

APPROVED



# Pioneer Valley Performing Arts Charter Public School

## Minutes

### December Board Meeting

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#### Date and Time

Tuesday December 12, 2023 at 6:00 PM

#### Location

Zoom Account is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: December Board Meeting

Time: Dec 12, 2023 06:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83351123912?pwd=QldTOFM1RzFGSEhGVlhPam9EWkFEQT09>

Meeting ID: 833 5112 3912

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Meeting ID: 833 5112 3912

Passcode: 616378

Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/kcWvelaslo>

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#### **Trustees Present**

Azizah Yasin (remote), David Cavallin, David Potter, LATRINA DENSON (remote), Mindi Winter, Neil Hede (remote), Sasha Viands (remote), Shino Pichette (remote), Vanessa Ford (remote)

#### **Trustees Absent**

Sarah LaPierre

#### **Trustees who arrived after the meeting opened**

Azizah Yasin, Vanessa Ford

#### **Ex Officio Members Present**

Brent Nielsen (remote), Marcy Conner (remote)

#### **Non Voting Members Present**

Brent Nielsen (remote), Marcy Conner (remote)

#### **Guests Present**

Danyelle Joujoute (remote), John Kulas

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### **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 12, 2023 at 6:06 PM.

### C. Read the Mission Statement

David Potter read the mission statement.

Vanessa Ford arrived at 6:07 PM.

Azizah Yasin arrived at 6:07 PM.

### D. D. Approve Minutes

Sasha Viands made a motion to approve the minutes from November Board Meeting on 11-14-23.

Neil Hede seconded the motion.

No Discussion

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

#### Roll Call

Mindi Winter	Aye
Azizah Yasin	Aye
Sarah LaPierre	Absent
Sasha Viands	Aye
David Potter	Aye
Shino Pichette	Aye
Neil Hede	Aye
Vanessa Ford	Aye
LATRINA DENSON	Aye

### E. Public Comment

## II. Head of School Report

### A. Brent's Report

Applications are open. Lottery is in Feb. 114 new applications so far. At this time last year we had 142. So fewer this year, but we're still on track to do well this year. But Brent encourages us all to put the word out, as that is the main way that news about PVPA gets out there - word of mouth.

Brent gave the breakdown of which county applicants are coming from. We are trending towards an increase in Hamden County applicants.

Average daily enrollment so far this year has been 400.01, which is stellar. Average daily attendance rate this year is 90.88%, which is fine, but we need it to be better. 15-20% of PVPA students have been out a lot, but most have only missed a few days. The state is looking closely at this, as is PVPA, because students are less likely to graduate on time if they are not IN school.

Brent will let David talk about the We Came To Play tour. It went spectacularly.

The African Dance Troupe went to a school where someone approached them about a grant.

Last year we had a huge campaign to raise money for stage mics, and it makes such a huge difference! It's amazing!

Questions:

- Do the attendance rates include excused absences, and does Brent see common themes or reasons for why students are absent? Are there absences that intervention by the school would help, or not so much?

--- Yes, the statistics include all absences - if students miss more than half a day for ANY reason. There are some students that our intervention could help, and we're working on it. Emily, the Dean of Students, and Brent also attended a webinar by DESE about how to tackle attendance challenges. There are many different approaches highlighted, for students in different situations. DESE says there will also be some grant money available to address attendance issues in the future.

### **III. Board Committee Reports**

#### **A. Finance Committee**

Marcy Conner arrived at 6:19 pm.

Neil reported out.

The main discussion of that meeting was the Esser Funds ending in September. There is projected to be 4% less funds available. This will mean roughly 50,000K less for PVPA, likely. But it depends on what sending schools end up deciding for the above foundation numbers.

MA Gov is talking about some extreme cuts to education. And enrollment is down across the state by 4% and hiring is up by 14% across the state. How are positions going to be kept with a cut in funding. Are teachers across the state going to lose jobs? It will depend how they spent their Esser funding. We're not sure how anything will affect PVPA yet.

Does the Esser funds ending affect PVPA directly? Yes, PVPA will also be not getting Esser funds, but we have already planned for this. The bigger issue is maybe the trickle down from sending schools.

There was a vote to increase the capital funding budget. Increase in \$19,000 for the front door project.

#### **B. Governance Committee**

Latrina reporting out.

The committee wants to focus on recruitment. One idea that we have is to invite potential trustees to the showcase on Dec 21. We also aim to have a table at the end and hand out recruitment materials. And we encourage everyone on the board to spread the word that we need to members, and invite folks to the showcase. We are also open to any other ideas from members about recruitment.

Shino reporting out about the ByLaw Updates conversation.

The committee does want the Head of School and CFO listed as participating in the board, in our bylaws. And we also think it might be clearer to call teachers and students "representatives" rather than members, as there seems to be some confusion around the term "member".

Q: Can we submit this to DESE before receiving their full feedback? We can submit it via email, but not in an updated document.

Q: Should we add a glossary section? That might help clarify what WE mean by "representative", "member", "ex-officio". Great idea!!

### **C. Head of School Support & Evaluation Committee**

David Potter reporting:

They are working with Brent on talking about the goals for this year.

to reiterate:

goal 1: multi-tiered systems of support. (Student support team)

goal 2: diversify its workforce

goal 3: updating how student progress is communicated to students and their families

This committee will check back in with the board as they receive evidence related to these goals. And we will circulate a survey in the spring (likely April) to get feedback about how Brent is doing with these goals.

## **IV. Internal Stakeholders**

### **A. Staff Reports**

David Cavallin reporting:

The We Came To Play tour went amazingly. Our students step up so well! Everyone pitches in, and the energy is so high. This was the best tour David has seen in his time at the school. This has felt like a very productive semester as well. Teachers are able to hold students accountable in ways they haven't been able to since COVID. Students are working so hard and well.

The Dance Show was so great. It was sold out and people were turned away because there was just no space. It seems like the community is ready to come back in person to see what PVPA is doing. And the more seats we sell the better for PVPA too!

## **B. Student Reports**

Danyelle Joujoute reporting:

The art departments are thriving! The art showcase had 123 people performing! Great to see the middle schoolers involved. That was the first show for some of the middle schoolers, which is so exciting! The African Dance group show in Springfield had students and teachers from the host school up dancing and it was so fun. There are changes in the science department. There have been lack of science teachers leading up to the MCAS which is concerning. But overall it has been a very productive fall, and Danyelle doesn't say that lightly.

No other students present.

## **V. President's Business**

### **A. Diversity Task Force Update**

David Potter: The task force is working on finding folks to participate. The goal is slow but steady. Not trying to go too fast. Want to do something meaningful and inclusive. It's a process and will take time to get these videos created.

Vanessa Ford: It might be helpful to have the Diversity Task Force and the Video Project be two distinct projects. Maybe the board members can be supporting the Diversity group that is already established on campus. Trevin Bond (who is working with the Diversity group on campus), and Vanessa discussed this distinction.

Q: What is happening at the school that our task force could support / invest in? Is it an active group? Are we talking about the Diversity Committee (not some separate group)?  
-- Yes. The Diversity Committee stopped being active at some point during COVID. So the board would like to meet with the Diversity Committee to see what we, as board members, can support with.

-- The Diversity Committee, in the past, didn't include students, but it is super important that it does moving forward. This work cannot happen without students. The faculty advisors and Trevin Bond are also involved.

David Potter asks that folks who want to participate in the task force stay on after the meeting to plan a time to meet.

## **VI. Closing Items**

### **A.**

### **Adjourn Meeting**

David Potter made a motion to adjourn.

Shino Pichette seconded the motion.

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

### **Roll Call**

Neil Hede	Aye
David Potter	Aye
Shino Pichette	Aye
Sasha Viands	Aye
Sarah LaPierre	Absent
Mindi Winter	Aye
Vanessa Ford	Aye
LATRINA DENSON	Aye
Azizah Yasin	Aye

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 7:00 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Shino Pichette