

Providence Englewood Charter School
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
6515 S. Ashland Ave, Chicago, IL 60636

Saturday, October 26, 2024
9:00 a.m.

MINUTES

ATTENDANCE IN PERSON/TELECONFERENCE

Directors

Ellen Kollar
Matt Bergmann
Peg Cain
Tim Dugan (Zoom)
Dr. Kelley Kalinich (Zoom)
Lennard Murray
Levi Neavill
Eddie Ross
John Stoops
Latasha Thomas
Arlen Wiley
Jason Zenner

DIRECTORS ABSENT

Caroline Degenaars
Rona Fourte
Yolanda Lester
Bernard Lilly
Joan Malliband
John Stevenson

OTHERS PRESENT IN PERSON

Staff

Angela Johnson-Williams, Executive Director, PECS
Dr. Shinwe Shelton, Chief Operations Officer, PECS
Shauna Bellen, Principal, PECS
Tahanni Ragland, Business Manager, PECS
Jessica Lewis, PECS Promise, PECS
Dr. Antoine Jones, Recruiter, PECS

I. ROLL CALL/DETERMINATION OF QUORUM

The meeting was called to order at 9:05 a.m. by Mrs. Kollar.

II. Public Participation Period

No requests have been made for public participation in today's meeting.

III. STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE

Mrs. Johnson-Williams shared the draft of the strategic plan with the Board. Feedback is still being collected from parents, team members, and Board members. Consideration has also been given to the previous five-year plan. The "Big Rocks" remain the same, except for Pre-K, which is now operational. The focus areas, or "Big Rocks," are Academics, Culture and Climate, Recruitment, and Operations.

Metrics have been developed for each focus area, except for Operations, as we are still awaiting the audit results. A faculty and staff survey was distributed, and the responses were largely positive. These responses will be used to refine the metrics in each focus area. A parent survey has also been created and will be distributed on Monday. The parent survey focuses on culture and climate, social-emotional well-being, school and student safety, and school programs and resources.

There is also a focus on future-oriented goal planning for students and parents, which will be incorporated into recruiting efforts.

The Board discussed the draft strategic plan in detail and offered insights and comments.

Taking into account the Board comments, and after reviewing the feedback from teachers and parents, a revised version of the strategic plan will be presented to the Board for further discussion and approval at a future meeting.

IV. SCHOOL REPORT

Mrs. Johnson-Williams discussed with the Board the school's personnel, noting in particular that the school has added two Permanent Substitutes, one of whom will cover for the teacher on maternity leave.

Principal Bellen provided a recap of the recent Charter Renewal Site Visit. While the visit was rigorous, it was collaborative, and the overall feedback was positive and helpful. The formal results of the site visit will not be available until 24 hours before, or possibly on the same day as, the CPS Board meeting at which charter renewals are considered.

Mrs. Johnson-Williams noted that the early childhood block grant program that we hope will provide the funding for our Pre-K will open its process in 2025 for funding beginning in the 2026-2027 school year. The team intends to vigorously pursue this funding. Ms. Wallace has submitted many grant applications, without success.

V. OPERATIONS/FINANCE

Dr. Shelton reviewed in detail the Financial and Operational reports. The Board discussed the report throughout Dr. Shelton's presentation.

Dr. Shelton also reviewed with the Board the audit for the 2024 fiscal year. She noted that PECS received a clean audit report with no compliance issues. The Board thank Dr. Shelton and Mrs. Ragland for their hard work on the audit and commended them for another clean report.

Since the audit is due to be submitted to CPS on November 1, following discussion, on motion duly made by Murray, seconded by Thomas, and unanimously passed, the Board granted authority to the Finance Committee to review and approve the audited financials for submission to CPS.

VI. RECRUITING

The recruiting team noted that PECS current enrollment is 433 students. They discussed with the Board the work they are doing with Mrs. Johnson-Williams to set clear goals and measurable objectives aimed at reaching 500 students. A key focus will be on student retention, as maintaining current enrollment is crucial to achieving the target. Alongside retention efforts, the school is also prioritizing professional development for staff, organizing a revamped Community Day, and building stronger partnerships with local organizations. One of the first steps in this process is the upcoming visit from Alderman Lopez on October 29th. This visit will serve as an opportunity to engage with local leadership and strengthen the school's relationship with the community. To further foster these connections, PECS plans to invite various community groups into the building individually, offering them a closer look at the school's programs and achievements. By working collaboratively with the community and focusing on retention, PECS hopes to meet its enrollment goal and enhance its overall impact.

VII. DEVELOPMENT

Mrs. Degenars informed the Board that annual appeal letter will be sent out on Giving Tuesday and asked Board members to please send contact information to either Mrs. Degenars or Mrs. Malliband for any individuals or organizations they'd like to receive this letter. In addition to the annual appeal, the school is also working to rekindle the Kenilworth Partnership, particularly with Joseph Sears School. This renewed partnership

will be a critical piece of PECS' community-building efforts. The fundraising goal for this year is set at \$230K.

VIII. ASSOCIATE BOARD

Mr. Neaveill updated the Board with regard to the Associate Board. He noted that since the last Board meeting last meeting, several Associate Board members have become mentors and have been paired with their students. He also reviewed actions being taken to recruit additional Associate Board members and to connect with other Associate Boards in Chicago, such as the Associate Board for the Chicago Symphony Orchestra.

IX. EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

Ms. Lewis discussed the PECS Promise program with the Board. She discussed 8th grade parent meetings and the high-school choice advising process. She also discussed alumni engagement and the work she is doing to organize their efforts more effectively, providing clear opportunities for alumni to give back.

On the marketing and branding front, Ms. Lewis noted that efforts are gaining significant traction. The decision to partner with a third-party company to build a new website is paying off, and the team is also working on updating the school's marketing video.

X. GOVERNANCE

Mrs. Thomas provided the report to the Board regarding governance matters. She noted that Mr. Ross is now joining the recruitment committee, which is a positive step in expanding the committee's capacity, and that the team is also in discussions with Judge Murray about joining a committee.

She reminded the Board that all board members must complete the Open Meetings Act (OMA) and Governance training to remain in compliance.

Looking ahead, Mrs. Thomas called to the Board's attention that in 2025 a large group of members will roll off for their one-year sabbatical, so the committee's focus will be on recommending new Board members to maintain a strong and active board.

Finally, Ms. Thomas noted that while we consistently have a quorum of Directors participating in our Board meetings, at our last few meetings we have not had the in-person quorum that is required to take formal action. As a result, she asked the Board to take action on matters that were deferred.

After discussion, and on motion duly made by Thomas, seconded by Zenner, and unanimously passed, the minutes of the meetings held on April 25th, June 7th, and September 12, 2024, were approved.

After discussion, on motion duly made by Stoops, seconded by Thomas, and unanimously passed, the Board voted to elect Mrs. Kollar to the Board for a new three-year term and to continue her role as Board Chair.

XI. OTHER BUSINESS

Mrs. Kollar noted that we will solicit Board feedback re: optimizing our Board meeting schedule and processes, with the aim to discuss among the Board at the December meeting. The goal is to reframe the structure of in-person meetings, including the number of in-person meetings held and their times, to better accommodate everyone's schedules and optimize participation, while also continuing to use technology for remote meetings where appropriate to drive continued Board engagement and awareness and solicit Board advice.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

On motion duly made by Zenner, seconded by Neavill, and unanimously passed, the meeting was adjourned at 11:12 a.m.

NEXT MEETING: Thursday, December 5, 2024 (4:00-6:00pm); Water Street, 444 W. Lake St.