

Paul Cuffee School

Minutes of the Board of Trustees Meeting

January 21, 2010

A meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Paul Cuffee School was held on January 21, 2010 at the Paul Cuffee Lower School in Providence, Rhode Island.

Present: David Burnham, Russell Carey, Elizabeth Colon, Allyn Copp, Stefano Crema, Keith Mathews, Maria Monteiro, Joop Nagtegaal, Martha Newcomb, Leanne Nyahkoon, Dorothy Patrick, Carolyn Pemberton, Sarah Reis, Ana Cecilia Rosado.

Excused: Su Almeida, Kathleen Alvarez, Luz Avila, Joan Canady Countryman, William Clifton, Sr., Michelle Cortes-Harkins, Philip Gould, Babak Taleghani.

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

Guest: Dan Moos.

The meeting was called to order at 6:15 p.m. President Joop Nagtegaal began by welcoming everyone to the January meeting of the Board of Trustees and asking for a moment of silence.

In his opening comments Joop remarked briefly on the frequency of developments affecting elementary and secondary education in Rhode Island, and noted there would be opportunities to discuss many of those developments in tonight's meeting.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the November 19, 2009 meeting of the Board were approved unanimously, with one correction noted and made. The motion to approve was made by Dave Burnham and seconded by Martha Newcomb.

Head of School January Report and Race to the Top Approval

David Bourns referred to his written report and reviewed several highlights, including Marjority Leader Gordon Fox's recent visit to the school. There was discussion of the high school application process and other questions and comments from members of the Board.

Mr. Bourns then turned to the Race to the Top application being submitted on behalf of the State of Rhode Island by the Commissioner, Deborah Gist. He explained the application process and the funding being made available to education reform efforts by the United States Department of Education. Paul Cuffee School has, pending approval by the Board, signed on to the application as a participating district. Following questions and discussion, it was

moved by Ana Cecilia Rosado that Paul Cuffee School support the Race to the Top application as a participating district. Martha Newcomb seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously by the Board.

Search Committee Report

Russell Carey and Carolyn Pemberton provided a brief update and overview of the activities of the search committee since the last Board meeting. The opportunity statement has been completed and made available on the school's website as well as to the Board, parents, teachers, and staff. The search firm, Independent Thinking, is actively engaged in outreach and recruitment and has been in contact with many individuals regarding the position. The committee anticipates receiving a pool of candidates in early February and candidate interviews will follow. It is anticipated that substantial progress will be made between now and the March meeting of the Board, although the search is not expected to be complete at that time. There were questions and comments from members of the Board.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Nominating Committee

Julia Karahalidis delivered the report of the Nominating Committee on behalf of Joan Countryman. She reviewed the work the committee has done on expectations for Board members, and noted that members of the committee will be contacting Board members to check-in regarding their service and interests with regard to the School and the Board.

Human Resources Committee

Carolyn Pemberton delivered the report of the Human Resources Committee. She reviewed the highlights of the minutes of the recent meetings which had been circulated to the Board in advance of the meeting.

Finance Committee

Jon Conklin delivered the report of the Finance Committee on behalf of Babak Taleghani. He reported that the 2009-2010 budget needed to be approved by the Board. Allyn Copp so moved, Carolyn Pemberton seconded, and it was approved unanimously. He reviewed the actual budget to date, and noted the impact of search expenses and the fact that revenues from the Rhode Island Department of Education are likely to be reduced by \$250-300,000 in this fiscal year. There was discussion of the fact that further budget reductions are anticipated for next fiscal year and the efforts underway by the administration to identify expense reduction scenarios.

Dave Burnham moved, and Keith Mathews seconded, that \$10,000 from the Matching Challenge campaign be transferred from operating funds to the Capital Expansion portion of the Board Designated Reserve. The motion was approved unanimously. The report concluded with further discussion among the Board of the school's financial situation.

Strategic Planning Committee

David Bourns delivered the report of the Strategic Planning Committee. He reported on the discussion and recommendation of the committee to expend up to \$50,000 on a consultant to advise the Housing Aid Equity Committee and work on passing legislation that will correct the current inequity in the way in which housing aid is awarded to charter schools (30% reimbursement for charter schools versus 80% for all other public schools in Rhode Island). There was discussion among the Board regarding legislative strategy and priorities. Allyn Copp moved to approve the expenditure of up to \$50,000 for this purpose, and Dorothy Patrick seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a majority of the Board, with one nay vote being recorded.

Mr. Bourns noted that the Strategic Planning Committee endorsed the long-term high school siting recommendations and strategy being

proposed to the Board by the Plant and Property Committee.

Plant & Property Committee

Russell Carey delivered the report of the Plant and Property Committee. He reviewed the work that has taken place since the last meeting of the Board, including the status of the acquisition of the Living Room property. He reviewed the short term options for a high school location being actively pursued for fall 2010. He then reported on the discussion of the committee and the strategy being proposed for arriving at a long-term siting recommendation for the High School and the Middle School by July 1, 2010. The joint recommendation of the Plant and Property Committee and the Strategic Planning Committee had been circulated to the Board in advance of the meeting (the High School Siting Document). It was noted that the strategy being proposed is for arriving at a permanent siting solution for both the High School AND the Middle School. The strategy involves the following essential steps between now and July 1, 2010:

- 1. Determining with as much precision as possible the costs and value of waiting versus going forward.**
- 2. Calculating the cost and financing options as well as revenue/gift options for various possibilities.**
- 3. Narrowing target properties and beginning investigations, including feasibility studies if appropriate.**

It was noted that the timing and steps are related closely to the progress of changing the current housing aid legislation. Following questions and discussion among the Board, Liz Colon moved, and Allyn Copp seconded, that the High School and Middle School Siting Recommendations as presented be approved. The motion was approved unanimously.

Other Business

Joop noted a matter that will be referred to the By-Laws Committee regarding the term limits for the member of the Board who is a descendant of Paul Cuffee. There was no other business brought before the Board.

Adjournment

Keith Mathews moved to adjourn. Martha Newcomb seconded. The meeting adjourned at 8:20 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Russell C. Carey, Clerk