

Paul Cuffee School

Minutes of the Board of Directors Annual Meeting

June 19, 2008

The Annual Meeting of the Board of Directors of the Paul Cuffee School was held on June 19, 2008 at the Paul Cuffee Lower School in Providence, Rhode Island.

Present: Kathleen Alvarez, Luz Avila, Jon Bennett, David Burnham, Russell Carey, William Clifton, Sr., Shivohn Garcia, Barrett Hazeltine, Geanise Love, Keith Mathews, Maria Monteiro, Joop Nagtegaal, Martha Newcomb, Esq., Carolyn Pemberton, Fraser Preston, Sarah Reis, Ana Cecilia Rosada, Babak Taleghani.

Excused: Su Almeida, Elizabeth Colon, Joan Canady Countryman, Stefano Crema, Philip Gould, Mary Sylvia Harrison, Sandy LeClerc, Kay Lisle, Robin Y. Miles, John Patrick, Betsy Pollack Shimberg.

Paul Cuffee Staff Present: David Bourns, Jonathan Conklin, Nina Giannotti, Paul Graseck, Julia Karahalidis, Nell Sears, Suzie Shaw.

Guests Present: Allyn Copp, John Duke.

The Annual Meeting was called to order at 6:15 p.m. with a moment of silence, followed by a welcome by President Joop Nagtegaal and the introduction of new members of the Board Sarah Reis, Jon Bennett

and Katie Alvarez. Joop also welcomed Allyn Copp and John Duke, representing the Board of the Sailing Institute.

In his comments opening the meeting Joop spoke about the recent activity relevant to charter schools and education in Rhode Island at the General Assembly, including the proposed Mayoral Academies. This new method for starting a school in Rhode Island is the result of an initiative proposed by Mayor McKee of Cumberland and supported strongly by the House leadership. Mayoral Academies, which also have the support of the League of Charter Schools, would be initiated by mayors acting through a non-profit organization and would draw students from more than one city or town. The academies would not be subject to the prevailing wage statute nor certain other rules and regulations governing public schools. In addition to this effort, which at the time of this meeting was yet to be acted upon by the Senate and the Governor, Joop noted that the moratorium on new charter schools in Rhode Island was expected to expire at the end of this fiscal year, an indication of the great interest in alternative educational models offered by charter schools and, potentially, mayoral academies.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of May 15, 2008 were approved unanimously. The motion to approve was made by Barrett Hazeltine and seconded by Judge Clifton.

Head of School's June Report

David Bourns referred the Board to his written report and asked if there were any questions. He noted materials which had been circulated to the Board which indicated that Paul Cuffee School remained a high performing school, as categorized by the Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) and on the basis of this year's NECAP results. David also noted that the outcome of the search for the academic head of the high school had been the recent appointment of Paul Graseck to that position, and the Board applauded Mr. Graseck.

Discussion of High School Planning Report

Paul Graseck thanked the Board and the search committee for their support and expressed his enthusiasm for his new position. He then proceeded to give an overview of the planning to date and work to be done with regard to the high school. Paul described the general structure and organization of the school and the curriculum, including the lower and upper houses and the gates through which students would need to pass by demonstrating certain competencies. He also reviewed the potential typical schedule for a ninth grade student, with particular mention of the time devoted to advisories and opportunities for all high school community members – students, faculty and staff – to interact with and get to know each other. Paul

stated that his experience as well as the planning work to date, including review of best practices at high schools he visited, indicated that the components of excellence in education include: great teachers (with an emphasis on coaching); inquiry-based instruction; essential questions; and active learning, where students truly engage with the subject matter. He noted the importance of hiring the best teachers and spoke about the approach for doing so and provided the Board with an overview of the house system. A significant amount of work remains to be done in the coming year - including hiring staff, writing grants, and budget planning – but overall the planning effort has progressed in a fully satisfactory manner.

There were questions from and discussion with the Board on a variety of topics, including: the integration of the maritime theme throughout the curriculum (Paul especially spoke about the idea of using Narragansett Bay as an organizing principle in a variety of subject areas); staffing and accommodations appropriate to special education needs and enabling all students to progress through the gates; the importance and necessity of grammar instruction throughout the curriculum; and the challenges and opportunities inherent in teaching (and assessing proficiency in) Spanish in a small school environment with many heritage speakers of that language.

Joop thanked Paul for his presentation and work to date planning the Paul Cuffee High School. Joop noted that there was little news to

report with regard to identifying a site for the high school and that work continues to investigate temporary and permanent options.

SAILING INSTITUTE & COMMITTEE REPORTS

Sailing Institute

Allyn Copp, vice president of the Sailing Institute, delivered the report on behalf of Mark Pearson, president. Allyn reported that the Sailing Institute had met earlier that day and had reviewed the minutes of its prior meeting and also took action approving the members nominated to serve on the Paul Cuffee School Board of Directors. There was also discussion of the purpose and mission of the Sailing Institute, including discussion of potential areas of focus such as: support of the maritime theme at Paul Cuffee School; sailing programs and education; and other initiatives which may benefit the school and the community. The Sailing Institute Board formed a committee to further investigate these questions and issues and develop proposals aimed at supporting the mission and role of the Sailing Institute and Paul Cuffee School.

Executive Committee

Joop delivered the report of the Executive Committee by referring the Board to the minutes, which were circulated in advance, and

reviewing briefly the purpose and outcome of the meeting (the authorization of the Head of School to extend an offer of employment to the candidate for the position of academic head of the High School, as previously delegated to the Executive Committee by the Board of Directors).

Human Resources Committee

Martha Newcomb delivered the report of the Human Resources Committee. She and Paul Graseck reviewed the work and planning done on the subject of the salary structure for the faculty. Following discussion, Barrett Hazeltine moved that:

The recommendation of the Human Resources Committee that Paul Cuffee School adopt a salary scale that is based on the methodology reflected in the Salary Study Group document and implement a salary scale for 2008-2009 that includes a 1% increase in the steps 1 and 10 salaries and a 1% increase in the sum of the ten salary steps over the current 2007-2008 scale be endorsed and approved as a policy of Paul Cuffee School.

Judge Clifton seconded the motion and it was passed unanimously by the Board.

Finance Committee

Babak Taleghani delivered the report of the Finance Committee. He reviewed the minutes of the last meeting of the committee and the projections for the next fiscal year, noting that the School anticipates a deficit of approximately \$156,000 in 2008-2009. There was brief discussion at the Finance Committee of the identification of a site for the high school and the salary structure issue.

Institutional Advancement

Julia Karahalidis delivered the report of the Institutional Advancement Committee on behalf of Betsy Pollack Shimberg. She reported that it had been a successful year for the committee and the development office, with many important goals having been successfully met. In particular, the Board doubled its collective contribution to the Annual Fund over the previous year and participated in the Annual Fund at the 100% level. The Annual Fund has raised \$136,000 to date, and there has been a significant increase in giving from friends of the School. The Committee is focusing on cultivation and engagement in the School in advance of High School planning and a likely progression into campaign mode and Julia noted the importance of Board members introducing new friends to the School as a high priority for the coming year. She thanked the Board for their support and Joop thanked Julia for her leadership.

Board Schedule for 2008-2009

Joop noted that an amended schedule for the 2008-2009 meetings of the Board was available at the meeting, with one change having been made to the May 2009 date (from May 21 to May 14).

Board Retreat Plans

Plans are developing for a Board retreat in the fall, with potential dates being October 4, 18 and 25 (a follow-up poll will be conducted to determine the best date). There was brief discussion of potential topics and Joop invited members of the Board to send him thoughts and ideas on topics to be included on the agenda.

Departing Members of the Board

Joop and Dave Burnham shared the responsibility of speaking about each of the departing members of the Board of Directors: Cade Tompkins, John Patrick, Geanise Love, Shivohn Garcia, and Sandy LeClerc. Each were thanked for their exceptional service and numerous contributions to the Board and the School. In addition to applause from the Board, each of the departing members were honored with a book which will be placed in the Paul Cuffee School Library in their name.

New Business

No new business was brought before the Board.

Adjournment

Barrett Hazeltine moved to adjourn. Babak Taleghani seconded. The meeting adjourned at 8:10 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Russell C. Carey, Clerk
