



**Meeting of the Board of Directors
Wednesday, October 3rd, 2018 at 4pm
339 North 63rd Street, Philadelphia, PA 19139**

The meeting was called to order at 4:01 p.m.

Board Members in Attendance: Sally Randolph, Steve Kempf, Jim Diehl, Bill Thorkelson, Will Kontes, Noah Tennant, Albert Oehrle, Steven Ujifusa, Eric Dobson, Rebecca Davis, Joe Conwell, Wally Zimolong, Steve Smith, Elaine Wells

Board Members Excused: Isaac Ewell, Patrick South, Andrew Addis, Wes Wyatt, Matt Schuh

Staff in Attendance: Ruth Gonzalez, Colleen Smith, Bethany Yonkers

Guests: Mike Whisman (Charter Choices), Jenna Smalley (Kleinbard LLC)

I. Call to Order: *Bill Thorkelson*

Mr. Thorkelson calls the meeting to order.

There is a motion to approve the minutes of the June 6, 2018 board meeting, which is moved by Mr. Oehrle and seconded by Mr. Diehl. The motion passes unanimously.

Mr. Thorkelson remarks that Boys' Latin is off to a good start, with enrollment above 800 students. Mr. Thorkelson states that both the high school and middle school are fully enrolled. Mr. Thorkelson thanks Messrs. Kempf and Conwell, along with Dr. Tennant, for working hard over the summer to bring several facilities projects to the finish line.

Continuing, Mr. Thorkelson adds that the budget was approved by the Finance Committee subject to a few edits. Mr. Thorkelson states that Boys' Latin has a strong operating budget as the board looks towards this fiscal year. Mr. Thorkelson is happy to report that Ms. Woodward and her family are doing well after the birth of her baby, and the school is looking forward to her return. Dr. Tennant and Boys' Latin have also agreed to continue employment for an additional three years.

II. CEO Report: *Noah Tennant*

Dr. Tennant begins by thanking the board for their support, and states he is most excited to move forward with the Boys' Latin family.

Dr. Tennant then shares a presentation with the board surrounding recent updates at Boys' Latin, and what students were up to over the summer. Boys' Latin students participated in a number of programs that took its young men to locations both locally and internationally, including the Delaware Water Gap, an outdoor leadership program in Wyoming, an expedition to Denver, and services trips to Costa Rica and the Dominican Republic. Students also attended the NAACP National Dance Competition in Texas, a bowling competition in Texas, the Penn Summer Science Initiative, an expedition to Iceland, North Carolina Outward Bound School, and a trip to the Paideia Institute.

Dr. Tennant explains that the purpose of these expeditions is to show students that the world expands beyond Philadelphia, and to teach students different skill sets for different environments. For example, Boys' Latin sends two kinds of students to North Carolina: students who previously demonstrated leadership potential are sent in an attempt to cultivate that potential; and students who were previously on the fringe and struggling, are sent in an attempt to jump start that student's potential. Dr. Tennant is happy to report that one of the students who previously struggled came back as a student ambassador. This student has subsequently participated in several panels and shown remarkable growth. Dr. Tennant describes the trips as very successful. The Paideia Institute loved the Boys' Latin students so much that they offered the school an annual scholarship.

Continuing, Dr. Tennant reports on new items for this school year. Boys' Latin's football and soccer teams are both off to a 5-0 start. Boys' Latin will also implement a CITRS Character Education and Development program along with student seminars.

Dr. Tennant then returns to Boy's Latin's mission, which is to prepare its students for college and beyond. Dr. Tennant explains that this requires breaking down the pillars and emphasizing emotional intelligence to counter the antiquated thinking about what it means to be a man, which is why Boys' Latin is focusing on programs to promote a new approach to defining manliness.

Dr. Tennant lists the other programs Boys' Latin has implemented this school year, which include SchoolMint (a new online program), ThinkCERCA (a writing program that dovetails with critical thinking), and SPARK (a middle school career development program where students visit job sites, including architect and marketing firms, to get a vision for their careers). Thanks to Collen Smith, Christina Cho and Jack Smith, Boys' Latin was awarded the FUSE STEM Grant, which the middle school will use to develop an inquiry-based STEM program.

Dr. Tennant states that the school has a lot to be excited about concerning its future. Dr. Tennant is happy to report that Brennen Malone, a Boys' Latin graduate from 2013, was hired as a Latin teacher in Boys' Latin's middle school. The school believes that Mr. Malone will bring valuable insight as a former student to the classroom which will benefit his students.

Dr. Tennant then details a special education update for the board. Boys' Latin hired three new case managers to make sure the school meets all federal special education requirements. A school psychologist was also hired to support the students, and Boys' Latin opened an emotional support classroom. Dr. Tennant describes one student, currently an eleventh grader, who wanted nothing to do with Boys' Latin when he was in sixth grade. This year that student was placed in an emotional support class, and he went home and told his mother he never wanted to leave. Boys' Latin was able to meet this student's needs. Dr. Tennant reports that another student who was placed in an approved private school at the end of last year is not happy with that placement, and wants to return to Boys' Latin. The school is pleased that the student is able to return and the resulting cost-savings.

Continuing, Dr. Tennant explains new requirements and educational updates to the board. There is no real update on Policy 406, a policy that hinders autonomy of charters in designing curriculums, as litigation moves slowly. Excellent Schools PA filed a lawsuit over Policy 406, and since then the State has asked for a response from the School District of Philadelphia.

A discussion follows on the details surrounding Policy 406, and potential impacts on Boys' Latin.

Dr. Tennant then describes Act 44, legislation which ensures that Pennsylvania schools meet the requirements to ensure student safety. Boys' Latin will submit its school safety plans in the event of evacuation/need for emergency shelter, and does not anticipate any compliance issues. Dr. Tennant then explains Act 55, a mandate that beginning this school year any board member who joins a board must receive approved training. Dr. Tennant states that the details of this legislation are still not known.

A discussion follows on the specific requirements of this board training program, and how it could impact the Boys' Latin board.

Dr. Tennant then directs the board's attention to a handout on college matriculation and persistence. Dr. Tennant states the numbers are emblematic of Boys' Latin's mission, and the results are about achieving that mission. Dr. Tennant states that for the class of 2017, Boys' Latin is in the top ten in terms of overall college matriculation, overall college persistence, college matriculation for males, and college matriculation for black students. For the class of 2016, Boy's Latin is top ten in four-year college persistence for males and four-year college persistence for black students. Dr. Tennant then directs the board to an article describing how where one lives determines whether he or she will realize the American Dream. Dr. Tennant states that Boys' Latin is in one of the highest poverty areas in the city, and there is a feeling of affirmation that the school is doing what it set out to do based on matriculation and persistence data—teachers are working hard, and the students are dedicated to the mission.

Mr. Thorkelson adds that this is a remarkable achievement. Mr. Thorkelson remarks that during the charter renewal process, it seems that Boys' Latin was not given credit for matriculation and persistence. Boys' Latin exists to serve an underserved population.

A discussion follows on the weight of test scores in measuring school success and renewing a charter, and the makeup of the new school board.

Mr. Dobson asks how the board can incorporate information surrounding emotional intelligence as a benefit to the students of Boys' Latin. Mr. Dobson mentions *The Color of Law* by Richard Rothstein, which details a history of documentation surrounding how the American housing policy intentionally segregates communities. Dr. Tennant asks Mr. Dobson to come in and speak to the students to inspire conversation around these topics.

In closing, Dr. Tennant announces that the Boys' Latin College Fair will take place tonight at the high school campus. Historically this event has been well-attended.

Dr. Tennant concludes his presentation.

III. Board Committee Reports

a. Parent Liaison Report: Elaine Wells

Ms. Wells begins with an update on meeting the needs of Boys' Latin students. Over the summer, Ms. Wells' two sons attended a Childhood Loss Foundation program called "The Black Boy Experience," which is designed to engage young men of color while they are most vulnerable in an effort to change the narrative and trajectory of their lives. The program offers a safe space for boys to discuss and digest what it means to be a young man of color in society and amongst friends and family. Ms. Wells describes the experience as transformative for her sons, as it was freeing for them to hear from adults who have experienced racism and stereotypes. Ms. Wells believes this program would be well-serving for the young men of Boys' Latin in terms of reforming expectations on what it is to be man, and giving students tools and a safe space to express their feelings. Ms. Wells' sons have since become comfortable expressing when their feelings are hurt or when they feel uncomfortable. Ms. Wells reports that other Boys' Latin students attended, and the feedback from them was similarly positive. Dr. Tennant will meet with folks from the program in two weeks to discuss how it can help Boys' Latin at large.

Continuing, Ms. Wells states that at the beginning of this school year she watched news reports about welcome back to school line-ups where parents and business people come together at schools to welcome students back to school. Ms. Wells thought this would be a good idea, and put a call out on social media for the community to do the same for Boys' Latin students—the response was

overwhelming. Ms. Wells' post got nearly 100 likes and shares, and on the first day of school there were dozens of community people with signs greeting our students, including Councilwoman Blackwell, Jim Robuck, Jr., Carolyn Nickels, and Dave Hardy at the middle school. Other attendees were the Members of Muslims for Humanity, Neighbors of Cobbs Creek CDC, Men of Courage Mentoring Program, CFO Ryan Boyer, founder of the Respect Alliance, alumni parents, and members of various houses of worship. Ms. Wells describes the students as stunned that so many people came out to support them on their first day of school. Ms. Wells states it is important for students to know that the community cares about them, is looking out for them, and wants them to succeed. Ms. Wells is looking forward to doing this again next year.

Mr. Oehrle thanks Ms. Wells for her efforts in coordinating such an invaluable demonstration of community support.

Ms. Wells concludes her presentation.

b. Finance: *Will Kontes*

Mr. Kontes begins by announcing that a budget is in place for fiscal year 2019. Mr. Kontes thanks the finance committee for all its work, including Ms. Woodward who was gracious to help out and Mr. Whisman for supporting the process. Mr. Kontes directs the board to the budget handouts, and remarks that the proposed surplus dipped slightly from what was originally anticipated. Revenues have increased with some small changes made in expenses. Mr. Kontes adds that Boys' Latin is currently budgeted for 798 students, with budgeted reimbursements at approximately \$8,000 per student and \$26,000 per special education student. Mr. Kontes explains that Boys' Latin conservatively budgeted for student enrollment, attrition, and reimbursement rates, should they change. Mr. Kontes adds that there is a general plan for what do with additional money, but the committee will not make a formal decision until the reimbursement rate is set.

A discussion follows on when reimbursement rates are set. Mr. Whisman advises that reimbursement rates can be set as late as June for any current school year.

Mr. Thorkelson thanks Mr. Kontes and the finance committee for their hard work in drafting the budget.

Continuing, Mr. Kontes states that Boys' Latin is assuming an attrition rate of above six percent. Mr. Kontes attributes this to the hard work of staff and administration on retaining the same amount of students as last year. Dr. Tennant adds that additional students may be joining the school.

A discussion follows on the budgeted amount of students, retention, and how a change in numbers could affect Boys' Latin's middle school.

Mr. Kontes then directs the board to a board resolution which approves the credit line facility with Meridian Bank. Mr. Kontes states that no interest rate is specified, but the prime rate is 5.25 percent. Mr. Kontes explains that Boys' Latin is not expected to use the money, it is merely a line of credit or "rainy day fund." Mr. Kontes states that the bank asked Boys' Latin to approve the resolution and the language came from the bank. Pending final confirmation of the interest rate, Mr. Kontes submits the resolution to the board for approval.

There is a motion to approve the credit line facility with the understanding that the interest rate will be variable, which is moved by Dr. Randolph and seconded by Mr. Conwell. The motion passes unanimously.

Mr. Kontes then addresses a second financial item: Boys' Latin currently has two loans totaling \$30,000 with a six percent interest rate. At a committee level, Boys' Latin can utilize cash on hand to pay down or pay off the loans. Mr. Thorkelson adds that spending this cash to pay off an outstanding balance in theory could be in competition with other needs within the capitol budget. Mr. Kontes states that this will be discussed amongst the finance committee, and if approval is needed a decision will then be brought to the board.

Mr. Kontes concludes his presentation.

c. Facilities: *Joe Conwell*

Mr. Conwell begins by stating that the facilities committee approved \$450,000 worth of spending on improvement projects, with \$25,000 of that spent on designing science labs for the high school. Mr. Conwell then walks the board through the three projects: replacing 17,000 square feet of concrete sidewalk at the high school and middle school, replacing flooring in the high school, and remodeling a middle school building into a Fine Arts Building to be used for music and art classrooms.

Beginning with the sidewalks, Mr. Conwell states that the project was completed on budget and looks great. The new sidewalks give the campus an improved professional environment, and eliminate a risk management issue. The facilities committee is happy with the result of the result sidewalk replacement.

Mr. Conwell explains that the flooring at the high school was ten years old, worn, and a drag on the energy of the school. The new tile in the hallways looks great, and new carpet was installed in some classrooms. Mr. Conwell reports that the flooring at the high school was all done under-budget.

Mr. Conwell then discusses the new Fine Arts Building at the middle school. Classrooms were installed on the first floor, along with a large bathroom and kiln. Up to 50 students can occupy the building at a time and the electrical and HVAC systems were replaced as well. Mr. Conwell describes the building as functioning well and safe. An outdoor path was created for students to access the building, and new boards

were installed on the porch. Mr. Conwell thanks Mr. Kempf for his hard work in getting these projects completed on time and under budget, along with Dr. Tennant and Ms. Gonzalez for their continued efforts.

Mr. Conwell is happy to report that the three projects came in under-budget, totaling \$434,000. Mr. Conwell then mentions some projects for the future, including installation of chemistry and biology labs at the high school. The committee approved \$25,000 to design those labs, and so far \$11-12,000 has been spent on design, including determining what equipment would be needed, flooring, lights and projected construction costs. The committee would like to bring in an architect to handle the next steps. Mr. Conwell anticipates a \$300,000 price tag for both labs, 60 percent to the chemistry lab and 40 percent to the biology lab.

Continuing, Mr. Conwell describes how the facilities committee sat down with Dr. Tennant and Ms. Gonzalez to determine how to improve housekeeping at the school, both interior and exterior. A building engineer was hired to address such problems, and the budget was increased to hire this building engineer. Since hiring the new building engineer, Mr. Conwell reports that housekeeping is now where the school wants it to be. The engineer addressed major issues such as the HVAC system.

A discussion follows surrounding the role and cost of the building engineer.

Mr. Conwell concludes his presentation.

d. Development: *Colleen Smith*

Ms. Smith begins by directing the board to the development report, which shows a strong start to the year. Ms. Smith states that Boys' Latin is nearly halfway to its budgeted goal of \$1 million in total contributions, and we are only a quarter into the school year. The development committee expects an end of year bump with the annual appeal and EITC. Ms. Smith states that another targeted EITC mailing will be undertaken this year, a little earlier than in prior years, to garner new support. Planning will begin soon for the annual fundraiser in April. Ms. Smith reports that the alumni report went out to 500 donors and supporters to re-engage interest in this school year. Mr. Kempf compliments the alumni report, saying it is very nicely done.

A discussion follows on the Lenfest Grant. Ms. Smith explains that Boys' Latin has received this annual grant for four years now, which helps support the middle school after school program. The grant helps support additional staff required to run an extended day.

Continuing, Ms. Smith adds that no date has been set for the annual fundraiser. The development committee will meet with planners next week to help choose the date, honorees, and committee chairs. A discussion follows on choosing the most viable weekday for the annual event, to garner high attendance.

Ms. Smith concludes her presentation.

Mr. Thorkelson closes with an update on Boys' Latin's strategic plan. The board has all received a draft of a new strategic plan, and Mr. Thorkelson thanks Mr. Ujifusa, Ms. Woodward and Dr. Tennant for their hand in helping draft the plan. Mr. Thorkelson describes six major areas that the school should focus on in the next five years. Mr. Thorkelson asks the board for their feedback, as the goal is to have the draft in final form by the next board meeting. Mr. Thorkelson summarizes the theme of the strategic plan is to get better at what it is Boys' Latin does. Boys' Latin learned that it does a great job of educating young men, and is always looking to improve. Mr. Conwell adds that the strategic plan is for the board as a body to serve the school, and asks the board rhetorically what the board's priority should be.

Mr. Thorkelson explains that the board has taken the lead in developing the strategic plan in hand with the school. The board should look to the strategic plan as a blueprint for how to operate the school.

Mr. Oehrle then gives a shout-out to Mr. Ujifusa for the publication of his new book, *Barons of the Sea: And Their Race to Build the World's Fastest Clipper Ship*. Mr. Ujifusa will donate copies of his book to the school library.

With there being no need for Executive Session, the meeting adjourned at 5:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sally Randolph, Secretary