

APPROVED



Pioneer Valley Performing Arts Charter Public School

Minutes

Special Board Meeting

June

Date and Time

Tuesday June 24, 2025 at 6:00 PM

Location

Pioneer Valley Performing Arts
15 Mulligan Dr, South Hadley, MA 01075

or [via zoom link](#)

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83036493315?pwd=tl8M4XzEewica9TgfecCoRab1NeWR6.1>

Trustees Present

Azizah Yasin, Grace Bannasch (remote), LATRINA DENSON, Neil Hede (remote), Sasha Viands (remote)

Trustees Absent

David Cavallin, Kiara Badillo, Tim Cable

Ex Officio Members Present

Brent Nielsen, Marcy Conner (remote)

Non Voting Members Present

Brent Nielsen, Marcy Conner (remote)

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 24, 2025 at 6:15 PM.

B. Record Attendance

C. Read the Mission Statement

Read by Latrina Denson

D. D. Approve Minutes

June 10th minute have not been finalized due to the absence of the Clerk. They will be tabled until the next meeting.

II. Public Comments

A. Public Comment

Eleanor & Dylan - 8th grade student. Student population does not want Brent's contract renewed - petition - 71 high school & 60 middle school signatures - some were lost - afraid of retaliation from Brent so students do not want it submitted. Will determine if families stay at PVPA. (Petition showed to Latrina). Eleanor's Dad - the Board has been hearing this stuff - impression is that it is an overzealous group of parents - this group cared about the community and students feeling safe. When we heard about what was going on with the Admin down playing and being deceptive - great loss of a number of people who would have contributed to the Community and make it better. Hope that moving forward - whether renewed contract - the BOT understands that changes need to be made - in the way the info is distributed - protecting adults involved - students should first priority. Need to have some take a-ways other than group of crazy parents.

Amanda Stroud - Eleanor is daughter. 1st year at PVPA been to many meeting. Asking not to renew Brent's contract. Investigations still pending - should delay voting until investigations are completed. Don't believe this small group is the only dis-satisfied group. Reach out to all of the community - students and other parents. Have not seen the Board act or deliberate over the issues brought forth. Parents banded together after not being able to get reasonable responses to their issues. Renewal is not what is best to have a health school community.

Emily Pfeiffer - Board is required to debate publicly - instead it had executive sessions to negotiate - no need for confidentiality because direct reports and Brent were present.

Told confidentiality was able to keep them private - not true. Don't know what will happen but suspect that renewal will happen tonight without any deliberation. Spirit of

open meeting law is to allow the public to participate . We heard tonight from a brave student - not alone in her feelings. This Board removed students and employees from Board - scheduled this meeting in just 6 days. Brent's casual demeanor is because he knows he will be renewed. The Board has not hear from this community. Should not renew until; issues are resolved and community weighs in.

Aly Wicks-Lim - doesn't matter all year what community or students say. My daughter will not be back for 9th grade for safety reasons. Recent email from Brent on PVPA partens Facebook page. communicating reason for withdraw on a form - essay for reason - problematic form - indicates where they are going - Brent is allowed to say that students are not unsafe because the form doesn't allow it. Disappointing to find that Admin monitors FaceBook page - would not existed if PVPA had not allowed - natural to want to connect to families - page was created so families could communicate without being monitored by Admin. Email claims that most families are happy - given lack of reliable communication concerned about people being comfortable because of lack of knowing. Group chat that kids and parents considering alternative - parents holding place - assuming you knew this because of the extra lottery. Please make comments on page 3 public - I will be sure to indicate why. Board please take these seriously - parents may not take time because they are tired of not being listened to - simple survey is needed so that it can be quantified. Look at the facts that parents want their students happy and safer - parents are leaving when they can't make this happen.

III. Head of School Contract

A. Head of School Contract

Contract that was created in conjunction with the Attorney - all Board members were able to contribute and Brent offered what he was looking for. Azzizah and Latrina met with Brent after recommendations and the revised contract was completed. Brent has accepted the negotiated contract.

Azizah Yasin made a motion to approve Brent Nielsen's contract as Head of School for July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2028.

Grace Bannasch seconded the motion.

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

Roll Call

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

IV. Discussion Items

A. Retreat 2025 and MCPSA training

Retreat - recommendations for topics to Latrina & Azizah no later than 2 weeks prior to meeting. There is an opportunity for someone from MCPSA come and discuss what it means to be a Board member - cannot make July 27th. The Board agreed to alternate dates for training before September. What to set the Board up for success. Latrina will communicate a date/time.

B. Elected new board members review

Reviewed this situation with our Attorney - regardless of what the motion was, there is no specific language required but the intent and everyone's understanding. We need to ensure that those who voted clarify what their understanding of what they voted was. Kiara is missing tonight and Grace was not at the meeting.

Polled members:

Azizah - believed the intent was exactly what Niel indicated at the last meeting - motion was to group them together as a slate and vote. voting on the candidates as a slate was my understanding.

Niel - previously clarified that he expected to vote on them as a slate as new Board members.

Sasha - Note no - my understanding was that I was voting on the methods and not for the members on a slate.

Latrina - understanding was that we were voting on a slate of members to be approved.

Majority understood that it was a slate. The motion was already approved - motion will carry based on the majority having clarity on what the for was for.

C. Election of Officers - Delayed

Delayed due to the Governance Committee needing to recommend a slate of officers and having met. Would typically take place in June at a regularly scheduled meeting - as a result will need to extend/delay the election of officers to the July meeting.

V. Head of School Evaluation Memo Approval

A. Approval of Head of School Evaluation Memo

Azizah Yasin made a motion to accept the Head of School evaluation dated June 24, 2025 as amended.

Grace Bannasch seconded the motion.

There was much discussion about the draft form of the HOS evaluation as well as communication from individual members with the requested input from the last meeting.

Both items were determined to be made available and attached to the minutes of this meeting.

The recommendations were put into the summary narrative and further discussion here can be incorporated. Our goal is to accept the approval of the memo and send it to Brent with recommended edits.

There was also lengthy discussions about how to align the job description with the evaluation. The discussion also centered around language about Brent's availability to meet with parent/community members and how to write expectations that are realistic and doable.

Sasha lost remote connection for two minutes and rejoined.

Some in the community had questions about where the authorization lies to start an investigation. Ultimately that language lies in the Community Handbook and not in the HOS evaluation. We can include what it means to have clear communication and transparency and perhaps what the rationale is when decisions are being made.

Builds and maintains family satisfaction is also an important item and that is what the goal is in creating spaces for the Head of School to meet with people. It is also hard to gauge satisfaction with no built in metric.

The Board needs to move this forward so that goal setting can be completed before school starts. More development of the goals and the evaluative process can be fleshed out at the retreat. Also included should be the Board's community forum, our roles and responsibilities and how the community can access the Board.

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

Roll Call

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

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 7:56 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Marcy Conner

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1wqQJuZivQN5hbnHJPJbL-tnr5_gFXlQd/view?usp=sharing -

Head of School Evaluation

https://drive.google.com/file/d/169N8PGjE5uyMbQYSERZebF-8oz_Ml1mx/view?usp=sharing -

Head of School Evaluation (Draft)

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1B3P6WE5_iJSvVN5JlP_-v-y2gMs2leB/view?usp=sharing -

Kiara's Feedback

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1zDiF3-sdKoU3vl0yu5exJOf1npooWH09/view?usp=sharing> -

Neil's Feedback

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1YoPKOv6NfMVHq4kbyj0pi_LCtIzEr1Qw/view?usp=sharing -

Sasha's Feedback

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1j0dAMgKQ6ogGSopq4F8sUtwKrPI_mzCR/view?usp=sharing -

Azizah's Feedback