

先锋中英双语学校

Pioneer Valley Chinese Immersion Charter School

Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes

October 20, 2022 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 Remote Board Meetings during the Coronavirus pandemic. The host for this meeting was Executive Director Richard Alcorn.

NOTES: Board Meeting scheduled for September 2, 2022 was cancelled.

Board Meeting scheduled for October 6, 2022 was rescheduled to October 20, 2022

In attendance for this meeting: Board Chair Cynthia Farmer, Vice-Chair Mike Rooney, Ann Kochis, Greg Rota, Gina Ocasion, and Frank Soleimani.

Absent: Peter Wood and Ying “Elaine” Wang.

Others in attendance: Executive Director Richard Alcorn, Principal Kathy Wang, previous Board member Elizabeth “Betty” Larivee (meeting scribe), and, Finance Committee member Charles “Nick” Bagley (joined meeting at 6:50pm). Also observing this meeting were recently elected Faculty Representative Kim Lachance and Student Representative Augusto Schwanz – both are pending final approvals from DESE for their appointments to the Board.

Documents used in this meeting:

1. Agenda with information for Zoom and Phone access to the meeting
2. Draft Minutes of the Board of Trustees Meeting dated August 4, 2022
3. Bios of elected candidates for position of Faculty and Student Representatives to the PVCICS Board of Trustees
4. Final Draft 2021-2022 Summative Evaluation for Principal Kathy Wang
5. Final Draft 2022-2023 Annual Goals for Principal Kathy Wang
6. Email dated 10/14/2022 with Financial Statements dated August 31, 2022
7. Email dated 10/17/2022 with Draft Auditor’s Report and Board Communication Letter
8. Email dated 10/19/2022 with One Page Summary Sheet of Auditor’s Report and Findings
9. Email dated 10/19/2022 with Draft Charter School Application

Meeting was officially called to order by the Chair at 6:03 PM. Chair Cynthia completed a roll call for attendance of Board members. Present were Ann, Mike, Gina, Frank, Greg, and Cynthia.

Public Comment: None

Administrative Items: Minutes of the August 4, 2022 Board Meeting were presented for review. No corrections were noted. Mike made a motion to approve the submitted minutes; seconded by Gina. Roll call vote: Approval from Mike, Ann, Elaine, Frank, and Cynthia. Greg abstained from the vote. Motion passed.

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Committee and Task Force Reports:

Trusteeship Committee: Chairperson Frank reported:

- ✓ There are several Board slots that are unfilled and could be considered for backfilling. The committee continues to work on this matter. If candidates are identified they could join the Board soon rather than waiting for the normal March-April recruitment process.
- ✓ School elections were held for Faculty and Student Representatives to the Board. The following were elected: Faculty Representative Kimberly Lachance (2 year term from November 2022 to June 2024). She is currently a Grade 5 English Teacher at PVCICS. Student Representative Augusto Schwanz (one year term November 2022 to June 2023). He also served in this Board position last year; he is currently a Senior at PVCICS.
- ✓ Motion was made by Greg and seconded by Mike to approve both of these elected Representatives. Roll call vote was unanimous approval. ED Richard will send the required paperwork to DESE for their final approvals as Board members.
- ✓ Committee meeting is tentatively scheduled for October 27, 2022.

Finance Committee: Chairperson Elaine is not yet in attendance

- ✓ Report will be postponed until later in this meeting.

Personnel and Grievance Committee: Chairperson Gina reported:

- ✓ Several committee meetings were held to review, edit, and complete Principal Kathy's 2021-2022 Summative Evaluation and her 2022-2023 Annual Goals. The committee is recommending approval of both documents as submitted to the Board.
- ✓ There being no discussion or questions, Mike made a motion to approve the submitted 2021-2022 Summative Evaluation for Principal Kathy; seconded by Greg. Roll call vote was unanimous approval.
- ✓ Mike also made a motion to approve the 2022-2023 Annual Goals for Principal Kathy; seconded by Ann. Roll call vote was unanimous approval.

Principal's Report: Principal Kathy reported:

- Power Point presentation covered the following topics:
 - Students started school on August 31st. THANK YOU to all the Teachers and Staff for such a smooth opening.
 - Breakfast and Lunch are free this year for all eligible students under the Federal Lunch Program Guidelines. However, the school is looking for a new vendor because Revolution Foods sent notification on 9/21/22 that they will be terminating services to PVCICS on 11/23/2022. A new vendor may mean changes to the available food program and costs.
 - Health Protocols continue to be in place for everyone at PVCICS.
 - Parent-Teacher Conferences are being held this week; they continue to be held virtually.
 - Spring 2022 MCAS results were released on 9/29/2022. Testing was done in Math and English for grades 3 to 7; Grades 8 and 10 had English, Math, and Science. PVCICS continues to have excellent results in comparison to State averages; however, one exception was noted in Grade 4 Math. Item analysis of the results is being completed by school staff.

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- DESE has designed a “School Accountability Percentile” based on MCAS testing. This is calculated using multiple years of data (if cohorts are large enough to use for data analysis) and designed to measure overall performance relative to other schools with similar grades. PVCICS has scored at the 97th percentile.

Finance Committee: Chairperson Elaine is not in attendance so ED Richard gave this report:

- ✓ Yesterday the Finance Committee held a meeting to review the Annual Auditor’s Report and the current Financial Statements.
- ✓ Some “Standards” for audit reporting have been changed so the related verbiage within the Auditor’s Report has also changed.
- ✓ Our Federal Grants totaled over \$755 million so additional accounting and scrutiny of these grants was required in this audit.
- ✓ Final statement from the Auditor says “No exceptions were noted”.
- ✓ Frank made a motion to accept the Auditor’s Report and have Chair Cynthia sign the Board Communication Letter; seconded by Greg. Roll call vote was unanimous approval. ED Richard will submit the Audit and Communication Letter to DESE as required by November 1st.
- ✓ Current Financial Statements show a surplus related to tuition reimbursements. This will be adjusted after the October SIMS Report is submitted and reviewed by DESE.
- ✓ A new line item has been added to the financial statement to separate staff salaries from stipends paid to staff for doing additional work as substitute teachers.

Executive Director’s Report: ED Richard reported:

- ❖ DESE approved the previous Proven Provider request of PVCICS to submit an Application to develop a new Chinese Immersion Charter School in the Worcester area.
- ❖ DESE has stated that they want an urban school in one location rather than a regional school as now operated at PVCICS. Worcester does qualify as a low performing urban district but other districts in this regional location are not low performing.
- ❖ Name of this new school is being considered as “Central Mass Chinese Immersion Charter School”. It would follow the same mission, educational philosophy, and curriculum as the Hadley location.
- ❖ The Draft Charter Application states that the school would open in the fall of 2024 with 44 students in Grades K and One. It would then grow each year by adding additional students and grade levels. The design is to eventually grow to a K-12 school.
- ❖ There is a possibility that PVCICS would be eligible for \$1 million funding to start this school. DESE interviews for this grant money will occur on December 21st and 22nd. Board members will need to be available if this interview occurs.
- ❖ Discussion occurred regarding inquiries from the current PVCICS ads on Face Book and possible support for this new school from local politicians.

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- ❖ Frank made a motion to allow ED Richard to complete and submit the Grant application as well as the Charter School Application for Program Replication in the Worcester Regional area; seconded by Greg. Roll call vote was unanimous approval.
- ❖ ED Richard stated that Finance Committee member Nick Bagley would be assisting him in preparing these final documents; however, he would also like some “proofreaders” to assist them. Mike and Betty indicated they would be available up to Saturday 10/29/22 for proofreading. The documents must be submitted by November 1st to DESE.
- ❖ Optional Purchasing – Possible Capital Expenditures: Ed Richard reviewed three possible expenditures: (1) Gardening equipment and raised beds -- however, given a subsequent review and bid of these items it appears that the materials for the requested 10-15 beds will not be a capital expense; (2) Climbing wall in the gym – current cinder block wall and ceiling weight bar allow wall attachments and safety harnesses to be attached; this would be used by the middle and high school students; current short wall climbing apparatus would be used by elementary students; current staff member has experience and desire to teach climbing techniques; estimated project cost is \$30,000 with possible installation to be completed over Christmas vacation; (3) Additional van for use to transport students to after school sports and activities; there is currently a six to eight month wait period for delivery if ordered now; rental of small vans are currently costing \$2000 to \$3000 per month.
- ❖ Following discussion, Mike made a motion to approve capital expenditures for the climbing wall and van; seconded by Cynthia. Roll call vote was unanimous approval.

New Business:

- Chair Cynthia stated that ED Richard has not had a raise for the past two years. She would like the Board to consider a raise for him. She will send information to the Board for their review and consideration regarding Richard’s 2017-2022 contract, past salary schedules, and related document regarding compensation of other Charter School Executive Directors. This matter will be on the agenda at the next meeting for a vote.

Having no further business, Chair Cynthia thanked everyone for their participation in tonight’s 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.

Cynthia called for a motion to adjourn the Regular Meeting and immediately move into Executive Session. Mike made the motion; seconded by Gina. Roll call vote was unanimous approval: Gina, Mike, Frank, Ann, Greg, and Cynthia. This meeting adjourned at 7:29pm.

Minutes approved by Board of Trustees on November 3, 2022

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