations and a variety of focus groups related to the Charter Renewal on Tuesday, 10/26/21. One focus group will be set up for Board members – further information on time will be determined.
- School schedule for the upcoming year will be In-Person, five days a week. The start dates will be New Teachers on 8/18; Other Staff on 8/23; Students on 9/1/2021.
 - (a) Masks will be required in the building and on school buses; Social Distancing will be followed. (b) Bubblers will not be functioning; Lockers will not be used for Middle and High School students. (c) On 7/30/21, DESE sent out a set of “Guidelines” for re-opening. More information is expected to follow. (d) School Nurses will be monitoring staff/students and using the approved Health Protocols. (e) Daily schedules for academics and athletics will return to the pre-Covid timelines. (f) Virtual Parent-Teacher Conferences, Meetings, and On-Line Forms will continue to be used. (g) Technology access will continue with the loan of computers.

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A question was asked about the requirement for staff vaccines – Kathy stated that this is a “personal health decision” and as such, will not be mandated at this time by the school.

Executive Director’s Report: ED Richard reported:

- ❖ Student enrollment is at 584 per DESE allowance. Fall attrition is unknown at this time. There are students on the waitlist for every grade. We are at capacity in 9th grade so no students can be admitted at that grade level.
- ❖ Several months ago, the Board reviewed and discussed an option to allow Verizon to put a cell tower on the school roof. Upon further review of this information, it has been determined that this would not be a profitable venture for the school. The proposal will not be accepted.
- ❖ The Annual Report was submitted to DESE as required by July 30th.
- ❖ Financially, the school is in a good position. Academic results continue to be very positive.
- ❖ School expansion needs to be discussed. DESE will require that paperwork be submitted by 11/1/2021. In the past, DESE has approved one expansion request to add the high school but has not supported other requests from PVCICS to increase enrollment. Recently, the school has gotten a lot of very positive press for high academic standards, safety of our diverse student population, and success as an integrated regional magnet school.

Evaluation of Executive Director: ED Richard stated:

He will compile a binder of “evidence” to indicate how he has met his 2020-2021 Annual Goals and the Charter School Criteria. The approved format for this evaluation has been sent to each Board member for their review. All results will be compiled into a final document which the Board must then approve. New Board members will not be responsible for completing this 2020-2021 Evaluation Cycle.

New Business: Chair Cynthia discussed the following:

The length of Board meetings depends on the agenda items. Generally, meetings will be under two hours in length.

Having no further business, Chair Cynthia called for a motion to adjourn. Juliet made a motion to adjourn the Regular Board Meeting; motion seconded by Mike. Roll call vote was unanimous approval: Betty, Frank, Mike, Sujane, Gina, Ann, Juliet, and Cynthia.

Meeting adjourned at 7:23 pm.

Minutes approved by the Board of Trustees on September 2, 2021.

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