

**MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
BOYS' LATIN OF PHILADELPHIA CHARTER SCHOOL**

Wednesday, April 5, 2017
339 N. 63rd Street Philadelphia, PA 19139

The meeting was called to order at 4:13 p.m.

Board Members in Attendance: Marianne Dean, Bill Thorkelson, Albert Oehrle, Steve Smith, Torch Lytle, Sally Randolph, Steve Kempf, Will Kontes

Board Members Joined by Phone: Dick Williams, Dave Hardy, Matthew Schuh

Board Members Excused: Janice Murdoch, Joe Conwell, Jim Diehl, Patrick South, Cliff Thomas, Isaac Ewell, Wes Wyatt

Staff in Attendance: Noah Tennant, Ruth Gonzalez, Colleen Smith, Kerry Woodward

Parent Representative in Attendance: Elaine Wells

Guests: Jenna Smalley, Kleinbard LLC

I. Call to Order: *Marianne Dean*

Ms. Dean called the meeting to order. There is a motion to approve the minutes of the February 8, 2017 board meeting, which is moved by Mr. Thorkelson and seconded by Mr. Kontes. The motion passes unanimously.

II. Deputy CEO Report: *Noah Tennant*

Dr. Tennant begins with an update on the class of 2017 college admissions rate which is currently 94 percent with 76 of 81 students accepted. Dr. Tennant believes that number will go increase in the coming months. Notable colleges where students have been accepted include: American University, Penn State, University of Delaware, Skidmore College, Temple University, Hampton University, and West Virginia University.

Continuing, Dr. Tennant explains that Boys' Latin is tracking student growth on state tests. Boys' Latin will focus more on growth to make sure students improve each year. Dr. Tennant gives a snapshot of high school juniors: as sophomores last year, they scored 34 percent, 16 percent, and 40 percent proficiency in Algebra I, Biology and Literature, respectively. This year as juniors, they scored 44 percent, 35 percent and 55 percent proficiency in Algebra I, Biology and Literature, respectively on the Winter 2016-17 Keystones. Dr. Tennant notes that these results are promising and shows the students are growing. Dr. Tennant explains that the Charter School Office only looks at the first time pass rate of students taking the Keystones. Boys' Latin students take the Algebra I Keystone for the first time after freshman year and then may take the test again in subsequent years, so we see higher pass rates by the

11th grade year. Ms. Woodward adds that in order to respond to this evaluation system, many charters are delaying their students in taking Algebra I, which impairs college preparation. Under that system, students won't make it higher levels such as trigonometry or calculus. Boys' Latin wants their students to be as mathematically prepared as possible upon entering college. Dr. Tennant notes that Boys' Latin offers math courses such as Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II, Pre-Calculus, and AP Calculus. About 20 to 25 Boys' Latin students take AP Calculus each year. Dr. Tennant states that some 8th graders take Algebra I currently, and can even take the Keystones, which can hurt Boys' Latin overall score per the Charter School Office but helps the students.

Dr. Tennant adds that middle schoolers will be taking their PSSAs over the next several weeks.

Dr. Tennant transitions to Boys' Latin's charter renewal process. Dr. Tennant explains that the school received a first glimpse of the charter renewal report one week ago. Errors were included in the report which Boys' Latin needs to address. Dr. Tennant is optimistic about where Boys' Latin stands. Dr. Tennant explains the matrix used by the Charter School Office to determine if a charter will be renewed: there are two axes, academic success and organizational compliance, which can be ranked with a red, yellow or green score. Dr. Tennant feels optimistic that Boys' Latin will land in the yellow, which means its charter will be renewed with conditions. A red score means the charter is not renewed.

Dr. Tennant explains that one major issue with this 31-page report is that there is no mention of college: Boys' Latin's mission, college preparedness, is seemingly not valued by Charter School Office. Dr. Tennant lists the concrete pieces from the report that the Charter School Office got wrong. Once Boys' Latin counters these errors, its overall score should improve even more.

A discussion follows on the specific areas of the report which were incorrect, how those errors could have been made and how Boys' Latin can defend against these errors. Dr. Tennant explains that Boys' Latin will send a rebuttal letter to the Charter School Office.

Dr. Tennant states that as of right now, Boys' Latin does not know when its renewal report will be made public, likely either late April or May.

Continuing, Dr. Tennant announces that Boys' Latin is searching for a new principal for its middle school, as Nicholas Pascale will be moving to Texas. Dr. Tennant thanks Mr. Pascale for his hard work and states that he will be missed. Mr. Pascale will be on the team to search for a new middle school principal. Ms. Dean notes that Mr. Pascale is a huge loss, but is confident Boys' Latin will find a suitable replacement.

Dr. Tennant states that Boys' Latin has found a new principal for its high school, R.J. McDaniel. Over the past several months, Boys' Latin reviewed 32 applicants of which 13 were brought in for interviews. A subset of those met with a panel of teachers, students and

parents then an even smaller subset met with administrators and the curriculum and instruction team. Dr. Tennant states that Mr. McDaniel emerged with great spirit, clear commitment to school culture and many ideas to bring the table. Boys' Latin believes Mr. McDaniel will be an excellent leader, and Mr. McDaniel looks forward to meeting the board and leading the high school.

Dr. Randolph adds that she got to meet Mr. McDaniel, and could not have been more impressed. He is known within the community, committed and his qualifications are overwhelming. Dr. Tennant states that Mr. McDaniel will begin as principal on July 1, 2017. Boys' Latin aims to find a middle school principal by that date, as well.

Continuing, Dr. Tennant is proud to announce that the Boys' Latin lacrosse team won their first game, 8-6. Dr. Tennant notes that the team is mostly made up of underclassmen, and a sophomore scored 6 of their 8 goals in their first win. Boys' Latin is proud to have started their lacrosse program, and Ms. Woodward adds that the lacrosse program is looking for a financial sponsor for next year.

Ms. Woodward congratulates Dr. Tennant on being named the Penn Graduate School of Education Educator of the Year, which is a major honor given to an educator who is a risk taker, innovator and who inspires students. Dr. Tennant will be honored on May 13, and the board congratulates Dr. Tennant.

Dr. Tennant concludes his presentation.

III. Board Committee Reports

a. Finance: *Bill Thorkelson, Kerry Woodward*

Mr. Thorkelson begins his presentation by explaining that Boys' Latin, in preparing this year's budget, has taken a haircut against revenue projection relative to its reimbursement rate. Mr. Thorkelson states that the budget has been reduced greatly, and the finance committee built conservatism into the budget. Mr. Thorkelson thanks Dr. Tennant and Ms. Woodward who worked to find areas Boys' Latin could reduce to bring the projection for this year into consonance with the covenant requirements.

Mr. Thorkelson then breaks down the anticipated revenue, expenses and areas Boys' Latin could reduce. Mr. Thorkelson explains that Boys' Latin will receive less revenue than anticipated, which puts pressure on the expense side of the budget. Boys' Latin has been able to identify cuts leading to a net income of \$154,000. Mr. Thorkelson describes that Boys' Latin has requirements which must be met for its outstanding loans covenants. If those covenants are broken, there will be an adverse effect on Boys' Latin. One of those covenants is that the net income has to be at \$80,000, which Boys' Latin is projected to meet.

Continuing, Mr. Thorkelson notes that Boys' Latin has had a revenue reduction: the school budgeted on a conservation basis based on expectations for this year, and have

found enough levers to pull to keep the ship afloat. Mr. Thorkelson states that there was a higher than expected decline in enrollment which hurt Boys' Latin's revenue: Boys' Latin budgeted for 825 students and currently have 785 enrolled. Mr. Thorkelson reminds the board that Boys' Latin's charter is for 800 students.

Mr. Thorkelson adds that donations have been strong again this year, but states that an anticipated decline in donations will be built into the budgeting process for next year. Mr. Thorkelson states that Boys' Latin has done a good job preparing its budget, which has flexibility in a climate that is difficult to predict. Mr. Thorkelson thanks Ms. Woodward for her efforts, and states that the finance committee feels comfortable with these projections.

Mr. Thorkelson concludes his presentation.

b. Strategic Planning: *Bill Thorkelson*

Mr. Thorkelson begins by explaining that Boys' Latin has identified a number of areas that need additional work from the strategic plan. Ms. Woodward and Dr. Tennant have been addressing some of those areas. Mr. Thorkelson states that Boys' Latin has been looking at the school salary structure and circulated a faculty-wide survey to get a sense of what issues the faculty thinks about vis-a-vis their compensation. Boys' Latin has learned a number of things from this survey, and is still at the beginning of this process. Mr. Thorkelson explains that the main goal is to get to a defined structure of how Boys' Latin compensates its faculty and administration.

Mr. Williams adds that Boys' Latin is taking a hard look at the entire organizational chart to design a new one that meets the school's needs. Mr. Williams explains that the goal is to get costs down, as the percentage of salaries at Boys' Latin is higher than other schools. Mr. Williams states that Boys' Latin wants to put a policy in place that is transparent for its employees.

A discussion follows on how Boys' Latin can accomplish this goal, the board's role in personnel decisions and any obstacles the school could face along the way.

Dr. Tennant adds that morale building will be necessary, and that he met with the faculty to discuss the results of the survey. Dr. Tennant notes that the staff appreciated the transparency of conversation, which gave them context of salaries.

Mr. Thorkelson concludes his presentation.

c. Facilities: *Dick Williams for Joe Conwell*

Mr. Williams begins by stating that everything is currently under control, with the only open item being the field surrounding the high school. Mr. Williams will report back at the next meeting.

Ms. Dean asks Mr. Williams to keep the board apprised on Mr. Conwell, who is sidelined with medical issues.

Mr. Williams concludes his presentation.

d. Governance: *Albert Oehrle*

There is no governance report.

e. Development: *Marianne Dean*

Ms. Dean begins by reviewing Boys' Latin's contributions, and states that she expects donations from the Event to go up. Ms. Dean notes that the goal for the Event is \$500,000 and Boys' Latin is slowly inching its way towards that goal. Ms. Dean thanks the board for their help and generous sponsorships. Ms. Dean encourages the board to use their seats and bring their friends and kids to maximize attendance.

Continuing on the topic of the April 27 event at the Please Touch Museum, Ms. Dean shares that the event will include a sit-down dinner and tribute video, which is nearly complete. Jay Pharoah from Saturday Night Live will be the entertainment, who is known for his funny impressions. Ms. Smith reminds the board to get their RSVPs in, along with anyone else who will be attending.

Ms. Dean describes the recent Patron's Event at Bob and Susan's Burch's, which was a huge success: the patrons were blown away by students who stood up and spoke about themselves. Ms. Dean adds that 40 to 50 people attended this event, and thanked Ms. Woodward and Ms. Smith for doing a wonderful job and for all of their hard work.

Ms. Dean adds that as of today, the total Event revenue is now at \$487,100 thanks to an unexpected \$20,000 donation that came in today.

Ms. Dean concludes her presentation.

With there being no new business, and no Executive Session needed, the meeting adjourned at 5:34 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sally Randolph, Secretary