

## **Paul Cuffee School**

### **Minutes of the Board of Trustees Meeting**

**March 17, 2011**

**A meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Paul Cuffee School was held on March 17, 2011 at the Paul Cuffee Lower School in Providence, Rhode Island.**

**Present: Su Almeida, David Burnham, Russell Carey, John Cariati, Allyn Copp, Stefano Crema, Dorothy L. Fields, Robert Kelley, Keith S. Mathews, Maria Monteiro, Joop Nagtegaal, Dorothy Patrick, Sarah Reis, Ana-Cecilia Rosado, Earl Smith III.**

**Excused: Kathleen Alvarez, Joan Cannady Countryman, William Clifton, Sr., Martha Newcomb, Esq., Leanne Yinusa Nyahkoon, Carolyn Pemberton, Babak Taleghani.**

**Paul Cuffee Staff Present: Jonathan Conklin, Nina Giannotti, Julia Karahalidis, Michael Obel-Omia, Nell Sears, Suzanne Mills Shaw.**

**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 March meeting of the Board of Trustees. He provided the Board with a brief overview of his recent trip to Tanzania and visits to several schools in that country.**

## **Approval of Minutes**

The minutes of the January 20, 2011 meeting of the Board were approved unanimously with one correction noted. The motion to approve was made by Keith Mathews and seconded by Dorothy Patrick.

## **Head of School March Report**

Mr. Obel-Omia reviewed several items from his report, circulated to the Board in advance of the meeting. He noted several recent visits to the school by various officials, including Governor Chafee, Commissioner Gist (twice), and Representative Medina. Several upcoming events and items of interest were noted, and Julia Karahalis reported on the very encouraging Annual Fund results to date. There were questions for Michael and discussion among the Board.

## **Presentation to the Board: Report on the NECAP Test Performance 2010**

Nell Sears and Suzie Shaw presented to the Board on the topic of NECAP Test Performance 2010. Ms. Sears began with an overview, presented through a case study of student writing samples, of differentiation at Paul Cuffee, which is a core principle of instruction. Evidence of commonalities and differences across student work were

discussed, including length, sophistication of thesis statements, analysis and imagery, etc. Ms. Sears and others commented on the various approaches to differentiated instruction and learning and the challenges and opportunities that presents in the classroom. Nell then turned to the results of the 2010 NECAP and discussed how to understand the results. Overall the results of the tests were very positive, with Paul Cuffee students having outperformed the City of Providence and, in two of three categories, the State of Rhode Island. There were questions and discussion from the Board, following which Ms. Sears was thanked for her report and the hard work of the teachers and the students which led to these results was applauded.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **Finance Committee**

Jon Conklin summarized the report of the Finance Committee. He reviewed the revenues to date, and noted given the fiscal situation in the City and State the uncertainties regarding revenues for next year. The external audit has been completed with no findings. Members of the Board thanked and applauded Jon for his great work.

### **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 the land survey and environmental testing had been delayed due to the adverse winter weather. An opportunity has presented itself for potential granting funding through the Department of Environmental Management and the Environmental Protection Agency, and we are actively pursuing that. Updates were also provided regarding ongoing discussions with the Narragansett Bay Commission pertaining to the Governor Dyer Farmer's Market property, 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, which will be changing its name to the Committee on Trustees and Governance. A Board of Trustees book is in preparation and will be distributed to members when it is complete. There were questions from and discussion among the Board.

### **New Business**

Joop thanked members for their attendance, participation, and engagement. There was no other new business brought before the Board.

### **Adjournment**

**Keith Mathews moved to adjourn. Ana Cecilia Rosado seconded. The meeting adjourned at 8:30 pm.**

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Russell C. Carey, Clerk**