

Providence Englewood Charter School  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING

At  
6515 S. Ashland Ave.  
Chicago, IL 60636

Thursday, April 11, 2019  
4:00 p.m.

MINUTES

ATTENDANCE IN PERSON

Trustees

Ellen Kollar  
Matthew Bergmann  
Peg Cain  
Caroline Degenaaars  
Leslie Holling  
Howard Isenberg  
Bernard Lilly  
John Stevenson  
John Stoops  
Latasha Thomas  
Arlen Wiley  
Jason Zenner

TRUSTEES ABSENT

Dick Burridge  
Rona Fourte  
Walter Matthews

TELECONFERENCE

Kelley Kalinich  
James Reilly

OTHERS PRESENT IN PERSON

Staff

Angela Johnson-Williams, Principal, PECS  
Shinwe Shelton, Deputy Director of Operations, PECS  
Tahanni Ragland, Business Manager, PECS  
Sonji Jones-Manson, Executive Director of External Affairs, PECS

I. ROLL CALL/DETERMINATION OF QUORUM

The meeting was called to order at 4:04 p.m. by Mrs. Kollar.

II. Public Participation Period (none requested in advance of the meeting)

III. Opening Comments and Approval of Minutes

Approval of Minutes of February 9, 2019. On motion duly made (Mr. Stevenson), seconded (Mr. Stoops), and unanimously passed, the Board approved the minutes of its February 9, 2019 meeting.

IV. Governance Committee

Mr. Bergmann, Chair of the Governance Committee, reported that work continues regarding committee assignments as well as board size and composition. In particular, Mr. Bergmann noted that in the fall of 2020, four current Board members will have reached their three-term limits and so will be cycling off the Board. As a result, the Governance Committee is focused on identifying new board and committee members. Mr. Bergmann noted that Tim Dugan will rejoin the Board in September.

V. Financial/Operations

Mrs. Shelton reviewed in detail the PECS financial statements with the Board. She noted that the Combined Balance Sheet as of March 31, 2019 showed combined Cash and Cash Equivalents decreases due to market depreciation in the foundation investments and operating activities; A/R decreases are due to combined PCTC methodology of SPED and SGSA. Accrued Payroll increases are due to labor costs and pension true-ups. Deferred Revenue increases are due to early payment of student book fees. There is a decrease in Loans Payable due to loan payment. Overall Total Liabilities and Net Assets are \$609,000 less than 2018.

On the Income Statement for the period ending March 31, 2019, a decrease in Charter School Funding is due to decreased enrollment (467 vs. 496, creating a \$376,000) and pension true-up. Grants and Contributions increases are due to increased occupancy costs, foundation contributions, and 8<sup>th</sup> grade fundraising. Student Fee decreases are due to decreased student enrollment. Personnel cost increases are due to increased labor costs and pension true-ups. The increase in Direct Student Cost is due to increased expenditures, scholarships and foundation expenses.

Mrs. Shelton then reviewed the annual budget against YTD actuals. She also noted that PECS has 99% on-time compliance regarding CPS reporting requirements.

VI. Potential FY20 Budget – PCTC Methodology

Mrs. Shelton updated the Board with respect to CPS actions and communications regarding funding charter schools. Specifically, CPS recently informed all charters that we would only receive partial Q4 payments until a mutually agreed upon solution is developed regarding next year's funding formula. CPS is proposing that charter schools receive from CPS a per student payment that falls in a range of 75% to 125% of CPS per student funding. It is expected that the funding formula will be determined in the coming weeks.

With this ambiguity as background, Mrs. Shelton discussed with the Board preliminary draft budget numbers for the upcoming school year. She shared budget information showing the school on a stand-alone basis – without the foundation(which is combined with the school for financial reporting purposes) and without the in-kind portion of PCTC Funding. Mrs. Shelton reviewed the preliminary draft budget numbers assuming various enrollment levels. The Board will have another discussion regarding the 2019-2020 school year budget at its June meeting.

Mrs. Shelton also reviewed with the Board the PECS FY 2018 tax returns, including the process by which the returns were prepared and reviewed. Following this discussion, on motion duly made (Ms. Thomas), seconded (Mr. Zenner), and unanimously passed, the Board approved the tax return for FY 2018 as prepared.

## VII. Academics

Mrs. Johnson-Williams reviewed with the Board highlights from the school report that was included in the Board packet. She noted in particular that the number of Special Education students needing paraprofessionals is increasing and that while these students are covered currently, PECS may need two additional paraprofessionals for the upcoming school year. Mrs. Johnson-Williams also discussed the challenges of hiring Special Education professionals.

Mrs. Johnson-Williams noted that student attendance has not yet reached the desired metric (96%); it has been hovering at near 93 -94%, which is less than last year. She noted that in February, an incentive was implemented for attendance: if students come to school Monday through Friday and were on green in their classroom behavior metrics, they were able to be out of uniform on Friday. There will also be an incentive for parents: the names of students who achieve "out-of-uniform" will be pulled and one parent will be selected from each of K-2, 3-5, and 6-8 to receive a gift card. Following roll-out of the incentives, attendance was near 95% every week in March. Further work is underway to better understand student attendance, particularly regarding those students in the STLS program and students who were out due to medical reasons.

Mrs. Johnson-Williams reviewed with the Board the PECS' scoreboard for ELA and Math and reported that two PECS 7<sup>th</sup> grade students earned awards in the CPS City Science

Fair: Jalessa H. earned a silver award and \$250, and Omosefe A. also earned a silver award and \$50. The Board congratulated these students.

Mrs. Johnson-Williams noted that the Senior Corps volunteer program is well under way, with six seniors currently volunteering. These volunteers come to PECS daily, for six hours each day, and are working wonderfully with our students.

Finally, Mrs. Johnson-Williams noted for the Board the need to finalize PECS 2019-20 Academic Calendar and 2019-20 Student handbook. She reviewed the approach that has been taken to develop and update these and noted that there are no significant issues for the Board to address. Following discussion, on motion duly made (Mr. Bergmann), seconded (Mr. Isenberg), and unanimously passed, the Board delegated to Mrs. Kollar the authority to approve PECS 2019-20 Academic Calendar and 2019-20 Student handbook after review.

#### Academic Excellence Committee Report

Dr. Kalinich discussed with the Board the activities of the Academic Excellence Committee. She noted in particular that the Committee has time reviewing teacher-based assessments of student performance and that as a result of this review, Mrs. Johnson-Williams will be working with PECS teachers to enhance the rigor of reading assessments.

#### VIII. External Affairs - Recruitment

Mrs. Jones-Manson reviewed for the Board the status of PECS recruitment efforts to bring in new students to PECS for the 2019-2020 school year, as well as the various factors that impact those efforts.

She noted in detail demographic trends that show steady decreases in the population of children ages 0-9 in Englewood and its surrounding neighborhoods. She also reviewed information about the 27 public schools within in a 3-mile radius of PECS, noting their SQRP ratings, the presence of pre-kindergarten programs, and registration fees. PECS most recent SQRP score had us near the bottom of the list; PECS is one of only four schools that don't offer preschool; and PECS has the highest registration fee.

Mrs. Jones-Manson then reviewed in detail with the Board the recruitment action plan which includes: emails and calls to local daycares, on-site registrations at daycares, calls to current applicants to support them through the application funnel. There is also a goal to get more advocates using word-of-mouth and to push Semester 3 registrations. Streetlight banners should be in place by May. Cold calls to local churches will begin in June. A lunch with Daycare Directors will occur in June. Marketing materials have been updated and first-day-of-school reminders will be sent.

The Board engaged in a robust discussion of the information presented by Mrs. Jones-Manson, with an aim to highlight the positive factors that differentiate PECS from other schools – such as the PECS Mission, PECS Promise Program, Semester 3, etc. – as well as to realistically consider the challenges faced. The Board discussed the need to focus more attention on Englewood’s increasing Latino community as well as the need to explore a pre-kindergarten program at PECS. The Board also discussed the PECS registration fee and alternatives to reduce or eliminate it. Following discussion, the Board delegated to Mrs. Kollarthe authority to approve the fee schedule for PECS 2019-20 school year.

- IX. Teacher Compensation (note: Mrs. Jones-Manson, Mrs. Ragland, and Mrs. Shelton were excused from this portion of the meeting)

Mr. Stoops, Dr. Kalinich and Mrs. Johnson-Williams reviewed with the Board the work they and a project team have done to review PECS teacher compensation. They reviewed the specifics of the current plan as well as its strengths and weaknesses. Importantly, they noted that PECS compensation plan is lower than other charter schools, particularly after five years of service. In addition, PECS merit compensation is unnecessarily time-consuming to execute annually and is not serving as the motivator it was intended to be.

The team proposed that PECS teacher compensation be changed as follows: adopt a revised teacher salary schedule which increases starting salaries and provides for higher annual increases in the early years, particularly in the 3-8 years; eliminate the merit pay component; include the school’s 6.2% pension contribution in the salary schedule, which is a common practice; streamline the evaluation of those teachers with a record of high achievement to make it meaningful, but not cumbersome; and support teacher applications for National Board Certification with subsidy of application cost and bonus on completion.

The team also reviewed proposed measures that PECS will take to offset the increased costs of the new teacher compensation plan.

Following extended discussion, the Board approved the proposed changes to the PECS teacher compensation.

- X. ADJOURNMENT

NEXT MEETING: Friday, June 14, 2019, immediately following Graduation – PECS, 6515 S. Ashland Ave, Chicago, IL 60636