

Board Meeting Minutes

Organization: Pride Academy Charter School Board Meeting
President: Mr. Mitchell
Time: 6:42pm
Place: Virtual Platform
Date: November 21, 2024
Minute Taker: Mrs. Wilson
Board Members Present: Mr. Mitchell, Ms. A. Taylor, Mr. Rosado, Ms. Brown

Others Present: Dr. Jones, Mr. Ofstad, Ms. Dumenigo, Mrs. Dockery,
Mr. Ofstad, Mrs. Persaud, Mrs. Toler-Dent, Ms. Weche,
Mr. Curtis

Absent: Mr. Moore, Mrs. D. Taylor, Mrs. Spence

IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER:

Next Board Meeting: Wednesday, December 18, 2024 at 6:30 pm.

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order at 6:42 pm and Roll Call was taken.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ANNOUNCEMENT OF PUBLICATIONS: The New Jersey Open Public Meetings Law was enacted to ensure the right of the public to have advance notice of and to attend the meetings of public bodies at which any business affecting their interests is discussed or acted upon. In accordance with the provisions of this act, The Pride Academy Charter School Board of Trustees has caused notice of this meeting to be published by having the date, time, and place thereof posted in the Star-Ledger and on NJ.COM under Legal Notices and posted on the school website.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA FOR THE BOARD MEETING: Resolution to Accept Agenda for November 4, 2024, Emergency Meeting - Attachment 1

Motion to approve: Ms. A. Taylor

Seconded: Ms. M. Brown

Vote:

Ms. Brown- in favor

Mr. Mitchell- in favor

Ms. A. Taylor- in favor

Mr. Rosado- in favor

Motion Carried

BOARD VOTED: To Accept Agenda for November 4, 2024, Emergency Meeting - Attachment 1

Approval of Board Minutes

Resolution to Approve the Minutes from the October 16, 2024, Reg. Meeting – Attachment 2

Motion to approve: Ms. A. Taylor

Seconded: Ms. M. Brown

Vote:

Ms. Brown- in favor

Mr. Mitchell- in favor

Ms. A. Taylor- in favor

Mr. Rosado- in favor

Motion Carried

BOARD VOTED: To Approve the Minutes from the October 16, 2024, Reg. Meeting – Attachment 2

Financial Committee Report by Business Administrator

F1. Resolution to Accept the Bills List current period: October 16, 2024 – November 20, 2024, as follows. - Attachment F1

General Funds Fund 10/11: 403,201.64

Special Revenue Fund 20: 25,640.00

Food Services Fund 60: \$20,473.43

Student Activities: \$2,914.00

Motion to approve: Ms. A. Taylor

Seconded: Ms. M. Brown

Vote:

Ms. Brown- in favor

Mr. Mitchell- in favor

Ms. A. Taylor- in favor

Mr. Rosado- in favor

Motion Carried

BOARD VOTED: To Accept the Bills List current period: October 16, 2024 – November 20, 2024, as follows. - Attachment F1

F2. Resolution to Accept Payroll Expense for the current payroll period(s) ending October 31, 2024 (\$150,435.78) and November 15, 2024 (\$156,699.40) - Attachment F2

Motion to approve: Ms. A. Taylor

Seconded: Ms. M. Brown

Vote:

Ms. Brown- in favor

Mr. Mitchell- in favor

Ms. A. Taylor- in favor

Mr. Rosado- in favor

Motion Carried

BOARD VOTED: To Accept Payroll Expense for the current payroll period(s) ending October 31, 2024 (\$150,435.78) and November 15, 2024 (\$156,699.40) - Attachment F2

F3. Resolution to Accept the FICA Reimbursement Report through November 15, 2024 - Attachment F3

Motion to approve: Ms. A. Taylor

Seconded: Ms. M. Brown

Vote:

Ms. Brown- in favor

Mr. Mitchell- in favor

Ms. A. Taylor- in favor

Mr. Rosado- in favor

Motion Carried

BOARD VOTED: To Accept the FICA Reimbursement Report through November 15, 2024 - Attachment F3

F4. Board Secretary's Report & Certification – Attachment F4

Pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-16.10 (c)3, I certify that as of October 31, 2024, that no major budgetary line-item account expenditure exceeds the amount appropriated by the district Board of Education and that sufficient funds are available to meet the district's financial obligations for the remainder of the fiscal year.

Charlene Jones, SBA

November 21, 2024

F5. Resolution to Approve Budget Transfer(s) for 2023-2024 school year, Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:22-8.1 and N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-13.1 listed budget transfers are needed to reclass expenditures from original budget approved by the board. The amount and account information are provided in detail in the attachment. - Attachment F5

Motion to approve: Ms. A. Taylor

Seconded: Ms. M. Brown

Vote:

Ms. Brown- in favor

Mr. Mitchell- in favor

Ms. A. Taylor- in favor

Mr. Rosado- in favor

Motion Carried

BOARD VOTED: To Approve Budget Transfer(s) for 2023-2024 school year, Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:22-8.1 and N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-13.1 listed budget transfers are needed to reclass expenditures from original budget approved by the board.

The amount and account information are provided in detail in the attachment. - Attachment F5

F6. Resolution to Approve Drawdowns of Special Revenue Funds for ESEA Title IA, IIA, and IDEA (Basic) as follows for the period ending November 2024: Attachment F6

→ Drawdown #2 – Title IA - \$16,000 Salary Expenditures; \$8,320 Benefits Expenditures

→ Drawdown #2 – IDEA-B - \$8,200 Salary Expenditures; \$3,520 Benefits Expenditures

Motion to approve: Ms. A. Taylor

Seconded: Ms. M. Brown

Vote:

Ms. Brown- in favor

Mr. Mitchell- in favor

Ms. A. Taylor- in favor

Mr. Rosado- in favor

Motion Carried

BOARD VOTED: To Approve Drawdowns of Special Revenue Funds for ESEA Title IA, IIA, and IDEA (Basic) as follows for the period ending November 2024: Attachment F6

F7. Resolution to write off school meal balances of transferred students from the previous school year, in the amount of \$352.70 - Attachment F7

Motion to approve: Ms. A. Taylor

Seconded: Ms. M. Brown

Vote:

Ms. Brown- in favor

Mr. Mitchell- in favor

Ms. A. Taylor- in favor

Mr. Rosado- in favor

Motion Carried

BOARD VOTED: To write off school meal balances of transferred students from the previous school year, in the amount of \$352.70 - Attachment F7

F8. Resolution to approve \$50.00 Thanksgiving gift cards for all employees for distribution by November 27, 2024, not to exceed \$2,350.00.

Motion to approve: Ms. A. Taylor

Seconded: Ms. M. Brown

Vote:

Ms. Brown- in favor

Mr. Mitchell- in favor

Ms. A. Taylor- in favor

Mr. Rosado- in favor

Motion Carried

BOARD VOTED: To approve \$50.00 Thanksgiving gift cards for all employees for distribution by November 27, 2024, not to exceed \$2,350.00.

F9. Resolution to approve December 2024 holiday bonus payments to all employees for \$117,00, not to exceed \$5,500.

Motion to approve: Ms. A. Taylor

Seconded: Ms. M. Brown

Vote:

Ms. Brown- in favor

Mr. Mitchell- in favor

Ms. A. Taylor- in favor

Mr. Rosado- in favor

Motion Carried

BOARD VOTED: To approve December 2024 holiday bonus payments to all employees for \$117,00, not to exceed \$5,500.

Principal Report:

Enrollment Update

At our last board meeting, we reported an enrollment of 300 students. As of today, Pride Academy has 299 students enrolled, and we anticipate this number will drop to 298 by the end of the trimester due to a student transitioning out. The process of replacing these students has already begun, with efforts focused on the current waitlist, which includes:

- 45 students in 5th grade**
- 44 students in 6th grade**
- 11 students in 7th grade**
- 6 students in 8th grade**

Compared to last year, we have seen an increase in waitlist numbers for grades 5, 6, and 7, while the 8th-grade waitlist has remained consistent.

Recent and Upcoming Events

1. ESSA-Meeting (November 14):

- During this session, Mr. Gardner shared student performance data with families. Approximately 45-50 families attended the Zoom meeting.**

2. **Project Pride Proposal Day (Upcoming Wednesday):**
 - Students will work on proposals for service projects during this half-day session. The grade-level focus areas are as follows:
 - 5th Grade: Health (e.g., initiatives related to wellness)
 - 6th Grade: Poverty (e.g., housing insecurity)
 - 7th Grade: Violence (e.g., addressing cyberbullying)
 - 8th Grade: Education (e.g., lack of funding for HBCUs)
3. **Kwanzaa Celebration (Thursday, December 19):**
 - This year's event will feature the announcement of the Pride Art Show winner and will be our first Kwanzaa celebration with a community meal since the pandemic.
4. **Philanthropy Day (Friday, December 20):**
 - On this half-day, students will participate in service activities, including wrapping Christmas gifts and other community-focused projects.

Discipline Update

- **Suspensions:**
 - At our October board meeting, we reported a total of 19 suspensions. This number has now increased to 30.
 - Notable incidents include:
 - Arguments between two 8th-grade female students that could have escalated into physical altercations. One of these students, who has had multiple suspensions this year, has since transferred out of Pride Academy.
 - One minor physical scuffle resulted in an after-school detention, reinforcing our focus on restorative practices.

The trends in disciplinary data will continue to be monitored and addressed as we work toward reducing suspensions and fostering a supportive school climate.

R1. Resolution to accept, with regret, resignation from Camille Oates, Main Office Coordinator/Food Services, effective January 1, 2025 – Attachment R1

Motion to approve: Ms. A. Taylor

Seconded: Ms. M. Brown

Vote:

Ms. Brown- in favor

Mr. Mitchell- in favor

Ms. A. Taylor- in favor

Mr. Rosado- in favor

Motion Carried

BOARD VOTED: To accept, with regret, resignation from Camille Oates, Main Office Coordinator/Food Services, effective January 1, 2025 – Attachment R1

R2. Resolution to accept, with regret, resignation from Shimaa Shehata, Replacement Dance Teacher, effective November 6, 2024 – Attachment R2

Motion to approve: Ms. A. Taylor

Seconded: Ms. M. Brown

Vote:

Ms. Brown- in favor

Mr. Mitchell- in favor

Ms. A. Taylor- in favor

Mr. Rosado- in favor

Motion Carried

BOARD VOTED: To accept, with regret, resignation from Shimaa Shehata, Replacement Dance Teacher, effective November 6, 2024 – Attachment R2

R3. Resolution to hire Spanish Teacher, Donna Kalembe, for the 2024-2025 school year – Attachment R3

Motion to approve: Ms. A. Taylor

Seconded: Ms. M. Brown

Vote:

Ms. Brown- in favor

Mr. Mitchell- in favor

Ms. A. Taylor- in favor

Mr. Rosado- in favor

Motion Carried

BOARD VOTED: To hire Spanish Teacher, Donna Kalembe, for the 2024-2025 school year – Attachment R3

R4. Resolution to hire Dance/Leave Replacement and Building Substitute, Courtney Porter Mezzo, for the 2024-2025 school year – Attachment R4

Motion to approve: Ms. A. Taylor

Seconded: Ms. M. Brown

Vote:

Ms. Brown- in favor

Mr. Mitchell- in favor

Ms. A. Taylor- in favor

Mr. Rosado- in favor

Motion Carried

BOARD VOTED: To hire Dance/Leave Replacement and Building Substitute, Courtney Porter Mezzo, for the 2024-2025 school year – Attachment R4

R5. Resolution to hire Math Teaching Support, Erin Kemp, for the 2024-2025 school year – Attachment R5

Motion to approve: Ms. A. Taylor

Seconded: Ms. M. Brown

Vote:

Ms. Brown- in favor

Mr. Mitchell- in favor

Ms. A. Taylor- in favor

Mr. Rosado- in favor

Motion Carried

BOARD VOTED: To hire Math Teaching Support, Erin Kemp, for the 2024-2025 school year – Attachment R5

R6. Resolution to Approve the monthly HIB report – Attachment R6

***still awaiting the receipt of the 2023-2024 HIB report. Approval is pending**

6. New Business

Robert Mitchell

○ Upcoming Events (Ms. Dumenigo)



UPCOMING EVENTS



KWANZAA CELEBRATION: Thurs. December 19th @ 5:30pm

- Imani & Pride Art Show Winner Announced
- First Kwanzaa with a community meal since the pandemic

PHILANTHROPY DAY OF SERVICE: Half-Day on Fri. Dec.20th

FIRST TRIMESTER AWARDS: Fri. Dec.20th @ 11am

FOOTBALL WITH THE FELLAS: Wed. January 15th @ 5:30- 7

We are intentionally scheduling this “Ubuntu” Parent Party on an evening of a board meeting in order for you all to hopefully be able to attend, participate, and get to know some of our parents and scholars.

***Board requested a Community Events Calendar moving forward**

○ Policy Update – HIB Reporting (Board)

***Dr. Jones will provide example for the Board from NJ School Boards**

***Dr. Jones reviewed the expectations for the HIB policy in accordance with the NJDOE**

○ 90-Day Principal Feedback (Ms. D. Taylor)

***90-day clause for all employees**

***the Board would receive feedback from parents, students, staff**

Mrs. D. Taylor is working on it

***we need to have an annual nursing plan- services provided to students, teachers, nursing assignment, how we are involved with the school physician, administering of medication, **we may need to develop this
Student Safety Patrol policy- appointment of faculty advisor, committee of students, etc..we will discuss at the next Leadership Meeting

7. Old Business

Robert Mitchell

- **Policy Review (Separate Packet)**
- ***we need to have an annual nursing plan- services provided to students, teachers, nursing assignment, how we are involved with the school physician, administering of medication, **we may need to develop this**
- ****Student Safety Patrol policy- appointment of faculty advisor, committee of students, etc..we will discuss at the next Leadership Meeting**
- **Board Strategic Planning Update**
- ***Dr. Copeland provided the report**
- **Next Steps: the Board will work with the Leadership Team to move forward with the implementation plan**
- **Mr. Mitchell will meet with Mr. Ofstad to begin the conversations**

8. Comments from the Public

Robert Mitchell

Mrs. Persaud asked about the number of suspensions- 30 from September to October. She inquired if there will there be a parent meeting about the behavior issues?

**Mrs. Toler-Dent: what is the plan to make the environment more secure?
Suspensions are increasing-How is the environment safe for students? Are we looking into getting a security officer?
How can we create more student inspired activities during recess? We can't keep taking away their recess**

9. Adjournment

Robert Mitchell

Motion to close the meeting at 8:22pm

Motion to approve: Ms. A. Taylor

Seconded: Ms. M. Brown

Vote:

Ms. Brown- in favor

Mr. Mitchell- in favor

Ms. A. Taylor- in favor

Mr. Rosado- in favor

Motion Carried

BOARD VOTED: To approve the adjournment of the meeting.

