

Paul Cuffee School

Minutes of the Board of Trustees Meeting

January 20, 2011

A meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Paul Cuffee School was held on January 20, 2011 at the Paul Cuffee Lower School in Providence, Rhode Island.

Present: Su Almeida, Kathleen Alvarez, David Burnham, Russell Carey, William Clifton, Sr., Allyn Copp, Stefano Crema, Philip Gould, Keith S. Mathews, Joop Nagtegaal, Leanne Yinusa Nyahkoon, Dorothy Patrick, Carolyn Pemberton, Sarah Reis, Ana-Cecilia Rosado.

Excused: Joan Cannady Countryman, John Cariati, Dorothy L. Fields, Maria Monteiro, Martha Newcomb, Esq., Earl Smith III, Babak Taleghani.

Paul Cuffee Staff Present: Jonathan Conklin, Becky Coustan, Nina Giannotti, Julia Karahalis, Megan Madden, Michael Obel-Omia, Suzanne Mills Shaw.

Guests: Bob Kelley.

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

column in the New York Times by Nicholas Kristof regarding the educational system in China and the issue of competitiveness. In Rhode Island there have been multiple political developments since the last meeting of the Board with significant impacts on charter schools and education reform in the state. What is encouraging is the overall recognition of the importance of education.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the November 18, 2010 meeting of the Board were approved unanimously. The motion to approve was made by Dorothy Patrick and seconded by Ana Cecilia Rosado.

Head of School January Report

Mr. Obel-Omia reviewed several items from his report, circulated to the Board in advance of the meeting. He noted that student-teachers from the Roger Williams University/Gordon School MAT program had recently completed student teaching placements at the School over the past several weeks, and had made a positive contribution. Other recent events of note included: the Martin Luther King Tribute speaker who had reflected on the experience of being a Sikh; the seventh grade field trip to New York City as part of their unit on the Harlem Renaissance; a visit to the School by members of the Brown men's basketball team; and many other events and activities. With NECAP scores anticipated later this month, members of the school

community have been actively engaged in advocacy efforts, including Regents hearings on the proposed charter school regulations and housing aid legislation. A Paul Cuffee Park is being planned in association with the New Bedford Whaling Museum and there will be opportunities for the school to be involved with that effort. Planning is already underway for the school's tenth anniversary in the fall, and Julia Karahalidis reported on the annual fund results to date (78% of the goal of \$125,000 achieved as of January 20) and other Development Office initiatives and successes. Michael concluded his report by reading a brief excerpt from a letter from a parent regarding the positive experience of her child at Paul Cuffee School. There were questions for Michael and discussion among the Board.

Presentation to the Board: The Paul Cuffee Library Media Program

Mr. Obel-Omia introduced School Library Media Specialist Megan Madden. Ms. Madden provided the Board with an overview of the School's Library Media Program. Ms. Madden is a certified teacher with a master's degree in library science, and the libraries in each of the three school buildings are critically important classrooms. A primary mission of the program is to instill a culture of books and reading throughout the School, which is integral to the school-wide literacy effort. The program is a foundation of curriculum support and the collections are tailored to the Paul Cuffee curriculum. Three years ago there was no library at the School, and today there are 10,000 items in the collection, thanks in large part to the library campaign.

Ms. Madden reviewed the role she plays in meeting state and national standards regarding promotion of reading, informational literacy, and curricular support. The program teaches students skills essential for success in a knowledge economy. The library also plays a key role with regard to equity, and helps address the disparate access students have to books and digital information technologies and resources outside of school. There were questions and discussion from the Board, following which Ms. Madden was thanked for her excellent report and outstanding leadership of this important program.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Finance Committee

Jon Conklin summarized the report of the Finance Committee. He noted that the Audited Financial Statements had been circulated to the Board, and that the Form 990 would be made available to the Board as well.

Human Resources Committee

Carolyn Pemberton delivered the report of the Human Resources Committee. The Committee has worked on performance evaluation and the disciplinary process. There was a discussion of developing policies regarding electronic mail and social networking, as well as

the performance evaluation process and managing risks as the School continues to grow.

Joop Nagtegaal reported on the matter of the proposed Head of School evaluation process, and in particular the role of the Board. Following discussion it was agreed to delegate the responsibility of the detailed evaluation to the Executive Committee while ensuring that input is sought from the full Board and that a report is made to the Board at the end of the process.

Plant & Property Committee

Russell Carey delivered the report of the Plant & Property Committee. He updated the Board on the progress made with the playground project, noting that a land survey and environmental testing needed to be completed before the design stage could proceed. Updates were also provided regarding ongoing discussions with the Narragansett Bay Commission pertaining to the Governor Dyer Farmer's Market property, work done at the Lower School, the High School building, and the continuing desire to locate a more suitable location for the Middle School. There were questions from and discussion among the Board.

Nominating Committee

Joop Nagtegaal delivered the report of the Nominating Committee.

Bob Kelley recused himself from the meeting, and Joop reported that the Nominating Committee recommended with enthusiasm the election of Mr. Kelley as a Trustee who is a descendant of Paul Cuffee. The motion to do so was made by Carolyn Pemberton, seconded by Keith Mathews, and approved unanimously by the Board. Mr. Kelley was welcomed back to the meeting with applause.

Consent Agenda Discussion

Joop reported on the discussion of the idea of a consent agenda. It was agreed not to pursue that idea at this time, both other suggestions were made to help ensure meetings of the Board are as efficient and effective as possible.

New Business

There was brief discussion of the idea of starting meetings at 6:15 pm. There was no other new business brought before the Board.

Adjournment

Keith Mathews moved to adjourn. Ana Cecilia Rosado seconded. The meeting adjourned at 8:50 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Russell C. Carey, Clerk