

PAUL CUFFEE SCHOOL

MINUTES OF BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING

NOVEMBER 15, 2012

A meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Paul Cuffee School was held on November 15, 2012 at the Paul Cuffee Elementary School in Providence, Rhode Island.

Present: Su Almeida, David Burnham, Darline Berrios, Russell Carey, Allyn Copp, Stefano Crema, Philip Gould, Robert Kelley, Keith Mathews, Alex Molina, Maria Monteiro, Martha Newcomb, Carolyn Pemberton, Gisele Polanco, Babak Taleghani

Excused: Dorothy Fields, Earl Smith

Absent: Tom Chen

Paul Cuffee Staff: Michael Obel-Omia, Becky Coustan, Nancy Cresser, Wendy Randle, Jon Conklin, Maria Monteiro

President Russell Carey called the meeting to order at 6:07 p.m. and asked for a moment of silence.

NECAP Presentation

Wendy Randle and fifth-grade students Shelby Demanski, Sasha

Garcia, and Ayanna Rowe gave a power point presentation on the NECAP science results for the 4th grade. They also discussed methods of science teaching and learning in general, and they concluded by focusing on ways to improve science teaching and learning at Paul Cuffee in particular.

Strategic Planning

Mr. Carey and Michael Obel-Omia introduced Kristin Lehoullier, who will guide the school's strategic planning effort over the next year. Ms. Lehoullier spoke about the goals of strategic planning as (1) to confirm the Paul Cuffee School mission; (2) to develop a strategic vision for the school within a framework of three-to-five years; and (3) to identify the top three to five priorities to achieve within that time frame. This includes developing strategies to achieve these priorities and engaging all stakeholders, she said. The Board supported the proposed strategic planning goals and strategic planning steps laid out in the draft distributed at the meeting.

Approval of Minutes and New Clerk

Mr. Carey congratulated Maria Monteiro on her appointment as Director of Institutional Advancement and thanked her for her longstanding service on the Board. The Board joined Mr. Carey in praising her service and congratulating her on her new position. Because she can no longer serve on the Board, the Board voted to elect Martha Newcomb as replacement Clerk. Mr. Carey also thanked Ms. Monteiro for her work on the minutes of September 20, 2012, and

Su Almeida moved that the minutes be approved and Carolyn Pemberton seconded the motion. The minutes were approved unanimously.

Head of School Report

Mr. Obel-Omia gave a brief report about activities in the school, citing the highlights in his written report. He then spoke in greater detail about the progress on the playground, including recent work to stabilize the soil and revamp the storm water system. He thanked Dan Moos for his work on the project. Mr. Carey noted that the \$400,000 grant from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) that made this project possible was the second largest gift in the history of the school. Mr. Moos gave a report on the construction project to date that expanded on the handout provided. He noted that the site work began in early September and is expected to be completed by the target date of mid-January 2013, weather permitting.

Finance Discussion

Both Mr. Carey and Mr. Obel-Omia spoke about the need to give board members an opportunity to get more involved in the financial planning for the school and to make financial information more accessible to board members, particularly in light of the Board's fiscal and fiduciary responsibilities. Mr. Obel-Omia and Jon Conklin explained recent revisions to the state's funding formula, which will result in a decline in state revenue for the school every year for the next eight years. Mr. Carey pointed out that the school's budget is

highly vulnerable to changes in the funding amount or the funding formula by the General Assembly. After explaining the sources of revenue for the school, Mr. Conklin and Mr. Obel-Omia explained the breakdown of expenses, with approximately 76 percent of the school's expenses going to personnel costs. Mr. Conklin noted that there will be challenges ahead, adding that although one debt obligation will end in 2015-2016, the other debt obligation will need to be reassessed in 2015. He also discussed some of the other financial challenges facing the school in the coming years as revenues from the city of Providence are cut and costs are increased.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Finance Committee

Babak Taleghani gave the Finance Committee report and called attention to the draft audit that had previously been distributed. He also explained that board approval was necessary to transfer certain funds to the capital replacement reserve. Allyn Copp moved that \$54,796 plus \$17, 726 be transferred from operating funds to Board Designated Reserve – Capital Replacement. Keith Mathews seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously. Mr. Conklin then explained that funds were necessary for roof repairs at the 459 Promenade Street site. Su Almeida made a motion that up to \$5000 be transferred from Board Designated Reserve – Capital Replacement to operating cash for this purpose. The motion was seconded by Mr. Mathews and was approved unanimously.

Committee on Trusteeship and Governance

Stefano Crema referred board members to the written minutes of the November 1, 2012 Committee meeting.

Human Resources Committee

A report by this Committee was deferred in light of other business.

Other Business

Mr. Carey and Mr. Obel-Omia urged board members to talk to them if they have concerns, suggestions, or questions about the strategic planning process. Mr. Carey also highly recommended the article by Mr. Obel-Omia titled “The School as a Teaching Tool” and urged board members to read it if they had not already had a chance to do so. It was included in the materials distributed before the meeting.

Adjournment

There being no further business coming before the Board, Ms. Pemberton moved to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Mr. Copp and others, and the meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Martha Newcomb, Clerk