



**Meeting of the Board of Directors  
Wednesday, April 11th, 2018 at 4pm  
339 North 63<sup>rd</sup> Street, Philadelphia, PA 19139**

*The meeting is called to order at 4:05 p.m.*

Board Members in Attendance: Noah Tennant, Steve Kempf, Jim Diehl, Marianne Dean, Will Kontes, Eric Dobson, Torch Lytle, Bill Thorkelson, Sally Randolph, Wally Zimolong, Pat South, Albert Oehrle, Andrew Addis

Board Members Joined By Phone: Steven Ujifusa, Matt Schuh

Board Members Excused: Steve Smith, Joe Conwell, Wes Wyatt, Isaac Ewell

Parent Representative in Attendance: Elaine Wells

Staff in Attendance: Ruth Gonzalez, Cassandra Ogbevire, Alexis Rylander, Colleen Smith, Kerry Woodward, Satoiya Wright, Ian Dorian, Christian Miskell

Guests: Jenna Smalley (Kleinbard)

I. Call to Order – *Bill Thorkelson*

Mr. Thorkelson calls the meeting to order. There is a motion to approve the minutes of the February 7, 2018 board meeting, which is moved by Mr. Thorkelson and seconded by Mr. South. The motion passes unanimously.

Mr. Thorkelson then welcomes Mr. Dobson to the board, and expresses gratitude to Jeff and Janine for hosting a successful Patron's Party for the annual benefit which will honor Ms. Dean and Mr. Conwell. Mr. Thorkelson thanks the board members who attended, and explains how Boys' Latin students were the highlight of the evening, as the seniors impressed the guests and conducted themselves with maturity. Mr. Thorkelson thanks Dr. Tennant for his leadership at Boys' Latin given the loss of William Bethel, as Boys' Latin is going through a terribly difficult time coping with loss throughout the school year. Dr. Tennant has led the staff in helping students process their grief.

## II. CEO Report – *Noah Tennant*

Dr. Tennant begins with the loss of Mr. Bethel, an honors student who played football and was beloved by both the student body and staff. Dr. Tennant thanks the board for their responses and offers of help, as Boys' Latin has struggled wrapping its mind around the terrible loss of a 16-year-old. Dr. Tennant explains that through board support, Boys' Latin is in a position to support its students and adults the best it can through relationships with community organizations like the Counsel for Relationships, the Anti-Violence Partnership of Philadelphia and the Foundation for Grieving Children. Dr. Tennant shares that while cleaning out Mr. Bethel's locker, he found Bill's handwritten notes from Career Day, which showed how the experience resonated with the young man. Dr. Tennant states that Boys' Latin will continue to assist both students and faculty with their grief, and thanks the board for being part of the solution.

Dr. Tennant then acknowledges two Boys' Latin seniors, Chris Lee and Joshua Williams, who attended the Patron's Party and represented the school with honor. Kenneth Borne, a member of the class of 2012, was also in attendance. He is the first Boys' Latin graduate to receive an advanced degree: a masters from Rutgers University. Ms. Dean adds that senior Sadat Waddy wants to become a Board Member, which Dr. Tennant notes is part of the vision of Boys' Latin.

Dr. Tennant then introduces today's guests to the board, Boys' Latin teachers Cassandra Ogbevire, Alexis Rylander, Satoiya Wright and Christian Miskell, who will give a presentation on a program they spearheaded for Boys' Latin called the WarHood Initiative—which focuses on motivating freshmen. Dr. Tennant explains that historically, freshman year is the year Boys' Latin loses most of its students, but it is also a time where the school can entice the students.

Ms. Ogbevire begins the presentation by thanking the board for its support, and explains how high school freshman year is the highest dropout year for African American and Latino males. She and her colleagues started the WarHood Initiative to address this dropout crisis, which helps students envision their lives post-graduation. Students were asked where they wanted to attend college, and the WarHood Initiative purchased t-shirts from those school so students could envision their collegiate success.

Ms. Rylander adds that the WarHood Initiative's pillars for its program are brotherhood, academic accountability, fellowship, commitment, service and peer collaboration. Students are paired up with like GPAs to achieve targeted goals through tutoring and organizing community service projects—the students recently put together a sock drive to donate to those in need.

Ms. Wright explains that there is an incentives program, where students are offered gift cards and experiences in exchange of their hard work—the group went to the

theatre to see the film *Black Panther* which followed a curriculum on afro-futurism. *Black Panther* features a strong, all-black cast and production team.

Data shows that the WarHood Initiative has motivated its participants to work harder, as 89 percent of members showed a GPA increase. The teachers are working on improvements for next year, such as issuing bi-weekly progress reports, starting a parent newsletter, allowing participants to obtain Leadership Academy credit, and developing a mentor/mentee contract. A further goal of the WarHood Initiative is to get students thinking about their GPAs as soon as possible, to improve their chances into getting into the college of their choice.

A discussion follows on the size of the program, assessing incoming freshmen, and future development. Dr. Tennant and Ms. Woodward thanks the teachers for their efforts, as they undertook this endeavor under their own volition, and the results have been astounding. The teachers conclude their presentation.

Continuing, Dr. Tennant gives the board an update on Policy 406—the School Reform Commission (“SRC”) was considering a charter amendment policy that caused concern for the charter community, as its implementation would limit charter autonomy. Excellent Schools PA filed a complaint against the SRC and the School District of Philadelphia asking the court to intervene; the case is still pending.

A discussion follows as to the details of the Excellent Schools PA complaint.

Dr. Tennant then gives the board an update on enrollment. Since the lottery last year, High School enrollment for the 2018-2019 is outstanding with 85 new freshmen (not matriculating from the middle school), and a waiting list of 175 students. At the Middle School level, Boys’ Latin is 15 students below where it was last year with 58 students currently enrolled in sixth grade for the 2018-2019 school year. Boys’ Latin is confident the Middle School numbers will go up, but attempting to recruit students from other schools has proven difficult. Boys’ Latin is exploring other recruiting avenues such as radio advertising, billboards, SEPTA ads, and churches.

A discussion follows on potential ramifications of under-enrollment, issues faced with recruiting, how past students have discovered Boys’ Latin, and various advertising strategies.

Continuing, Dr. Tennant congratulates ten Boys’ Latin students who received scholarships for the Summer Search program, which offers current high school sophomores college advising and mentoring from the present throughout their college experience. Between the summer of their sophomore/junior year, students travel nationally for a service trip then attend an international service trip the following year. Seven Boys’ Latin students were also selected for scholarships to the North Carolina Outward Bound program, which sends students in to the North Carolina wilderness for two to three weeks where they make their own meals and learn valuable survival skills as well as leadership and fellowship skills.

Dr. Tennant announces that winter test results for both Keystones and PSSAs are in. Sophomores (the class of 2020 and first group that started at the Middle School in sixth grade) have made huge advances in biology and outpaced students from years before. Science is where those students scored the highest, and Dr. Tennant credits the science department for their invaluable efforts. The Middle School received word that it will receive a High Academic Growth banner to display in its hallways, as it has demonstrated some of the highest growth in the city.

Dr. Tennant acknowledges Boys' Latin's Athletic Director Joseph Dunn, who was selected as Athletic Administrator of the Year for the Philadelphia Public League. Boys' Latin is grateful to Mr. Dunn for his tireless and humble efforts.

Dr. Tennant reinforces Boys' Latin's mission to prepare its students for college and beyond, and is happy to report that 75 percent of seniors have been accepted into college—the school believes that number will go up. Four students are considering entering the military, and nine students have yet to finalize their applications. Dr. Tennant will work with those students to complete their applications.

Dr. Tennant concludes his presentation.

### III. Board Committee Reports

#### a. Parent Liaison Report – *Elaine Wells*

Ms. Wells begins by explaining to the board that due to the loss of three young men from Boys' Latin in the last year and a half, she has been working on creating a support workshop for parents and students to deal with grief. Ms. Wells states that her sons are devastated by the loss of Mr. Bethel. Through her work with the Extended Family Network, she partnered with the Victim Support Director in Mayor Kenney's Office to provide techniques to recognize signs of grief in others, including internalized anger and frustration. Ms. Wells describes the importance of helping parents who are very hurt and do not know how to cope with their grief, as it is difficult to accept the death of a child. Ms. Wells is determined the workshop, which should be finalized next week, will help both parents and students get through this difficult time.

Ms. Wells concludes her presentation.

#### b. Finance – *Will Kontes*

Mr. Kontes begins by submitting the February Financial Report for board review. Mr. Kontes states that financially, Boys' Latin is in good shape and is projected to have another positive year. Mr. Kontes highlights that student attrition is lower than budgeted. The finance committee will ask the board in June to agree to an intended purpose for any surplus, striking a balance between campus

improvements and maintaining “rainy day” funds. Mr. Kontes states that the committee will continue to monitor Special Education funding and expense.

A discussion follows on the facilities budget, Special Education numbers, and how to invest the surplus. Ms. Woodward adds that the statement of financial interests needs to be filled out by the board members.

Mr. Kontes concludes his presentation.

c. Development – Marianne Dean

Ms. Dean begins by stating that Boys’ Latin is in good shape from a fundraising perspective as well, as the school budgeted conservatively. Ms. Dean then walks the board through the Development Report. The school has raised \$1.5 million in cash and commitments and exceeded the budget by \$475,000. Ms. Dean notes that currently the school is only \$97,000 shy of last year’s total. Ms. Dean states that the Patron’s Party was a great success, despite being rescheduled due to inclement weather, and the best way to sell the school is to show off Boys’ Latin students who are comfortable in the spotlight. Ms. Dean thanks the board for its support, and notes that tickets to the annual event on April 27 have almost sold out. Ms. Dean thanks Ms. Woodward and Ms. Smith for their efforts, and also extends thanks to Dick and Janine.

Ms. Smith adds that each year seniors participate in a field work as a component of their senior project, such as interning, job shadowing, or interviewing professionals—and asks the board for any available sites for Boys’ Latin seniors.

Ms. Dean concludes her presentation.

d. Facilities – *Steve Kempf*

Mr. Thorkelson explains how Mr. Kempf has been working with Mr. Conwell, Ms. Woodward, Dr. Tennant, and Ms. Gonzalez to investigate the condition of both the Middle School and High School properties with a goal of establishing a baseline. Mr. Thorkelson states how Boys’ Latin is looking to hire an architect to help with various projects, and will ask for the board’s approval without an official vote to do so.

Mr. Kempf begins by describing how Boys’ Latin consists of two campuses with five buildings total, and each of these buildings is between 70 to 100 years old. Over the last 90 days, Mr. Kempf has met with Mr. Conwell, Ms. Woodward, Dr. Tennant and Ms. Gonzalez to talk to builders, architects, and engineers to assess and evaluate structural issues and solutions to these issues. The committee has determined that there are significant and immediate maintenance needs, primarily with exterior sidewalks (which also raises liability issues) and interior flooring at the high school. Currently, facilities maintenance is under-budgeted and under-

resourced, such as the janitorial staff. Priority capital projects include creating a new science lab in the High School, along with a new computer lab, recreation space, and a space for Fine Arts at the Middle School. The facilities committee believes that \$25,000 should be allocated towards architectural and engineering fees to further evaluate these projects.

Mr. Kempf explains how the committee believes in the importance of projecting a well-kept, clean campus for those walking by Boys' Latin. Other areas that will eventually need to be addressed include brick pointing and water drainage. Mr. Kempf states that the recreation space in the Middle School would go in the church, which is currently not being utilized. The Middle School auxiliary building is currently not in use, but the committee has ideas for engineering and resources.

Continuing, Mr. Kempf states that the High School requires sidewalk repairs, and it is important to fix these soon. Dr. Tennant notes that the sidewalk surrounding the High School campus also serves as the track. Also at the high school, the carpeting is 11-years-old and needs to be replaced. Mr. Kempf states that the committee does not have hard estimates at this time, and will obtain those from qualified contractors. Mr. Kempf asks the board for the ability to retain an architect to determine the design and scope of the project, along with getting contractor proposals.

A discussion follows on building conversion, the realities of the Middle School recreation space, budgeting, fundraising strategies, and priorities of the projects. Dr. Tennant notes that the High School basketball team currently uses the Christi Rec Center to play, but there are safety issues with traveling off campus.

Mr. Thorkelson asks the board for their approval to appropriate \$25,000 for architectural services. With there being no objections from the board, facilities will proceed with retaining an architect.

Mr. Kempf concludes his presentation.

#### IV. New Trustee Approval – *Sally Randolph*

Mr. Thorkelson states that prospective trustee, Rebecca Davis, is currently employed at the Haverford School and brings a tremendous amount of experience from an academic perspective.

Dr. Randolph begins by telling the board that Ms. Davis first visited Boys' Latin three years ago, and was very impressed with the school. Dr. Randolph recently told Ms. Davis that she was looking for an administrator for Boys' Latin, and Ms. Davis asked Dr. Randolph if she could be considered. Dr. Randolph states that Ms. Davis has been employed at the Haverford School for 17 years, and has been Dean of Students for 11 years. Dr. Randolph believes Ms. Davis will be an excellent addition to the board.

There is a motion to approve Ms. Davis as new board member, which is moved by Dr. Randolph and seconded by Ms. Dean. The motion passes unanimously.

A discussion then follows on board terms.

V. Other Business – *Bill Thorkelson*

Mr. Thorkelson begins by stating that Dr. Tennant has circulated a school calendar electronically to the board, which needs approval for the 2018-2019 school year. There is a motion to approve the 2018-2019 calendar, which is moved by Mr. Thorkelson and seconded by Mr. Zimolong. The motion passes unanimously.

In closing, Mr. Thorkelson states that the PEW Foundation submitted its report on the health of the City of Philadelphia. Mr. Thorkelson notes that the percentage of adults who live in Philadelphia who obtained a bachelor's degree is 29 percent, and adults with a high school diploma is 32 percent.

*With there being no need for Executive Session, the meeting adjourned at 6:05 p.m.*

Respectfully submitted,

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Sally Randolph, Secretary