

先锋中英双语学校

Pioneer Valley Chinese Immersion Charter School

Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes

Meeting previously scheduled for March 7, 2024 was postponed
Rescheduled to March 14, 2024 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: Vice-Chair Mike Rooney, Treasurer Charles “Nick” Bagley, Gina Ocasion, Faculty Representative Hsinpei Normand, Frank Soleimani (joined the meeting via phone), and Greg Rota (joined the meeting at 6:08pm).

Absent: Board Chair Cynthia Farmer, Ann Kochis, Student Representative Francesca Barlow
Others in virtual attendance: Executive Director Richard Alcorn, Principal Kathy Wang, previous Board member Elizabeth “Betty” Larivee (meeting scribe), and Director of Student Services Marilyn Kusek.

Documents used in this meeting:

1. Meeting Agenda with information for Zoom and Phone access
2. Draft Minutes of the Board Meeting dated February 1, 2024
3. E-mail dated 2/12/24 regarding re-sent Evaluation Form and Instructions for ED Richard
4. E-mail dated 2/21/24 article from Gazette newspaper regarding PVCICS second campus
5. E-mail dated 2/26/24 regarding Final Report for Special Education and Civil Rights Monitoring Review completed by the Office of Public School Monitoring
6. E-mail dated 3/5/24 announcing postponement of 3/7/24 Board Meeting to 3/14/24
7. E-mail dated 3/12/24 regarding Resume of Trustee Candidate YuYing “Iris” Tang

In the absence of Chair Cynthia, the meeting was officially called to order by Vice-Chair Mike at 6:00 PM. He completed a roll call for attendance of Board members. Present were Frank, Charles “Nick”, Gina, Hsinpei, and Mike.

Public Comment: None

Administrative Items: Minutes from the Board Meeting of February 1, 2024 were presented for review. No corrections were offered. Mike called for a motion to accept the minutes. Nick made the motion; seconded by Gina. Roll call vote for approval: Nick, Gina, Nick, Frank, and Mike; Hsinpei abstained from the vote. Motion passed.

NOTE: Once again, Betty mentioned that the minutes from the November Board meeting are still pending completion. Information from the beginning of the meeting (before the recording started) has not been provided to her.

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Committee and Task Force Reports:

Trusteeship Committee: Committee Chair Frank reported that the committee met 2/28/24 and interviewed two possible candidates for the Board. Both were strong candidates but only one was being recommended at this time – the other candidate will have follow-up in the next month or so. Frank made a motion to recommend YuYing “Iris” Tang as a candidate for the Board of Trustees; motion seconded by Nick. There was no discussion or questions from the Board members. Roll call vote was unanimous approval: Nick, Gina, Frank, Hsinpei, Mike, and Greg. ED Richard will submit her information to DESE for review; if approved, she will serve a two year term as a Board member (Spring 2024 to June 30, 2026).

Finance Committee: Committee Chairperson Nick stated that a meeting will be scheduled to review current school finances and budget planning for FY’25.

Personnel and Grievance Committee: Committee Chair Gina reported that required observations of Principal Kathy are being planned. She had no other committee updates.

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

- ✓ The students have completed 121 days of school; the third quarter ends on 4/2/24.
- ✓ The first lottery session has been completed and acceptance letters have been sent to the families. ED Richard will have further information in his report.
- ✓ PSAT testing for Grades 8 and 9 has been completed; MCAS testing starts later this month.
- ✓ UMASS Fam Lab has been working with students in Grades 6 to 10 regarding mental health issues that surfaced as a result of Covid-related matters.
- ✓ Spring athletics has Ultimate Tennis and new co-op programs for baseball and softball. The school is looking to hire a High School Girls Tennis Coach.
- ✓ Photos shown regarding return to school group activities (1) Sushi Demonstration to Kindergarten students by two Grandparents; (2) Potato Social currently taking place in school gym; and, (3) Pi Day High School pie eating contest (really only Cool Whip) – Student Rep Francesca is at this activity in lieu of the Board meeting.
- ✓ Planning has started for School Year 24-25:
 - Discussions are underway for use of space, operations, and staff
 - Governor Healy is developing a Literacy Initiative
 - School curriculum and Assessments will be reviewed
 - Enrollment is on-going with many siblings entering Kindergarten; few siblings have applied for grades 6 or 9
 - Commissioner Jeff Riley is leaving DESE; Deputy Education Commissioner Russell Johnson will temporarily take over that position
 - Staffing is a priority area with year-round interviewing; staff needed to fill positions in Special Education, School Nurses, and Bilingual Chinese Teachers

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- ✓ The Final Report for the Special Education and Civil Rights Review has been received. NO issues were noted – No corrections were cited. DESE has requested that this Final Report be posted to the school website.
- ✓ The Accountability Review scheduled for March 2024 has been postponed by DESE -- it will occur sometime next year.
- ✓ A site review will be scheduled for the 10th Year Anniversary of the IB Program at PVCICS. No date has been announced.

Executive Director's Report: ED Richard reported:

- ❖ Student recruitment for next year is going very well; there have been 270 applications to date and more are still being received.
 - There are 44 students accepted in Kindergarten; 54 students are on the Kindergarten wait list and new applications are still being received
 - There are 20 applications for elementary grades 1 to 5; 40 applications for grade 6 and 30 for grade 9
 - Typical summer attrition will impact September enrollment so all open slots will be backfilled.
- ❖ The Transportation Policy is still being worked on so no action will be taken tonight.
- ❖ ESSER III Grant allows for \$400,000 for school expenses. Some of these funds will be set aside for the new building but this action is on hold pending approval by USDA of the Loan Application.
 - There will be a Community Engagement Session (via Zoom) regarding these ESSER III funds for community input and general information.

Evaluation of Executive Director: ED Richard reported that this discussion will be tabled because Chair Cynthia was not present. He reminded Board members to send the completed Evaluation Form to Cynthia.

New Business: Nick stated that he would like to initiate a discussion at a future Board meeting about returning to in-person meetings which would continue to include a remote option. He would also like to discuss a meeting time of 7pm rather than 6pm.

Betty reminded the Board that ED Richard has a contract that expired in June 2022 but it had a roll-over clause so his employment continues unless he is terminated. She said that it would be beneficial to have a new contract in place for him.

Vice-Chair Mike indicated that he would bring both matters to the attention of Chair Cynthia.

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Having no further business, Vice-Chair Mike thanked everyone for their participation in tonight's meeting.

Vice-Chair Mike 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.

Vice-Chair Mike called for a motion to adjourn the Regular Meeting and move into Executive Session. Greg made the motion; seconded by Gina. Roll call vote was unanimous approval: Nick, Gina, Mike, Hsinpei, Frank, and Greg. The meeting adjourned at 6:37 pm.

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

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