



Pioneer Valley Performing Arts Charter Public School

Minutes

December Board Meeting

Date and Time

Tuesday December 14, 2021 at 6:00 PM

Location

<https://zoom.us/j/98158607236?pwd=cG1OQkd2TTEvT2RWYTl4RXN4TzdBZz09>

Meeting ID: 981 5860 7236

Passcode: PVPA2022

Trustees Present

Andrea Nathanson (remote), David Potter, Jacob Rosenblum, LATRINA DENSON (remote), Marty Espinola (remote), Mindi Winter, Neil Hede (remote), Shannon Materka, Shino Pichette (remote), Tonya Ward (remote)

Trustees Absent

None

Guests Present

Firas Hashmi, Jenna Sardella, Marcy Conner (remote), Sofia Getoff-Scanlon

I. Opening Items

A. Record Attendance

B. Call the Meeting to Order

David Potter called a meeting of the board of trustees of Pioneer Valley Performing Arts Charter Public School to order on Tuesday Dec 14, 2021 at 6:02 PM.

- C. DESE needs more information to formally approve Sofia, Jenna, and Shannon. The hope is that they will be full members by next meeting.**

D. Read the Mission Statement

PVPA offers its students... INSERT MORE

Stated by: David Potter

E. Approve Minutes

Marty Espinola made a motion to approve the minutes from 11/9/2021 November Board Meeting on 11-09-21.

Mindi Winter seconded the motion.

Links on BoardOnTrack need to be included in the documents section as well. We will rectify this issue for past minutes.

The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

F. Public Comment

None

II. Executive Director Report

A. November Updates and Votes on Policies - presented by Kendrick Roundtree, Dean of Students

Brent has designated Kendrick Roundtree to deliver the Executive Director Report.

[Social Media Policy](#)

New Instagram groups have been popping up related to the PVPA community and sharing inappropriate relationships. This new policy would encourage positive social media usage and prompt students to assist in reducing the harmful behavior that has been taking place on social media recently.

Neil: Have lawyers looked at this?

Kendrick: Yes. It has been reviewed by lawyers.

Shino: How does this relate to alumni network pages?

Kendrick: It would not impact any pages legitimately run by PVPA.

The wording of the policy seems to focus a lot on PVPA's site itself and the employees of the school. This could make it easy for students to skirt the intention behind this policy without violating the policy itself.

Shino: Are problematic pages posing as PVPA-sponsored sites?

Kendrick: No. Students are creating their own groups and commenting on other students. However, most of these pages have "PVPA" in their names.

Shino: Does this student behavior violate other community standards?

Kendrick: Yes. We have developed a new policy on cyberbullying for the handbook.

One way to tighten this up would be to distinguish the social media websites as "websites/social media accounts using 'PVPA' in the name."

This policy needs to be enforceable if necessary, but it feels like it is far-reaching. There are groups that are not causing problems, and we do not want them to suffer as a result of this policy.

This is also a safety issue. For students who cannot be on social media for one reason or another, these actions can be dangerous and need to be addressed.

When students are complaining that they are being targeted online, it becomes the school's responsibility to make them feel safe and supported. This policy may not be ideal, but we need to communicate that this behavior will not be tolerated in our community.

Latrina: Is there a policy in place right now to deal with this issue in the meantime (prior to a vote)?

Kendrick: Grades 7-9 are really struggling right now. We are establishing opportunities for social-emotional learning that will kick off soon. Right now, we are relying on concerned students who bring this to our attention.

We will continue to discuss this policy at our next meeting.

[Title IX Policy](#)

David: Is the court-type process outlined in the policy part of the usual Title IX procedure?

Kendrick: Yes. This is part of the usual procedure for Title IX cases.

David: With other types of suspendable offenses, this court-type process is not present, correct?

Kendrick: This is not offered unless the accuser is willing to be present.

Shino: What did we have in place before this?

Kendrick: The Title IX policy was not ideal. Roles and responsibilities were not well defined. This policy is much more clear and comprehensive.

Safety is the top priority, and safety plans are the first steps in the Title IX process.

Almost all language in our proposed policy comes from the federal government.

Neil: Could we just state that we are following federal policy and state all exceptions related to our specific school community? Creating bulletin boards, putting Title IX policy in regular community notes, etc. seems like it would be more educational.

Kendrick: Given that members of the community may not be aware of general Title IX federal policy, we want to lay it out clearly for all PVPA-affiliated individuals.

Jake: How will the community response look following a Title IX investigation?

Kendrick: What has happened in the past is that students in the past have heard about instances without knowing all of the information. The school cannot inform the community of specifics because there are confidentiality laws that prevent it. The administration will work with the mental health team to best support the community following a Title IX incident.

Enrollment:

We plan to add a few more students given that we have space. We have received a comparable number of applications to last year.

COVID-19:

As of today (12/14), there have been a total of 10-members who have tested positive for COVID-19. Half of these cases have been in the two-week period since returning from Thanksgiving Break.

Staffing Update:

We brought on a new adjustment counselor who started two Mondays ago. We are putting together the process of interviewing candidates for a half-time nurse. We have also received a number of applications for Restorative Practice Coordinator.

Productions: Our second production of the year will be performed live in our mainstage theater this Friday and Saturday.

Communications:

PVPA's 2021 annual report has been approved by DESE and is on the website. The new communication team has been meeting weekly. A new website is currently being discussed.

New website addition:

The PVPA website has been updated with images and information about the administrative team. The administration also hosted the first PVPA community meeting on November 22nd.

[Library Selection Policy](#) - Presented by Austin Clark

Austin will ask the Board to approve the Library Selection Policy.

This policy contains critical guidelines for how the library functions and it should function in the future.

This policy was created in conjunction with a number of different students.

Mindi Winter made a motion to Approve the Title IX Policy.

Shino Pichette seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

Jacob Rosenblum Aye

LATRINA DENSON Aye

David Potter Aye

Marty Espinola Aye

Neil Hede No

Shannon Materka Aye

Mindi Winter Aye

Shino Pichette Aye

Tonya Ward Aye

Andrea Nathanson Aye

Jacob Rosenblum made a motion to Approve the Library Selection Policy.

Marty Espinola seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

III. Board Committee Reports

A. Finance Committee

The Finance Committee met on November 3rd. Marcy shared the year-end financial report. There were no issues. In the past year, we have added over \$300,000 to our cash reserves.

Reserves money can be spent on consulting for a head-of-school search. The number provided to the Finance Committee was \$30,000. From a finance perspective, there is funding for this consulting—where the money comes from can be determined at a later date.

The Finance Committee has changed their meeting time to be later in the day so as to avoid working hours for many community members.

B. Governance Committee Report

The Governance Committee continues to work on recruiting for the Board with regard to strategic action priorities. We plan to present several candidates during our January meeting. The reason we are not presenting candidates now is due to an influx in interest. We would like to evaluate all new potential Board members at once.

C. Long Range Infrastructure Planning Committee

D. Executive Search Committee

The Executive Search Committee is working on a list of values that they will look for in candidates. They are currently working on evaluating candidates for the Committee.

The position for head of school should be posted by early February. The Committee has decided to recommend that a consultant be hired to assist in the search process, including reference evaluations and background checks.

E. Executive Evaluation Committee

The Executive Evaluation Committee is making progress in developing questions to aid in the acquisition of a new school leader.

IV. Internal Stakeholders

A. Staff Reports

One of the things that staff would really like to see (even before an RP coordinator is hired) is a return to the Restorative Practices curriculum that has been practiced in the past. Students and Staff are clamoring for more opportunities for communication. Making an institutional effort to provide spaces for conversations may work to address some of the issues that the school is facing in terms of social media.

There is currently a system that seems working, though more information would be needed. Clarifying the decision-making process for suspensions and other disciplinary actions would be helpful for the community.

There are resources that have been created in the past by PVPA students regarding Restorative Practices. Our best consultant for this effort is our student body.

B. Student Reports

[Sofia Getoff-Scanlon's Student Report](#)

[Firas Hashmi's Student Report](#)

What would Board Members like students to share during meetings?

Mindi: Students are here to represent the student body as a whole in their reports. When you are a voting member, you are acting in your capacity as a special state employee.

Andrea: In the time I have been on the Board, student reports have evolved from conversations to informational presentations. Presenting unified issues as a group of representatives (when they arise) would allow for dialogue.

Marty: Occasionally, students in the past have come to the Board with personal opinions or grievances. Ensuring that student reports are representative of the entire student body is important.

David: Speaking on behalf of the middle school is not something we have seen very much in the past. Increasing middle school input would be a positive change. Running through reports with the whole student council could expand representation.

V. President's Business

A. Board Visit with Teachers and Staff

David is inviting all Board Trustees to join him on December 22nd to meet the staff informally during their curriculum day. Details in terms of timing are yet to be determined.

There is also an effort to organize a meetup with the student body at some point.

B. Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion

In building the Executive Search Committee, we want to honor diversity but failed to ask candidates to explain what groups they represent in the application process. Navigating how we address this in future hiring committees should be a forethought.

Feedback is welcomed from the Board. Marcy will meet with David to discuss these questions.

C. Strategic Action Plan

David included Objectives 2.1, 2.2, and 2.3 from the Strategic Action Plan as recognition that we are making meaningful progress on these priorities.

VI. Closing Items

A. Adjourn Meeting

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 8:05 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jacob Rosenblum

Jacob Rosenblum made a motion to Adjourn at 8:05.

Marty Espinola seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.