

APPROVED



# Pioneer Valley Performing Arts Charter Public School

## Minutes

### Board of Trustee Meeting May 2025

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#### Date and Time

Tuesday May 13, 2025 at 6:00 PM

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#### Trustees Present

Azizah Yasin, Kiara Badillo (remote), LATRINA DENSON, Neil Hede, Sasha Viands (remote)

#### Trustees Absent

Craig Santos, David Cavallin, Grace Bannasch, Tim Cable, Vanessa Ford

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#### I. Opening Items

##### A. Call the Meeting to Order

LATRINA DENSON called a meeting of the board of trustees of Pioneer Valley Performing Arts Charter Public School to order on Tuesday May 13, 2025 at 6:11 PM.

##### B. Azizah Yasin recording minutes in the absence of Vanessa Ford.

##### C. Record Attendance

##### D. Read the Mission Statement

Azizah Yasin read the mission statement

##### E. D. Approve Minutes

##### F.

**Approve minutes**

**II. Executive Session**

**A. Negotiation strategies regarding Head Of School Brent Nielson contract.**

Azizah Yasin made a motion to Go into executive session under G.L. c. 30, section 21(a) (2) to conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel or to conduct collective bargaining sessions or contract negotiations with nonunion personnel (Head of School Brent Nielsen).

LATRINA DENSON seconded the motion.

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

**Roll Call**

Craig Santos	Absent
Kiara Badillo	Aye
Sasha Viands	No
Neil Hede	Aye
Vanessa Ford	Absent
Tim Cable	Absent
Azizah Yasin	Aye
Grace Bannasch	Absent
LATRINA DENSON	Aye
David Cavallin	Absent

**B. Executive Session**

[Executive Session Notes](#)

6:07pm Latrina Denson called the Executive Session meeting to order. Trustees Present: Azizah Yasin(in-person), Kiara Badillo (remote, alone), Latrina Denson (in-person) Neil Hede (in-person), Sasha Viands (Remote) Latrina Denson reinstated the purpose Purpose: Executive Session under G.L.c.30, section21(a)(2) Executive session under G.L. c. 30, section 21(a)(2) to conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel or to conduct collective bargaining sessions or contract negotiations with nonunion personnel (Head of School Brent Nielsen).

The Board of Trustees invited legal counsel Marc Terry to the meeting to discuss negotiation strategies and the renewal of Brent Nielsen’s contract. The discussion included terms, the length of the contract, and clarification of the job description. Based on the discussion between the board and legal counsel and the decision regarding the content to be included and/or modified in the contract, the board voted as follows to give legal counsel authority to draft a proposed employment contract for head of school Brent Nielsen:

It was moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:53pm and return to the Public board meeting. Rollcall Azizah Yasin(in-person, yes), Kiara Badillo (remote, alone, yes), Latrina Denson (in-person, yes) Neil Hede (in-person, yes), Sasha Viands (Remote, abstain) Legal Counsel Marc Terry left and the board prepared to return to the Public board meeting Neil Hede made a motion to That the board give legal counsel authority to modify the contract proposal.

Azizah Yasin seconded the motion.

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

**Roll Call**

Kiara Badillo	Aye
David Cavallin	Absent
Vanessa Ford	Absent
Craig Santos	Absent
Grace Bannasch	Absent
LATRINA DENSON	Aye
Neil Hede	Aye
Sasha Viands	Abstain
Azizah Yasin	Aye
Tim Cable	Absent

**C. Adjourn**

Azizah Yasin made a motion to It was moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:53pm and return to the Public board meeting.

Neil Hede seconded the motion.

It was moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:53pm and return to the Public board meeting.

**Rollcall**

Azizah Yasin(in-person, yes), Kiara Badillo (remote, alone, yes), Latrina Denson (in-person, yes)

Neil Hede (in-person, yes), Sasha Viands (Remote, abstain)

Legal Counsel Marc Terry left and the board prepared to return to the Public board meeting.

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

**Roll Call**

Grace Bannasch	Absent
LATRINA DENSON	Aye
Azizah Yasin	Aye
Tim Cable	Absent
Kiara Badillo	Aye
Craig Santos	Absent
Sasha Viands	Abstain
Vanessa Ford	Absent

**Roll Call**

Neil Hede	Aye
David Cavallin	Absent

**III. Public Comments**

**A. Public Comment**

- Presiding officer, president Latrina Denson opened the meeting with public comments.
- There were 15 minutes for public comments.
- There were adults and 1 student who contributed to the public comment session, who expressed they did not want Brent N. to continue as a head of school, so they disagreed with a contract renewal.

**IV. Internal Stakeholders**

**A. Staff Report**

No report

**B. Student Reports**

No report

**V. Agenda Items for Board Approval**

**A. Competency Determination (CD) Policy and Updated Graduation Requirements**

Azizah Yasin made a motion to Move to accept the competency determinatgion policy and updated graduation requires.

Neil Hede seconded the motion.

Sasha Viands asked if this was to determine seniors can graduate using the new graduation requires.

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

**Roll Call**

Grace Bannasch	Absent
Vanessa Ford	Absent
Craig Santos	Absent
LATRINA DENSON	Aye
Azizah Yasin	Aye
Neil Hede	Aye
Kiara Badillo	Aye
Sasha Viands	Abstain

**Roll Call**

David Cavallin	Absent
Tim Cable	Absent

**B. District Curriculum Accommodation Plan (DCAP)**

Azizah Yasin made a motion to Move to accept the new District Curriculum Accommodation Plan (DCAP).

Neil Hede seconded the motion.

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

**Roll Call**

Sasha Viands	No
Tim Cable	Absent
Grace Bannasch	Absent
David Cavallin	Absent
LATRINA DENSON	Aye
Azizah Yasin	Aye
Neil Hede	Aye
Vanessa Ford	Absent
Craig Santos	Absent
Kiara Badillo	Aye

**C. Pioneer Valley Performing Arts Charter Public School Discipline for Students Identified as Having Special Needs**

Azizah Yasin made a motion to Vote to accept the Pioneer Valley Performing Arts Charter Public School Discipline for Students Identified as Having Special Needs.

Neil Hede seconded the motion.

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

**Roll Call**

Kiara Badillo	Aye
Sasha Viands	Abstain
Azizah Yasin	Aye
LATRINA DENSON	Aye
David Cavallin	Absent
Craig Santos	Absent
Tim Cable	Absent
Grace Bannasch	Absent
Neil Hede	Aye
Vanessa Ford	Absent

**D. Board On Track Contract Renewal**

Neil Hede made a motion to Move to renew the Board On Track Contract Renewal.

Kiara Badillo seconded the motion.

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

**Roll Call**

Sasha Viands	Abstain
Vanessa Ford	Absent
David Cavallin	Absent
Grace Bannasch	Absent
Azizah Yasin	Aye
Kiara Badillo	Aye
Neil Hede	Aye
Tim Cable	Absent
LATRINA DENSON	Aye
Craig Santos	Absent

**VI. Governance Committee**

**A. Ann Dargie, Esq.,**

Neil Hede made a motion to To present all of the candidates and vote as a slate.

Azizah Yasin seconded the motion.

Azizah Yasin, VP and governance committee chair, explained the process of interviewing and presenting the candidates for full vote of the board without a vote of the committee since a panelist from the interview panel had a question on whether deliberation and vote should happen publicly or in executive session of the governance committee meeting. Azizah reached out to counsel to confirm the process, and the vote was tabled until confirmation was given.

Kiara confirmed that the process was legally compliant and that Azizah did not need a vote, but was doing this in good faith as a best practice, but it is fine for Azizah as governance committee chair to present to the full board for a vote.

Azizah presented a profile of the first candidate based on the resume attached.

There was discussion and questions raised about thrfee of the four candidates being lawyers and if there were relationships and/ or were conflicts of interest from board member Sasha V, Neile H, and Kiara B.

Azizah responded discussing recruitment efforts over the past few years, difficulty of people making commitments to volunteer.

Met with the candidates individually, conducted panel interviews with two other panelists, all of whom at the end of the interviews supported them being presented.

There was a suggestion by Sasha V who said she would agree to take one or two candidates.

Latrina said we have been transparent and some candidates attended the board meetings and are aware of the issues in the PVPA community. And although they are lawyers they have other qualities such as passion for arts and finance.

Neile Hede they made a motion to vote on all candidates together as one slate.

Azizah second the motion.

When Latrina asked for discussion, Azizah went through the profile of the other three candidates. There was a vote on the following in one slate:

- Ann Dargie, Esq.,
- Thomas Roy, Esq.,
- Matthew Schmidt, Esq
- Emily Whitebear

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

**Roll Call**

Kiara Badillo	Aye
Grace Bannasch	Absent
Sasha Viands	No
LATRINA DENSON	Aye
David Cavallin	Absent
Craig Santos	Absent
Azizah Yasin	Aye
Vanessa Ford	Absent
Neil Hede	Aye
Tim Cable	Absent

**B. Thomas Roy, Esq.,**

**C. Matthew Schmidt, Esq**

**D. Emily Whitebear**

**VII. Head of School Report**

**A. General Report and Updates**

Brent N. began his head of school report. Moments later, Kiara B. mentioned that Sasha V. left the meeting.

As a result there was no longer quorum to continue the meeting and the meeting ended at this time.

**VIII. 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 8:00 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Azizah Yasin  
Meeting adjourned due to lack of quorum

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**Documents used during the meeting**

*None*