



Pan American Academy Charter School

Minutes

November Board Meeting

Date and Time

Monday November 18, 2024 at 4:30 PM

Location

Virtual

Directors Present

A. Feuer-Edwards (remote), C. Gorman (remote), D. Nuccio (remote), H. Guzmán (remote), J. DuCette (remote), J. Garcia (remote), M. Gonzalez (remote), N. Flores (remote)

Directors Absent

D. Espinosa

Guests Present

Connie Malone, Dean of CIA (remote), Cynthia Matos, Instrucional Coach (remote), D. Russotto (remote), E. Munoz (remote), I. Escribano (remote), J. Fineberg (remote), L. Kelly (remote), Laura Higgins DiVito, Dean of CIA (remote), Lorna Concepcion, School Social Worker (remote), M. Mason (remote), R. Burgos (remote), R. Lugo (remote), Robin Eglin of Omnivest LLC, W. Jackson (remote)

I. Opening Items

A. Call the Meeting to Order

N. Flores called a meeting of the board of directors of Pan American Academy Charter School to order on Monday Nov 18, 2024 at 4:33 PM.

B. Public Testimony

C.

School Connections

Escribano provided updates on the School Advisory Council (SAC). She highlighted recent discussions about field trip procedures and protocols, noting that the school will organize three trips annually, including the GATE trip. A pressing issue of inappropriate language and slurs among students was addressed, with a decision to shift from assemblies to classroom community meetings for these conversations, aiming to foster deeper connections and understanding. Escribano also shared efforts to improve student location tracking when they are pulled from their regular schedules. Flores inquired whether the behavioral issues were new or ongoing. Escribano clarified that these behaviors have been persistent and expressed optimism that smaller, community-focused meetings would lead to meaningful progress.

Concepción provided an update on the school's community engagement initiatives, sharing that the recent canned goods drive collected an impressive 1,572 items, with one classroom contributing 461 items and earning a pizza party. A poster contest is also underway to raise awareness about homelessness. The annual turkey drive has so far secured \$150 in staff contributions and 10 turkey donations. Additionally, the Homelessness Awareness dress-down day raised over \$800.

Concepción shared the evolution of the school's family support program, which began in 2016 assisting three families and expanded to help 86 families last year. This year, the program will continue with an enhanced structure to better serve families in need. Flores asked how the board could assist, and Concepción suggested that board members consider adopting a family. She also noted that, in past years, donations were used by Russotto to purchase gifts. There was discussion around organizing a gift-wrapping event, and Fineberg proposed adding a spring giving initiative to extend support beyond the holiday season. Flores agreed to connect with the board to explore funding and other ways to support these efforts. Gonzalez asked about typical donation amounts, which range from \$25 to \$250, and Feuer-Edwards shared her experiences to provide further context.

In other updates, the high school application has been submitted. Flores expressed heartfelt gratitude to everyone involved and suggested a public acknowledgment to recognize their hard work and dedication.

II. Action Items

A. Contracts

N. Flores made a motion to Lease Proposal for Mill Redevelopment.

M. Gonzalez seconded the motion.

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

B. Other Items

N. Flores made a motion to Local Wellness Policy.

A. Feuer-Edwards seconded the motion.

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

N. Flores made a motion to APPROVE research proposal.

C. Gorman seconded the motion.

Flores inquired about how this initiative would inform Burgos' teaching practices. Burgos expressed her interest in exploring how books can serve as a catalyst for generating ideas and how those ideas can be leveraged to support students' oral language development.

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

III. Governance

A. Approve Minutes

N. Flores made a motion to approve the minutes from October Board Meeting on 10-21-24.

H. Guzmán seconded the motion.

Gonzalez abstains. Gorman abstains. DuCette abstains.

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

B. Committee Updates

Governance Committee Update

The Governance Committee shared documents aimed at enhancing the onboarding structure and improving overall board management and organization. These included a review of the Board Member Agreement and a follow-up on the Conflict of Interest Statement and BoardOnTrack Document Management system for onboarding and annual filings.

As part of the governance section of the high school application, one of the stated goals is to expand the board to 15 members. The committee emphasized the importance of bringing on candidates with expertise that aligns with the school's educational pathways goals. Members were encouraged to start considering potential candidates over the next few months.

Audit & Finance Update

There were no updates to report from the Audit & Finance Committee.

Advancement Committee Update

Feuer-Edwards provided an update from the Advancement Committee, outlining progress on brainstorming initiatives in various functional areas. She expressed plans to meet with Flores and Russotto to establish foundational elements and eventually convene with the full board to address remaining gaps.

Committee Meeting Schedule

The committee meeting schedule was reviewed, with a reminder that committees are expected to present strategic planning ideas by March.

High School Advocacy

Gonzalez highlighted the importance of playing a stronger advocacy role in the high school approval process and encouraged further discussion on this effort.

Reminders

Members were reminded about the December 5th outing.

IV. High School Planning

A. Next Steps in Application Process

On November 19, binders containing a hard copy of the high school application and its 44 attachments will be delivered. Before the winter break, the application will be presented at an official hearing. As of now, no communication has been received regarding the scheduled date for this hearing.

In January, a second hearing will take place, focusing on addressing questions raised about the application. This hearing will serve as a defense, with a hearing officer provided by the School District of Philadelphia (SDP). Legal counsel is actively supporting the preparation for both hearings to ensure a thorough and well-represented presentation.

V. Finance

A. Monthly Report - October

Eglin provides an overview of the October financial report.

VI. Development

A. Grants, Partnerships, Fundraising

Russotto provides an update on grant submissions, pending and grants that were denied.

VII. School Report

A. School Report

The school report was provided for review.

VIII. Executive Session

A.

Human Resources

Entered into executive session at 5:49 pm to discuss personnel matters and compensation. Returned to the regular session at 5:58pm.

IX. Closing Items

A. Action Items

N. Flores made a motion to approve New Hires (Lina Vargas, Xiomara Salgado, Yaritza Medina).

J. DuCette seconded the motion.

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

N. Flores made a motion to approve personnel salaries.

A. Feuer-Edwards seconded the motion.

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

N. Flores made a motion to approve stipends.

C. Gorman seconded the motion.

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

N. Flores made a motion to approve employee referral bonuses.

A. Feuer-Edwards seconded the motion.

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

N. Flores made a motion to ratify employee separation.

M. Gonzalez seconded the motion.

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

B. Adjourn Meeting

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,

N. Flores