

APPROVED



# Pioneer Valley Performing Arts Charter Public School

## Minutes

### Board of Trustee Meeting June 2025

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#### Date and Time

Tuesday June 10, 2025 at 6:00 PM

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#### Trustees Present

Azizah Yasin, David Cavallin, Grace Bannasch (remote), Kiara Badillo (remote), LATRINA DENSON, Neil Hede, Sasha Viands (remote)

#### Trustees Absent

Tim Cable, Vanessa Ford

#### Ex Officio Members Present

Brent Nielsen, Marcy Conner

#### Non Voting Members Present

Brent Nielsen, Marcy Conner

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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 Jun 10, 2025 at 6:11 PM.

#### B. Record Attendance

**C. Read the Mission Statement**

Read by Azizah

**D. D. Approve Minutes May 13, 2025**

Grace Bannasch made a motion to approve the minutes from Board of Trustee Meeting May 2025 on 05-13-25.

Azizah Yasin seconded the motion.

Confusion over slate of officers - clarification. Neils' motion was intended to vote on the slate of officers. Others did not understand.

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

**Roll Call**

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

**II. Public Comments**

**A. Public Comment**

Emily Pfeiffer - current open complaints with several organizations. Feb PRS violation for Title IX. Sec of State open minute violation - assigned atny and investigation. Quotes open meeting law. Brent claims no findings - lie of omission. No findings yet. Shooting the messenger is common. Seems easy to blame me. This Board is to blame. Any other blame is scapegoating. Enrollment is fine and a wait list - should be concerned that students are expendable - if you believe him why is there another special lottery - parents are telling the truth. Maybe you can see how he is doing it to you to? What if the things we are saying are true. What if you are a party to it?

Amanda Strout - tired - as Admin tries to communicate half truths. Violations still open. Tired Board is more concerned with talking to an attorney than parents. Want to know students are safe. Want to know that admin is forthright and communicating issue. Don't feel this after May 23rd fight in bathroom - email sent sat - no injuries - not true - find video - battery occurred - this is serious. Have been attending since Jan and hearing about investigations that are on going on. Please don't act or vote without knowing there is no wrong doing. You have a responsibility - care and respect.

Micheal - public asks not to renewal Brent's contract until recent Title IX investigation is completed.

### **III. Internal Stakeholders**

#### **A. Staff Report**

David - busy last month - spring music showcase - Alice By Heart - visual arts gallery - ms production Good Man Charlie Brown - graduation. Today - film festival. Last meeting as trustee - taking over as co-chair of PVPA Union and trustee of executive board of local 2322. Conflict of interest for bargaining next contract.

#### **B. Student Reports**

No students.

### **IV. Head of School Report**

#### **A. General Report and Updates**

From last meeting - DESE integrated motoring review completed - 43 separate criteria in SPED and Civil rights - two findings: one eval meeting not with 45 day time frame, two a SPED teacher at the time had not yet taken one of two MTELS within 1st year of employment - is working on this. Good overall review .

Student schedule - grades 8 to 11 have a scheduled for next year. Current 7th graders and new 7th graders have yet to be done.

Supplemental lottery - typical of charter schools to have year round lottery. Prior to COVID supplemental lotteries were not needed as we had a healthy weight list. Student numbers across state are down. Other districts struggle to hit their max - we currently have 397 - this is remarkable compared to other schools. Lottery of grades 7 and 10 will be July 3rd - in other grades the wait lists are too long. Anticipating 400 student next year - we do over offer to ensure we hit the max. This year current 7th grade is at 72 - 1 left after Feb 15 stating peer interaction group as reason for leaving. 8th grade lottery will not happen again until 2026-27 - over 60 students for 9th grade some will leave for vocational schools. Received 56 applications - 21 for 7th grade.

Budget - pleased about new items - addressing the wants/needs/desires for community. SPED teacher for math for students struggling with math achievement. Full time lighting & sound teacher for new dept - will now have 3 full time teacher is each arts department. Assist Dean for MS as well as FT MS PE teacher - proactively address student culture and behavior - Homework support classes were not structured enough for middle school

students - new PE block will still have some support time. Hoping to address problematic behaviors of the middle school. Transportation reimbursement will help enrollment by transportation all students from their home to school.

Fundraising - new light board- Friends of PVPA campaign. Tech facilities that rival area theaters for students to learn and take into working world.

Las day of school is Friday. Students have been sharing their talent with community - Unity Day and 8th grade Step up day

Neil - attrition on 8th and 9th grade? Haven't been losing more than typical - 10 to 18 is typical - due to athletic programs and vocational schools. No significant difference than previous years. Similar to other schools - since COVID - lower number of applicants - taking more work to keep seats full.

Azizah - new staff - been hired? No. They are posted.

## **V. President's Report**

### **A. President's Report**

Autonomy resilience - talk about Unions - thoughts on how to support staff in relation to what is changing with bylaws. Ensure that the voices of teachers are still heard. Non-voting member there are more ways to share and engage in a different way. Important that new staff reps are aware of the changes and how to connect with teachers. Can discuss at retreat. Tim will also be leaving next year. Want teachers to feel like valuable members of this board - can continue conversation at retreat.

New bylaws - waiting on DESE approval - added structure for on-boarding of members and not much around teachers and students. Need to connect with teachers and students by getting into the school. A little bit of a disconnect between the Board and the school - not fan of us/them dynamic. New family orientation. Something intentional, not just productions.

Conversation centered around what the benefits are for staff to become involved.

Possible solutions could be coffee hour with parents/community/staff, approaching non-unionized staff to participate, and Student Council (will be a more formal process for students next year)

Head of School evaluation next steps - special public meeting next week to do evaluation - Tues? Last one for this year - no more than hour - agenda HOS contract and new Board members. Will work on a date. Questions around executive sessions vs open meetings - negotiations is separate and for exec session - evaluation is done in open meeting - unusual that both happen at same time this has made this process confusing.

Received a letter form FOPVPA - need to consider a time to meet - maybe retreat.  
Received at end of year. Will need some time to go through the issues - dense and complicated. Marcy should be present - good job of explaining the different responsibilities.

**VI. Governance Committee**

**A. Retreat Day 2025**

Selecting a date? July 27th 8:30 - 3:00

Agenda - Charter Renewal application - FOPVPA

**B. Renewal of current board members**

Terms & renewal - slate for another term - flaw in demarcations - discussion about a member's status changing because of their relationship with the school - causes confusion - Do terms change based on the relationship? What is the term? All members should have the same term? The distinction does not make sense - we did change the terms last year. Vote for another term for those that expire this year.

Vanessa has been extremely ill - clerk side has been difficult for this reason. Please lift her up - she serves in the wider community and has alot on her plate that she will be stepping away from.

Shino made the updates last year to make sure there was no issues. If elected to a three year terms then it should stand unless voted different. Neil was voted on last year - term ends 2026. Azizah - ends June 2026.

Neil - ends June 2026

Sasha - ends June 2025

Latrina - ends June 2025

Grace ends June 2027

Azizah Yasin made a motion to accept the present slate of members and renew Sasha (parent) to another two year term ans Latrina (community member) to another three year term.

Neil Hede seconded the motion.

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

**Roll Call**

LATRINA DENSON Aye

Vanessa Ford Absent

Neil Hede Aye

**Roll Call**

Azizah Yasin	Aye
Tim Cable	Absent
David Cavallin	Aye
Grace Bannasch	Aye
Sasha Viands	Aye
Kiara Badillo	Aye

**VII. Additional Board Committees**

**A. Head of School Evaluation and Support Committee**

Brent opt to stay in meeting. Everyone received copy of the Head of School evaluation. Rough draft of template - areas for improvement - summary - memo. Areas of improvement based on core competencies - used though out the state - reviewed areas.

Latrina based these documents on feedback from the Board- if even one person had an area of disagreement then it went to needs improvement. No one gets an excellent - only a satisfactory or meets criteria. Needed to separate evaluation process from contract negotiations. Questionnaire was sent to Board and Brent's supervisees. Need to hold HOS accountable to the goals that are set by the Board and himself.

The document was written by Latrina and has not fleshed out the narative - wanted input form the Board. The point is for this to be a collective from the Board and not one person. Did not see anything surprising. Distribution shows the spread but is anonymous.

There was a lengthy discussion about how the process needs to be improved - survey is only 14 people. Missing 90% of school. Specific questions that say "high level of parent satisfaction". Some things that need work and some things are perfect. Not a perfect process - need to continue to improve the process.

Overall there were not surprises in the comments. Financial and DESE are great - communication needs work - no surprises. Need to look a job description. Summary is missing monthly meetings in job description. Open to suggestions on where improvements can be made by Brent - with communication recognizing intention vs impact. Brent does not act in an unethical manner.

There are always places where we can improve - may need to contextualize - % to show the respondents - separate adjectives - articulate what the actual concerns were - also helps to identify goals. Section by section:

1st Core Competency - demonstrates integrity

2nd - cultivate a culture of excellence - improvement connected to communication and conflict resolution - alot of strengths. Need key bullets.

Each member will send bulleted lists about each competency and any disagreements with Latrina's summary of the survey. The final document will be discussed at the next meeting. Had hard time and limiting recommendations to 3 - 10 seems more appropriate. 24 hours to Latrina

Neil Hede made a motion to table the vote on the Head of School evaluation pending a thorough review and input. To be placed on the next agenda for approval.

David Cavallin seconded the motion.

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

**Roll Call**

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

**B. Finance Committee**

Neil Hede made a motion to accept and pass the FY26 budget as presented.

Azizah Yasin seconded the motion.

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

**Roll Call**

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

**C. Friends of PVPA Liaison Report**

No information. Retreat having a codified plan when meeting. Organize fundraising/tasks. Movement on building studies - what is best.

Thank you to Kiara for her service as the Board liaison to the FOPVPA.

Thank you to David & Tim as well for their service to the Board - joys successes and challenges. Your commitment is commendable - will miss you!

## **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 8:36 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Marcy Conner