

# 先锋中英双语学校

Pioneer Valley Chinese Immersion Charter School

## Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes

December 7, 2023 at 6:00pm

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

The meeting was held with Zoom and Telephone access in accordance with current Massachusetts Open Meeting Law (OML) guidelines for remote access as extended by Governor Healey from March 2023 to March 31, 2025. The host for this meeting was Executive Director Richard Alcorn.

In virtual attendance for this meeting: Board Chair Cynthia Farmer, Treasurer Charles “Nick” Bagley, Gina Ocasion, Frank Soleimani (via phone connection), Greg Rota, Faculty Representative Hsinpei Normand, and Student Representative Francesca Barlow

Absent: Ann Kochis and Vice-Chair Mike Rooney

Others in virtual attendance: Executive Director Richard Alcorn, Principal Kathy Wang, previous Board member Elizabeth “Betty” Larivee (meeting scribe), and three parents.

### Documents used in this meeting:

1. Meeting Agenda with information for Zoom and Phone access
2. Draft Minutes of the Board Meeting dated November 2, 2023
3. Email dated 11/29/23 regarding Financial Statements dated October 31, 2023
4. Email dated 12/7/23 regarding Families with 2+ students on school buses

The meeting was officially called to order by the Chair at 6:02 PM. Chair Cynthia completed a roll call for attendance of Board members. Present were Charles “Nick”, Gina, Frank, Greg, Hsinpei, Francesca, and Cynthia.

Public Comment: None

Administrative Items: Minutes from the Board Meeting of November 2, 2023 were presented for review. No corrections were offered. Cynthia called for a motion to accept the minutes. Betty spoke up to say that the minutes could not be approved until they were completed – information prior to the recording of that meeting was missing. No one could report on this missing information; Cynthia stated that she had information in her notes but could not access them at that moment. Frank made a motion to table these minutes until the next meeting to allow for completion; motion seconded by Nick. Roll call vote was unanimous approval to table the minutes.

### Committee and Task Force Reports:

Trusteeship Committee: Committee Chair Frank reported that he had been unable to schedule a committee meeting. There was one candidate to be reviewed as an applicant for the Board of Trustees. Betty spoke up to remind the Board that this committee requires five members per Board Bylaws but currently only has four members. A

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meeting could be held but no formal action could occur without the fifth committee member.

Finance Committee: Committee Chair Nick reported that a meeting had been held with ED Richard and Fiscal Manager Anita Maloney. They reviewed current financial statements to find an overall solid and healthy position. By the end of the year, there should be a “break even” budget due to the upcoming tuition adjustment by DESE as a result of lower student enrollment caused by space constraints in the current facility. ED Richard stated that they also spoke about a possible end of year bonus for the staff. Traditionally, this has been \$1000 flat rate per person for about 100 people; it is pro-rated for part time staff; it is not given to hourly employees. No objections were raised by any Board member; ED Richard stated that the end of year bonus would be given to staff.

Personnel and Grievance Committee: Committee Chair Gina reported that the 11/30/23 meeting regarding Principal Kathy’s 2022-2023 Evaluation had been cancelled and rescheduled to next week on 12/14/23.

Principal’s Report: Principal Kathy reported via Power Point presentation:

- ✓ The students have completed 66 days of school; this is about 1/3 of the school year.
- ✓ Christmas break starts on 12/22/2023.
- ✓ Winter athletics has started with basketball, skiing, co-op programs for wrestling and ice hockey, and the Nordic cross-country ski club.
- ✓ Two “Information Sessions” have been held for 2024-2025 enrollment. There has been lots of interest in elementary slots; some interest for middle school slots; and a trickle for high school slots. The first enrollment lottery will be done in early March.
- ✓ DESE staff has been on-site to complete the Tiered Focus Monitoring (TFM). This is a multi-year process to review Special Education and Civil Rights. Last year, the process involved a Self-Assessment; Fall 2023 involved Technical Assistance to update necessary paperwork, procedures, and policies; November 2023 was a Pre-Site Review via phone; December 2023 was a two day On-Site Visit; a Post Site Visit and Final Report is yet to be determined. The Board will review the Final Report once it is received.
- ✓ Post Covid, there are now lots of community-wide events. PVCICS has been or will be involved in many of them – clothing drive; fundraising for School Library, Family Association, Athletics, Black Student Union, and Theatre Club; Hot Chocolate Run for community shelter assistance; and, Florence Savings Bank Grant Program.
- ✓ Parent volunteers have come forward to be involved in a Special Education Council (SEPAC) and a Parent Advisory Council. More information to come on these as they become active.
- ✓ Yesterday an Emergency Evacuation Drill took place at school. All families were notified after the drill occurred. Some families have multiple email contacts which created confusion as only one email notice was sent out to a family.

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- ✓ Chair Cynthia spoke up to say that the 5pm committee meeting previously scheduled but then cancelled was not a good schedule for most people. Meetings need to be held at 6pm or later. Principal Kathy agreed that 5pm was not a good meeting time.

Executive Director's Report: ED Richard reported:

- ❖ At this time, the request to review the Commissioner's denial of the Charter By-Law Amendment is still on hold.
- ❖ There has been no response from Secretary of Education Tutwiler regarding the invitation to visit PVCICS.
- ❖ An email was sent to Board members regarding the number of families with two or more children riding the four large buses to PVCICS. Further discussions will occur about the possibility of reducing the transportation costs for families with multiple students on these buses.
- ❖ Endless reports and revisions are being completed – everyone is busy with paperwork!

Evaluation of Executive Director: ED Richard reported that he has been unable to send out the required documentation for his Evaluation Process. The Board will receive this information by the end of the month.

New Business: For the Board's general information and understanding of requirements, Principal Kathy briefly spoke about the extensive level of involvement required by DESE as they initiate new paperwork and reporting requirements for Special Education, Chronic Absenteeism, Bullying, and Student Discipline.

Having no further business, Chair Cynthia thanked everyone for their participation in tonight's meeting. Comments were also made to welcome Francisca and Hsinpei to the Board.

Chair Cynthia then read the following statement:

The PVCICS Board of Trustees will enter into Executive Session per M.G.L. Chapter 30A section 21(6) – To consider the purchase, exchange, lease or value of real property if the chair declares that an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the public body. An Open Session will not reconvene at the conclusion of the Executive Session.

Chair Cynthia called for a motion to adjourn the Regular Meeting and move into Executive Session. Gina made the motion; seconded by Greg. Roll call vote was unanimous approval: Nick, Gina, Frank, Greg, Hsinpei, Francesca, and Cynthia. The meeting adjourned at 6:39 pm.

Minutes approved by the Board of Trustees on January 4, 2024

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