

APPROVED



# Pioneer Valley Performing Arts Charter Public School

## Minutes

Board of Trustee Retreat 2025: Sunday, July 27, 2025

---

### Date and Time

Sunday July 27, 2025 at 8:30 AM

### Location

Betty Shabazz Cultural Center  
2 Dunlap Place  
South Hadley, Massachusetts 01075

---

Welcome/ Breakfast will start at 8:30am

---

### Trustees Present

Azizah Yasin, LATRINA DENSON, Neil Hede

### Trustees Absent

Grace Bannasch, Sasha Viands

### Ex Officio Members Present

Brent Nielsen, Marcy Conner

### Non Voting Members Present

Brent Nielsen, Marcy Conner

---

### I. Opening Items

**A. Welcome/ Breakfast**

**B. Call the Meeting to Order**

LATRINA DENSON called a meeting to order on Sunday Jul 27, 2025 at 9:06 AM.

**C. Record Attendance**

**D. Read the Mission Statement**

Read by Azizah Yasin.

**E. Approval of Minutes**

Neil Hede made a motion to approve the minutes from Board of Trustee Meeting June 2025 on 06-10-25.

Azizah Yasin seconded the motion.

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

**Roll Call**

Neil Hede	Aye
Azizah Yasin	Aye
Sasha Viands	Absent
LATRINA DENSON	Aye
Grace Bannasch	Absent

**F. Minutes from March 11th - letter needed to be summarized per AGO. Motion to approve minutes from March 11, 2024 with amendments: Azizah Seconded by Neil. Approve unanimously.**

**G. Approval of Minutes**

Azizah Yasin made a motion to approve the minutes from Special Board Meeting on 06-24-25.

Neil Hede seconded the motion.

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

**Roll Call**

Grace Bannasch	Absent
Neil Hede	Aye
LATRINA DENSON	Aye
Azizah Yasin	Aye
Sasha Viands	Absent

**II. Head of School Report**

**A. Approval of the Charter Renewal Application**

Azizah Yasin made a motion to authorize Brent Nielsen to submit the application for charter renewal.

Neil Hede seconded the motion.

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

**Roll Call**

Sasha Viands	Absent
Neil Hede	Aye
Azizah Yasin	Aye
Grace Bannasch	Absent
LATRINA DENSON	Aye

**B. Additional Updates**

Student Opportunity Act plan - a few amendments needed prior to submission of annual report. Due On August 1st. Annual Report also due August 1st. Details the items/programs that were updated this year.

New Department

New Region

Transportation - 16 buses, offer to all students - survey approx 295 responses. Possible new design of the parking lots and traffic flow for the future.

Data anomalies - Front Line to PS - SPED numbers incorrect. 22% to 15% puts is below required - required further explanation. October 1 numbers. Low income 23-24 was 44% down to 38%. Free lunch for everyone has changed the process - parents no longer filling out application - now direct certification and supplemental process. Misses those that fall between state services and being low income. Should be able to correct the issues. Also issue with ELL population - below the numbers of where we should be compared to S Hadley, Holyoke and Springfield. ELL is based on a test to qualify or comes to PVPA already qualified. We have focused on recruiting. Population is pretty balanced.

Charter renewal - Week Sept 8th site visit - more happening on line. Focus groups - Board, Staff and parents along with Administration.

Professional development schedule - Emily, Alyson & Loris have been working hard on putting this together for next year. Focus for the year will be classroom management/disruptive behavior.

Attendance and achievement on MCAS. Bolster math instruction. Part of culture has been that you could still get by without attending because of standards based grading.

Hoping transportation helps with attendance. Students considered chronically absent but has all A's - courses need to adjust for attendance. Trends in staff attendance as well that need to be addressed.

### III. Election of Officers

#### A. Election of Officers 2025-2026

Azizah Yasin made a motion to elect slate of officers for 2025-2026 Latriona President, Azizah Vice President and Neil Hede Treasurer.

Neil Hede seconded the motion.

A few member have left for personal reasons. Need to be on board for at least one year before a committee lead assignment. Azizah did reach out to Sasha and Grace and discussed options for positions. No clerk. Looking for options for clerk - recording meetings.

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

##### Roll Call

Grace Bannasch	Absent
Neil Hede	Aye
LATRINA DENSON	Aye
Azizah Yasin	Aye
Sasha Viands	Absent

### IV. Retreat Topics and Activities

#### A. Team Builders/ Ice-breaker

MS or HS - favorite teacher or someone who inspired you.

Develop BOT Spotify play list.

#### B. Review Trustee Expectations

What does it mean to be a trustee?

Working in the best interest of the school

Collaborating with HOS

Role models

Spokesperson

Keepers of the process

What we are not:

Jury or court

Investigators or micro managers of the school

Experts

Norms - need to add - when on Zoom you must have your camera on and your focus needs to be on the meeting and not your surroundings/background activities. In person as norm - exceptions approved by Chair. To keep the integrity of the Board.

Remote attendance etiquette - be there in person - arrange for adequate private space with internet connection.

Conflict of Interest Law and Open Meeting Law.

Develop tool for recording required trainings/information.

### **C. Develop Trustee Goals for 2025-2026**

Continue to grow the Board.

PVPA engagement and participation - calendar - representation at each event. Meet and greet times at PVPA - Brent to provide some windows for opportunities.

BOT spotlight with news letter/social media. Board on track - bio.

Schedules - annual agenda items - provides continuity.

Develop Strategic Planning Committee - ASAP - whole year to work on aligning: SAP, Accountability plan and SOA plan.

Communication transparency.

### **D. Break for lunch/snack**

### **E. Wrap up additional retreat discussion, reflection, and closing exercise**

## **V. Executive Session**

### **A. "Executive session pursuant to G.L. c. 30A, section 21(a)(7)"**

LATRINA DENSON made a motion to go into executive session pursuant to GLc30A section 21 (a)(7) to review executive session minutes for Jan 14, Mar 4, mar 11, march 26 & May 16. Will return to open session.

Neil Hede seconded the motion.

Brent is invited to remain for first part then will be dismissed.

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

**Roll Call**

Azizah Yasin	Aye
Grace Bannasch	Absent
Neil Hede	Aye
LATRINA DENSON	Aye
Sasha Viands	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 1:30 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Azizah Yasin