

**A meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Paul Cuffee School was held on March 21, 2013 at the Paul Cuffee Lower School in Providence, Rhode Island.**

**Present: Darline Berrios, David Burnham, Russell Carey, Tom Chen, Allyn Copp, Dorothy Fields, Robert Kelley, Leeds Mitchell IV, Keith Mathews, Martha Newcomb, Carolyn Pemberton, Gisele Polanco, Babak Taleghani**

**Absent: Su Almeida, Stefano Crema, Philip Gould, Alex Molina, Dorothy Patrick, Earl Smith III**

**Guests: Crystal Gantz, Kim Noble**

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

**President Russell Carey called the meeting to order at 6:09 p.m. and asked for a moment of silence.**

### **Approval of Minutes**

**Mr. David Burnham requested that a fuller statement be added regarding the Shakespeare competition referenced on page three of the January 17, 2013. Ms. Maria Palmgren stated she would make said recommendation and re-distribute the January 17, 2013 minutes**

at the May 16, 2013 Board meeting. Mr. Babak Taleghani made a motion to approve the January 17, 2013 minutes, subject to the amendment requested by Mr. Burnham, and to approve the minutes of the February 26, 2013 meeting of the Board. Mr. Bob Kelley seconded the motion, and the Board unanimously voted to approve the minutes of the January 17, 2013, pending amendment, and of the February 26, 2013 meeting.

Mr. Carey informed the Board that the CoTaG members at its March 7, 2013 meeting voted to forward to the Board three candidates for Board membership. He explained that the Board would be voting on two of the candidates, Mmes. Crystal Gantz and Kim Noble, at the evening's meeting. Mr. Carey also informed the Board that the vote for the third candidate would be taken during the May 16, 2013 meeting of the Board. Mr. Keith Mathews reported on the CoTaG meeting, and introduced Mmes. Gantz and Noble, and gave the Board their respective educational and professional experiences. Following the introduction, Mr. Carey excused Mmes. Gantz and Noble. Mr. Mathews made a motion to approve Mmes. Gantz and Noble as Trustees to the Board of Paul Cuffee School. The motion was seconded by Ms. Martha Newcomb, and the Board unanimously voted to approve Mmes. Gantz and Noble as Trustees to the Board of Paul Cuffee School.

## **Strategic Plan**

Mr. Michael Obel-Omia informed the Board that work on the strategic

**plan for Paul Cuffee School had begun and that the process is being facilitated by Ms. Kristin Lehoullier. Mr. Obel-Omia also explained that notes from the Strategic Planning Committee will be forthcoming upon further work by the Committee.**

### **NECAP Scores**

**Mmes. Becky Coustan, Nancy Cresser and Wendy Randle, principals of Paul Cuffee Upper, Middle and Lower schools, respectively, presented the Fall 2012 New England Common Assessment Program (NECAP) results. Paul Cuffee students in grades 4-11 participated in the NECAP test, and overall scores for Paul Cuffee School were higher than those of the Providence public schools. Areas of improvement were noted, and plans for improving the scores in those areas were shared with the Board. A discussion among the Board followed.**

### **Upper School Graduation**

**Ms. Coustan shared with the Board the Upper school's graduation plans. She explained the development of the curriculum, the need for adequate teaching space, and the hiring of additional faculty. She noted the requirements for graduation, as set forth by the state, and the anticipated work to ensure those requirements are met.**

### **Head of School Report**

**Mr. Obel-Omia gave a brief report about activities in the school, citing the highlights in his written report. He noted that more than**

1,500 students applied for admission to the school, while the number of available slots was fewer than 60. Mr. Obel-Omia asked Ms. Maria Monteiro to briefly report on the Annual Fund. Ms. Monteiro noted that the majority of Board Trustees had contributed to the Annual Fund. She clarified in answer to a question raised that, although a Board Trustee may contribute to a designated fund such as the Wiggins Committee, Board participation in support of the Annual Fund is expected. Ms. Monteiro also informed the Board of several upcoming events at the school, including the National Reading Week and invited guest readers; the Wiggins Committee's guest speaker Robert Meeropol; the 5th grade Boat building contest; and the Wiggins Committee's play "La Musica de Mi Gente", performed by Paul Cuffee students.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **Finance Committee**

Mr. Taleghani gave the Finance Committee report and noted that the balance sheet continues to look strong, with approximately \$500K revenue above expenses. He explained that the revenue numbers satisfy the loan covenant from Citizens Bank. Mr. Taleghani told the Board that at its January 9, 2013 meeting, the Finance Committee approved, in principle, the addition of a 12th Step to the Teacher Salary Step Scale. Mr. Jon Conklin added that the 12th step is the final step in the scale, as per the Providence Public School Department's current scale. Mr. Taleghani explained that the IRS Form 990 for the period ending June 30, 2012 had been submitted to

**the IRS, and that an electronic copy of the 990 would be emailed to the Board members.**

**[N.B. The electronic version of the 990 form was emailed by Ms. Palmgren to the Board on March 22, 2013]**

### **Committee on Trusteeship and Governance (CoTaG)**

**Mr. Mathews' report of the CoTaG is referenced at the beginning of these minutes.**

### **Human Resources Committee**

**Ms. Pemberton reviewed with the Board the meeting of March 19, 2013, and its related material.**

### **Other Business**

**Following the reports of the Board committees, Mr. Carey made an open call announcing that the Board would move into executive session as per Rhode Island General Laws § 42-46-5(a)(1)(personnel exception, the sole purpose of which was approval of the minutes of the January 17, 2013 meeting of the Executive Session. Mr. Burnham made a motion to hold the executive session closed and to keep the minutes of the executive session sealed, Mr. Leeds IV seconded the motion and the Board unanimously voted to go into closed executive session.**

**Mr. Carey asked the Board Trustees to remain, as well as Ms. Coustan, Mr. Obel-Omia and Ms. Palmgren. Mr. Carey excused all other staff and guests.**

**Executive Session - Rhode Island General Laws § 42-46-5(a)(1)(personnel exception).**

**There was one vote taken during Executive Session. Minutes of the executive session are kept sealed in the Office of the Head of School.**

### **Adjournment**

**Upon conclusion of the executive session, Mr. Leeds IV made a motion to resume the regular meeting. Mr. Kelley seconded the motion and the Board unanimously voted to resume its regular meeting.**

**There being no further business coming before the Board, Mr. Taleghani moved to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Mr. Leeds IV, and the meeting was adjourned at 8:08 p.m.**

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Martha Newcomb**