DRAFT

Paul Robeson Charter School

Minutes

Regular Board Meeting

Date and Time
Tuesday October 6, 2026 at 4:00 PM

Location
1289 Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard
Trenton, NJ 08638

This meeting is being held in compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act and is open to the public. Notices were duly posted and the meeting was advertised in The Trentonian and The Times of Trenton. Formal action will be taken.

Trustees Present
B. Blount (remote), B. Englezos, J. Cassimatis (remote), K. Somberg (remote), V. Aggarwal

Trustees Absent
None

Guests Present
A. Wright (remote), Ashanti Waters, B. Falkowski (remote), C. Freyer (remote), F. Lund, I. Dillon (remote), J. Amenda, Jess Brandenburg (remote), K. Lamilla (remote), K. Tini (remote), Mary Mooney, S. Smith (remote), Simone Rose (remote), Tyler Baier (remote)

I. Opening Items

A. Call the Meeting to Order

K. Somberg called a meeting of the board of trustees of Paul Robeson Charter School to order on Tuesday Oct 6, 2026 at 4:00 PM.

B. Record Attendance

II. Discussion

A. Staff Rotation- Leadership Team

Jess Brandenburg provided an update, implemented new teacher PD and along with Regina Bell the Transend and Whole Child "Strong Start" which is a more restorative focus than "Teach Like A Champion" was. Reported culture changes and effectiveness of the toolkits which improved teacher's ability to independently support student engagement and problem resolution. Science of Reading strategies proving effective, K to 3 showing strong performance on I-Ready. Focus is on grade 3 proficiency in Math.

Simone Rose spoke to the operations and building readiness that went well due to staff consistency. Operations manual being rolled out, also certified nurse being onboarded and exploring using the features of Power School more dynamically. Simone expressed concern about the bidding outcome - potential loss of the experienced security teams and cleaning services who were not the low bidders. Discussion tabled for later to understand options on how to address.

Mary Mooney also provided an update including that (Mr. O) from MCTS acknowledgement of the high level of PRCS 9th graders who came in on grade level and ready, this is reflective of the board priority. Mary is still concerned about HIB and group chats issue so its still a priority area.

Ashanti Waters spoke to the intervention group improvements but highlighted the space and people challenges to deliver on unique programming/student needs and maintaining the least restrictive environment model.

Freya Lund provided a readout, this summer provide an opportunity to focus on academics (since no major facilities projects were ongoing). Still a way to go on getting staffing set and ensuring people are in the right positions so still focusing on this area. Concern on the cleaning and security teams potential turnover.

Ken Somberg expressed the pleasure of the board on the performance of the leadership team.

B. Data Review

Kristen Tini walked through the summary of the Data review presentation, emphasized that 90% of K ended on grade level. John expressed that the Commissioner of Ed referenced our data point at the conference which highlights its importance and how this could compound positively in the future. Noted that Math had the strongest cohort story and the impact of stability in the inconsistency of the Gr5 teacher. Attendance has been strong overall at about 97%.
Shakira Smith shared Organizational Health results. Very positive responses overall and improved over last year.

Dashboard - John Amenda mentioned that other data points will be updated at next meeting in Nov. 3 vacancies to be posted around Thanksgiving.

C. Facility Update

John Amenda- still operating under a temp Cert of Occupancy, final should be after playground is complete. 28 Open maintenance and capital concerns - post occupancy issues still being communicated before warranty walkthru in about a month.

EFF - Project affordability and capital, closed on $1.5M Cash Flow loan with 2 conditions from EFF for waivers on covenants. 1.Monthly Cash reports through June and 2. Engagement with external financial consultants to review our long term financial projections viability. Goal is to stay positioned for refinance approval.
First Capital was chosen- (FC is led by Brian Cates previous EFF leader) , Tyler added that they will be helpful in terms of strategic partnership for the future financial planning and review.

D. Board Retreat

Still open to decide if the 18th or 19th is possible since the 17th does not work for most. Katherine will confirm with the team.

E. Fundraising Update

$175,000 goal for this year, about half raised so far. The new solicitation templates and plans for weekly emails have been drafted for board review & feedback, target audience include capital campaign participants , groundbreaking ceremony attendees . Changes suggested to Donor page to provide donors more flexibility in choosing how much and what item to support as well as to avoid the issue of locking into restricting funds to only to a specific item. Updates will be incorporated.

F. First Read- New Charter Bill Policy Review

John A summarized the presentation from the NJPCSA, referred to the discussion items related to the Charter Reform Bill (includes financial, public meeting and board composition policies), stating that we are already complaint with most but cross

referencing. Any new requirements will be incorporated in the Compliance calendar that Kristin maintains.
First reading but will be on the agenda for adoption next meeting.

G. Renewal Application & Interview Questions

John A. - Renewal application submitted in September. Sample questions drafted and waiting for the virtual interviews to be scheduled. Trustees can attend if they are interested (just to be careful of quorum). Example questions are in the presentation along with sample proposed answers.

III. Updates

A. Enrollment

Goals expected to be met, few students on wait list - Freya's team managing.

B. Emergency Drill Log

John asked if there were questions on the Drill Log. Ken , had a question about the shelter in place, Freyda indicated all drills are now being recapped to staff and also communication emails being sent to parents.

C. Talent and Certification

Aniyah gave a readout - 100 staff members total with a few (3) open roles - 97% staffing level. October to November expectation for job board posting per the normal cycle. One person in process for certification.

D. Special Education Files Audit Update

Dashboard included in handouts.

E. HIB Report- Elementary & Middle School

Freya presented the HIB report, families were appraised via meetings. Intervention seems to be working well based on outcomes that suggest the offenses are not continual. Ken raised discussion on perfect score on self assessment. Update will be made to present the Board with all cases prior to conclusion of the HIB team.

IV. Acceptance of Meeting Minutes

A. Motion for Paul Robeson Charter School, Board of Trustees to accept the minutes from the August 18, 2026 board meeting.

J. Cassimatis made a motion to IV. Acceptance of Meeting Minutes A. Motion for Paul Robeson Charter School, Board of Trustees to accept the minutes from the August 18, 2026 board meeting - as amended. Regular Board Meeting on 08-18-26.
B. Englezos seconded the motion.

As amended to update the fundraising number to reflect the dollar amount numbers in "thousands"
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

V. Motions for Approval

A. Finance

J. Cassimatis made a motion to Approve Finance Item A 1-5 1. To approve the Secretary's and Treasurer's Reports for July and August 2026 as per the attached. Pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:232.11(a), the Paul Robeson Charter School Board of Trustees acknowledges receipt of the secretary's certification, and after review of the monthly financial report (appropriations section) certifies that, to the best of its knowledge, as of September 2026, no major account or fund has been over expended in violation of N.J.A.C. 6A:232.11(b), and that sufficient funds are available to meet the school's financial obligations for the remainder of the fiscal year. 2. To approve the Bills/Check List from August 18, 2026 through October 1, 2026. 3. To approve the following payrolls: 8/30/26 Payroll $ 335,422.00 9/15/26 Payroll $ 337,480.87 9/30/26 Payroll $ 346,415.32 4. To accept the BRIDGE Competitive Cohort 2 grant award in the amount of $71,183.00. 5. To approve the submission of the Annual Charter School Fiscal Questionnaire.
B. Blount seconded the motion.
Finance section a)
Item1)July and August 2026 Secty. & Treasurer reports (Sept done and supplied in EFF package as well as Finance Committee dashboard and budget v actuals for Sept. although on next agenda.
Item 2) - Bills list Aug 15 - Oct 1st
Item 3) - Payroll Aug 30, Sept 15 - Sept 30 -note amounts on trend
Item 4)- Competitive Grant of $71,183 - needs motion to accept to formally close grant acceptance
Item 5) - Submission of Annual Charter School Fiscal Questionnaire to ensure Board members are fully appraised
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

Roll Call

V. Aggarwal	Absent
J. Cassimatis	Aye
B. Blount	Aye
B. Englezos	Aye
K. Somberg	Aye

B. Personnel

B. Englezos made a motion to Approve motion 5 B Personnel 1-4 B. Personnel Vote Freya Lund 1. To approve the following new hires: Employee- Victoria Frederick Position- Part-Time Substitute School Nurse Pay Rate- $65/hour 10-mon/12-mon- 10-month 2. To approve the following resignations: Employee- Beyonka Watson Position- Teaching

Assistant Resignation/Termination Date- 9/17/26 (termination) 3. To approve the following Staff Travel & PD Expenses/Reimbursements: Employee- Diana Luque Description- WIDA Conference Cost- $285 Date- Sept 15 Employee- Sandra Mehmedagic Description- NJCSS - SS Convention (Writing in SS) Cost- $90 Date- Oct. 19 Employee- Amy Muldoon Description- BER: AI and English Language Arts Cost- $295 Date- Oct 22 4. To approve the following staff stipends: Employee- Vasilia Penna Position- MLL Teacher Stipend Reason- Additional class taught SY25-26 Stipend Amount- $2,571.
J. Cassimatis seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

Roll Call

B. Blount	Aye
K. Somberg	Aye
V. Aggarwal	Absent
J. Cassimatis	Aye
B. Englezos	Aye

C. Curriculum

B. Blount made a motion to Approve Curriculum item1. To approve the following curriculum purchases: Kendall Hunt- $2,114 - 5th Sci Curriculum.
B. Englezos seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

V. Aggarwal	Absent
B. Englezos	Aye
K. Somberg	Aye
J. Cassimatis	Aye
B. Blount	Aye

D. Policy/Miscellaneous

B. Blount made a motion to D. Policy/Miscellaneous 1. To approve and certify the NJ Department of Education School Self Assessment for Determining Grades under the Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights Act (HIB Report- July 1,2025-June 30, 2026 School Year) 2. To retroactively approve E-Rate Agreement 3. To approve Agreement for Consulting Services, effective October 1, 2026, between Children First Capital Advisors LLC ("CFC") and Paul Robeson Charter School.
J. Cassimatis seconded the motion.
Ken confirmed the requirements are through to end of the loan period.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.
B. Englezos made a motion to E. SECURITY AND CUSTODIAL SERVICES BIDS To approve the 2 related motions: Motion E-1: Authorization to Request DLGS Approval for Competitive Contracting Motion to adopt a resolution authorizing the School Business Administrator/Board Secretary, as authorized agent pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:18A-4.3(b)

and N.J.A.C. 5:34-4.4, to apply to the Director of the Division of Local Government Services (DLGS), New Jersey Department of Community Affairs, for approval to use competitive contracting pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:18A-4.1(k) for (a) custodial services and (b) security services, as separate requests. Upon receipt of DLGS approval for either service, the resolution further authorizes the use of competitive contracting for that service pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:18A-4.1 et seq. and N.J.A.C. 5:34-4, administered by the School Business Administrator, with any resulting contract to be awarded by separate resolution of the Board. Motion E-2: Rejection of All Bids for Custodial Services and Security Services Motion to adopt a resolution rejecting all bids received for Custodial Services (Bid No. PRCS Custodial 2026-27) and Security Services (Bid No. PRCS Security 2026-27), publicly opened on October 1, 2026, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:18A-22, because the Board intends to substantially revise the specifications. Specifically, the security specifications will be revised to require that armed officers have a law enforcement background and related certification. The custodial specifications will be revised to define the required staffing levels and hours of service. The School Business Administrator is authorized to revise the specifications and re-advertise both services.
K. Somberg seconded the motion.
The administration recognizes that the bid process did not adequately provide the detailed requirements and as such the school would not receive the proper level and quality of services under the current lowest bid contracts - details included in the summary motion.
Dr. Falkowski walked through the rules and requirements of the public purchasing laws, legal counsel will be consulted based on the high level of concern with respect to the gap in the level of services and requirements and the inadequate scope of the lowest bids.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

VI. Executive Session

A. It is expected that the Board will go into Executive Session.

Board agreed no need for executive session.

VII. Closing Items

A. New Business

Non profit connect (training organization) has a session on Oct 28th which Ken plans on attending and is inviting another board member to join.

B. Public Comment

C. Important Dates

D. Adjourn Meeting

B. Blount made a motion to Adjourn at 5:56 pm.

B. Englezos seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.
There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 6:00 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
B. Falkowski

Documents used during the meeting

None