



**Meeting of the Board of Directors  
Wednesday, February 7, 2018 at 4:00 pm  
339 North 63<sup>rd</sup> Street, Philadelphia, PA 19139**

*The meeting is called to order at 4:15 p.m.*

Board Members in Attendance: Marianne Dean, Steve Kempf, Sally Randolph, Noah Tennant, Steve Smith, Bill Thorkelson, Steven Ujifusa, Will Kontes, Joe Conwell

Board Members in Attendance via Telephone: Matt Schuh, Jim Diehl, Andrew Addis

Board Members Excused: Isaac Ewell, Patrick South, Wes Wyatt, Torch Lytle, Albert Oehrle, Wally Zimolong

Staff in Attendance: Colleen Smith, Kerry Woodward, Bethany Younkens, Alexis Rylander, Cassandra Ogbevire, and Satoia Wright

Parent Representative Excused: Elaine Wells

Guests: Michael Whisman, Charter Choices; and Jenna Smalley, Kleinbard LLC

**Agenda**

I. Middle School Musical Performance

The meeting begins with a musical performance by the Boys' Latin Middle School group, The Collective, led by Margel Overton.

II. Call to Order – *Bill Thorkelson*

There is a motion to approve the minutes of the December 6, 2017 board meeting, which is moved by Mr. Thorkelson and seconded by Ms. Dean. The motion passes unanimously.

III. CEO Report – *Noah Tennant*

Dr. Tennant then introduces Bethany Younkens, Director of the Special Education Department, to the board. Dr. Tennant explains how there has been a leadership transition the Special Education Department over the past few months, and throughout that process Boys' Latin has learned a great deal about the ways in

which it needs to improve. Dr. Tennant expresses how fortunate Boys Latin is to have Ms. Younkers.

Ms. Younkers begins her presentation, and lists the goals she has for the board today: to identify the needs and trends of special education students, and identify current educational laws governing charter schools. Ms. Younkers explains that 120 students at Boys Latin receive an Individualized Education Program (“IEP”), and gives a breakdown of the number of students per grade. Ms. Younkers describes a growing trend where more students are operating in lower than average and borderline IQ ranges.

Ms. Younkers then details a breakdown of six different student profiles who receive IEPs at Boys’ Latin, and the specific challenges each student-type faces. In some cases, these students can come from traumatic pasts and/or turbulent home lives which categorizes them as needing an IEP, despite the student lacking any learning disabilities.

A discussion follows on the expected outcomes for students who fit these profiles, in terms of graduation, future success and relationships with other students. Ms. Younkers explains the different expectations for the various profiles, and how Boys’ Latin tries to track the success of its former students who had received an IEP.

Ms. Younkers then transitions to special education laws and regulations, beginning with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004 (“IDEA”) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. Ms. Younkers explains that under the Americans with Disabilities Act (“ADA”), all charter schools must comply with state and federal laws. IDEA provides that all students with disabilities receive free and appropriate public education with supplemental aids and services, as all children have to be given public education free of charge. Boys’ Latin must then provide these services.

Ms. Younkers explains how Boys’ Latin cannot limit or deny admission on any basis, and cannot discriminate against a student on the basis of disability. Ms. Younkers states that the number of special education students in Boys’ Latin’s program has nearly doubled in the past four years from eight to 15 percent.

Ms. Younkers continues through the current trends and challenges, including in staffing—Boys’ Latin has had a difficult time retaining talented special education teachers, as the turnover rate is high. Ms. Younkers explains that every student’s IEP is evaluated every year, and Boys’ Latin’s special education team faces a constant battle with timelines to stay in compliance.

Three teachers at Boys’ Latin then speak, Alexis Rylander (science teacher), Cassandra Ogbevire (algebra teacher), and Satoia Wright (English lit teacher). Ms. Rylander explains how she has created an online platform so students have

24-hour access to the curriculum. Ms. Rylander altered her classroom to accommodate IEP students, and currently has ten IEP students in danger of failing.

Dr. Tennant adds that general education teachers go to great lengths to connect with all students, but strict documentation requirements leave the school ripe for litigation.

Ms. Ogbevire explains that she is not certified as a special education teacher, but that she teaches to serve all students. Ms. Ogbevire uses online platforms, and needs to conduct her own research as it is her responsibility to make sure the students are continuously progressing. Ms. Wright states that she has students with mixed abilities, and works with graphic organizers which are helpful for students with IEPs. Ms. Wright notes that IEP students have great strengths, as one has the highest grade in her class.

Ms. Younkers concludes her presentation.

Dr. Tennant continues to the importance of relationships, and directs the board to a handout regarding Dr. Joseph Nelson. Dr. Tennant explains that part of Boys' Latin's brand is how to best serve boys: Dr. Nelson taught a session on relational teaching and serving boys of color. Dr. Nelson believes that on the middle school level, boys' relationships with teachers are key as the teacher is the "relationship manager." The teacher owns the responsibility and is required to give more to make sure these students succeed. If a teacher sees a student doing what they are not supposed to, the teacher should reach out and go above and beyond to make sure the boy does what he is supposed to. Dr. Nelson stresses personal advocacy, where teachers serve as an ally to the students by establishing common ground and accommodating opposition. Dr. Nelson is open to working with students more, and has invited Boys' Latin students to see his Swarthmore classroom. Boys' Latin hopes this collaboration will be an ongoing relationship.

Dr. Tennant then gives an update on Boys' Latin relationship with City Hall and the School Reform Commissions ("SRC"). Dr. Tennant states that there are a lot of upcoming changes which will effect Boys' Latin. Mayor Kenney visited Boys' Latin in January 10, and the school is grateful for the visit. On January 30, 400 charter school stakeholders from across the city went to City Hall demanding transparency and expediency in the charter renewal process and discussing the limitations around Policy 406.

A discussion follows on how the new school board governing body will be formed, and any effects on Boys' Latin. Dr. Tennant adds that Dave Hardy applied to be on the new school board.

Dr. Tennant concludes his presentation.

#### IV. Board Committee Reports

##### a. Financial Report – *Will Kontes and Kerry Woodward*

Mr. Kontes begins by stating that the finance committee had a productive meeting two weeks prior to the board meeting, and thanks its members for their time and input. Mr. Kontes explains that the committee spent the majority of the time talking about the impact of special education funding in relation to the budget. Mr. Kontes is grateful to Ms. Woodward and her staff for figuring out that Boys' Latin was not getting fully reimbursed for a number of special education students. The next step was then to make sure those students get the support they need. Mr. Kontes explains the challenge that the number of children is increasing, which is trending towards a district-wide average

Ms. Woodward explains that she prepared a budget revision allocating more to additional staff to: i) process IEPs more effectively and get paid correctly; and ii) limit liability by doing the job correctly and improve the overall educational environment for the students. Ms. Woodward describes the bottom line that Boys' Latin needs more special education staff to accomplish these goals.

Mr. Kontes describes other issues discussed by the finance committee, including a review of benefits and insurance. The Boys' Latin Foundation was also discussed, along with how other charter schools handle their foundations. Mr. Kontes states that the committee also discussed long term facilities financing, and the possibility of a capital campaign.

Mr. Kontes concludes his presentation.

##### b. Development – *Marianne Dean and Colleen Smith*

Ms. Dean begins by sharing the good news that Boys' Latin has received over \$1 million to date, which is eight percent more than the budgeted fundraising goal. Ms. Dean explains this increase is driven by a successful annual appeal, which keeps getting better every year. Ms. Dean urges the board for 100 percent board participation. Continuing, Ms. Dean states that 38 percent of contributions are from EITC, with 12 percent from grants, four percent from the event and 46 percent from individual giving.

Ms. Smith adds that to date, Boys' Latin has raised close to \$90,000 for the event, which is 30 percent of the overall goal. Ms. Smith thanks the honorees, Marianne Dean and Joe Conwell, for this early success. Ms. Smith states that 800 invites will be sent in March, and the committee has great fundraising momentum.

Ms. Dean gives kudos to Ms. Woodward for naming this year's event, "Let's Hear It for the Boys." Ms. Dean states that the Patron's Event will lead up to the event in March, and thanks the generous hosts. Ms. Dean thanks both Ms. Woodward and Ms. Smith for their hard work, along with Mr. South for agreeing to take on the position of Development Chair next year. Ms. Dean states that Mr.

South has great experience in development, and represents a gap in the donor base. Ms. Dean is confident the board will be in good hands with Mr. South.

Ms. Dean concludes her presentation.

c. *Governance – Bill Thorkelson*

Mr. Thorkelson begins by directing the board to the resume of Eric Dobson, who will be nominated tonight as a new board member. Mr. Thorkelson met with Mr. Dobson and Dr. Tennant, and believes Mr. Dobson will be a fine addition to the board. Dr. Tennant adds that Mr. Dobson has a history of helping the underserved, and has worked to get those in need housing and a top-notch education. Mr. Dobson has a good relationship with clergy, speaking talents, and excellent insight into Boys' Latin's mission.

There is a motion to approve Eric Dobson as new Boy's Latin board member, which is moved by Mr. Thorkelson and seconded by Dr. Randolph. The motion passes unanimously.

Mr. Thorkelson concludes his presentation.

d. *Facilities – Joe Conwell*

Mr. Conwell begins by describing a tour he took of the high school facilities with Dr. Tennant and Mr. Kempf, and how in the charter world one learns to make due with less. Mr. Conwell states that the high school is now ten-years-old, and the committee wants to understand the needs of the facility. Mr. Conwell explains how the committee can look at ways to reserve and plan for safety and security issues down the line, as deferred maintenance is an operating budget issue. Mr. Conwell wants to organize his observations as a report which he intends to share with the board at a later date.

Mr. Thorkelson adds that Boys' Latin needs a clear understanding of the future needs of facilities, in terms of anticipating financial issues in turning the sanctuary building into a gymnasium. Mr. Thorkelson states that a timeline on funding such a project is what a strategic plan is all about.

Mr. Conwell concludes his presentation.

*With there being no Other Business and no need for Executive Session, the meeting adjourned at 5:52 p.m.*

Respectfully submitted,

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Sally Randolph, Secretary