



**Meeting of the Board of Directors  
Thursday, October 10, 2019 at 4pm  
339 North 63<sup>rd</sup> Street, Philadelphia, PA 19139**

*The meeting was called to order at 4:11 p.m.*

Board Members in Attendance: Joe Conwell, Rebecca Davis, Jim Diehl, Eric Dobson, Steve Kempf, Albert Oehrle, Patrick South, Noah Tennant, Bill Thorkelson, Elaine Wells

Board Members Joined by Phone: Isaac Ewell, Steven Ujifusa, Wes Wyatt

Board Members Excused: Andrew Addis, Matt Schuh, Steve Smith, Wally Zimolong

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

Guests: Jenna Smalley (Kleinbard LLC)

I. Call to Order: *Bill Thorkelson*

Mr. Thorkelson calls the meeting to order.

Mr. Thorkelson announces that the school year is off to a good start, with enrollment at over 800 students and favorable feedback received from faculty and administration regarding the new evaluation and compensation framework. Boys' Latin is also off to a strong financial start. Mr. Thorkelson thanks Messrs. Kempf and Conwell for their hard work and time spent on constructing the new science labs. Mr. Thorkelson encourages the board to visit the high school to take a look at the two new classroom spaces.

II. CEO Report: *Noah Tennant*

Dr. Tennant begins by briefing the board on updates at Boys' Latin from over the summer, as many students participated in programs that helped them experience how big the world the world is—students traveled to China, Italy, Panama, Costa Rica, the Rocky Mountains, North Carolina, and the Delaware Water Gap. Dr. Tennant explains how these experiences help show the students how they can impact the world, and that what they do matters in the world. Faculty members were also sent on retreats to help built on those experiences and shape the culture of Boys' Latin.

Dr. Tennant describes how Boys' Latin implemented the Black Boy Experience into its summer orientation program for incoming freshman, thanks to Ms. Wells, which teaches students how to navigate issues. Students also participated in the Philadelphia Outward Bound School which teaches leadership, followership, and community.

At the start the of the school year, Boys' Latin was featured on the television show *The ClassH Room*, which pit middle school students against the faculty in a friendly trivia competition—and the students won. Dr. Tennant describes how the students looked sharp in their uniforms, and had fun laughing and celebrating with the faculty.

Dr. Tennant then breaks down student enrollment and faculty composition for the board—Boys' Latin currently has 836 students (474 in the high school and 362 in the middle school) with 19.5 percent of those in special education, which has risen over the past four years. Dr. Tennant states that 70 percent of eighth graders matriculated to the Boys' Latin High School, which is an increase of a few percentage points. The school is hopeful this number will continue to grow.

A discussion follows on grade level equivalents of sixth and ninth graders entering math, and the impacts and challenges Boys' Latin faces in helping students close the gap. Dr. Tennant states that Boys' Latin aims for five-to-six years of growth.

Turning to faculty, Dr. Tennant advises that Boys' Latin currently has 73 instructional employees, 75.3 percent of those are certified—which meets the Charter School Office's requirement. Boys' Latin has 16 instructional support personnel to assist with special education students, 39 percent staff of color, 23 percent teachers of color, and 42 percent male teachers. Boys' Latin retained 79 percent of teachers at the high school and 90 percent at the middle school.

Dr. Tennant then announces two recent distinctions earned by a student and a faculty member. Imere Williams, Boys' Latin Class of 2020, has been appointed as a student member to the Philadelphia School Board, and wants to be an advocate for students and education. Heidi Bonner, the Director of College Advising, received a national award from the National Association for College Admission Counseling.

Dr. Tennant congratulates senior Symere Cunningham as the first college acceptance from the Class of 2020, who was accepted to Indiana University of Pennsylvania. Boys' Latin has a tradition where the student is called to the office over the public address system, and he is given a different tie to wear to celebrate and also inspire other students to submit their applications.

Dr. Tennant thanks Colleen Smith for her hard work in leading the charge on redesigning the schools' website. Dr. Tennant expresses the importance of a strong online presence, and Boys' Latin wants to makes sure its website captured the spirit of the school, its students, and what the students accomplish. A discussion follows on how the website is used for both student and faculty. Dr. Tennant thanks Ms. Wells

for her suggestion that community service forms be added to the website, and Ms. Woodward adds that the calendar has been a vast improvement as well.

Dr. Tennant also thanks Messrs. Kempf and Conwell for all their time spent on bringing the new science labs to life, and also encourages the board to swing by the high school to take a look.

Dr. Tennant then turns the board's attention to the Non-Discrimination Policy for Transgender and Non-Conforming Youth, which has evolved through discussions over the past 3 years. Dr. Tennant explains how Boys' Latin embraces this policy as part of its mission to serve students who have been traditionally marginalized. Boys' Latin is excited to provide a safe space to transgendered youth who face serious safety concerns. Boys' Latin wants to be a school where all students can grow and learn and find success. Dr. Tennant advises that the recommendation is to have guidelines, rather than a policy, as guidelines are subject to change as the school's understanding of these issues change.

Dr. Tennant then turns to Gov. Wolf's draft legislation which is not charter-friendly and could be a threat to Boys' Latin: the legislation would reduce special education funding by approximately \$1.9 million and would remove the rental reimbursement funding. Boys' Latin has been undertaking defensive strategies by meeting with Speaker Turzai and Senator Corman to seek guidance on how to fight this legislation. There is also an upcoming rally in Harrisburg, and Boys' Latin invited Gov. Wolf to visit the school. A discussion follows on how this legislation could impact Boys' Latin, and the likelihood of it passing.

Dr. Tennant switches gears to Boys' Latin Charter Agreement, which requires board approval for years 2017-2022. Dr. Tennant describes how the charter was renewed in July of 2017, but certain components of that charter have been negotiated by Boys' Latin and the Charter School Office ("CSO") in the period since. Dr. Tennant, Ms. Woodward, and the Boys' Latin team spent a lot time negotiating and finally feel good about the charter being put forward for approval tonight. Boys' Latin is trying to foster a strong relationship with the CSO and feels good about where the agreement stands now.

Dr. Tennant adds that Trudy Allen has been appointed a the new middle school principal—Ms. Allen is a major factor in the high teacher retention rate, and that Christina Cho will be the new high school dean.

A discussion follows on the various terms of the revised charter.

Mr. Thorkelson asks for board approval to appoint Steven Ujifusa as new Boys' Latin Board of Trustees Secretary, which passes unanimously.

Mr. Thorkelson puts on a motion on the floor to approve the following: affirmation of appointing and dismissing school administrators, including the appointment of Trudy

Allen and the appointment of Christina Cho; affirmation of course of study; dissolution plan and policy; admissions policy and process; salary information; board biographies; and affidavit of certification—which is moved by Mr. Oehrle and seconded Mr. Kempf. The motion passes unanimously with one abstention.

There is a motion to approve the charter school agreement, with a resolution recommending approval of the charter school agreement as discussed and as presented in the board packet, which is moved by Mr. Conwell and seconded by Mr. Dobson. The motion passes unanimously.

Mr. Thorkelson thanks Dr. Tennant and Ms. Woodward for their hard work in finalizing the charter school agreement with the CSO.

Dr. Tennant then informs the board that some policies will need to be approved, per the Pennsylvania Department of Education, namely: a truancy prevention policy (if a student is truant, proper interventions are taken); selecting a food service vendor (since Boys' Latin participates in a free and reduced lunch program, the school had to start a bidding process to contract with a vendor and chose Linton's Food Service Management); board clearance requirements (including background checks and fingerprinting for all board members); and board of trustee training requirements (three to four hour online webinar for all board of trustee members).

There is a motion to approve the truancy prevention policy, which is moved by Mr. South and seconded by Mr. Diehl. The motion passes unanimously.

There is a motion to approve the Linton's Food Service Management service agreement, which is moved by Mr. Kempf and seconded by Mr. South. The motion passes unanimously.

There is a motion to approve the minutes of the June 5, 2019 board meeting, which is moved by Mr. Thorkelson and seconded by Mr. Kempf. The motion passes unanimously.

Dr. Tennant concludes his presentation.

### III. Board Committee Reports

#### a. Parent Liaison Report: Elaine Wells

Ms. Wells begins by describing how since the beginning of the school year, the EFN has established a new team of parents at the middle school, who joined the principal for dinner at the high school which was a hit with the parents. Family Fun Day was recently enjoyed by parents and children who got to network and bond. The Welcome Warriors Back to School event on September 9 was also a great success with high turnout at both the middle and high schools—committee members, state reps, and various members of the community came out to support Boys' Latin students and

staff. Ms. Wells speaks to the success of Back to School Night, where a brief intro was given to EFN. Later this month the Black Male Leadership Conference will take place which aims to add 1,000 black male educators by 2020. The Annual Parent Social will take place on October 19, where the community is invited to come out for a family game night at the high school. Ms. Wells reports that numerous organizations have been reaching out to partner with Boys' Latin, such as Millionaires in Training and Social Justice Mentoring.

Ms. Wells concludes her presentation.

b. Finance: *Wes Wyatt, Kerry Woodward*

Ms. Woodward begins by directing the board to the August 31 financial report, which has been thoroughly reviewed by the finance committee. Ms. Woodward reports that the balance sheet position is very strong. Ms. Woodward then takes the board through the projections for the end of the year, such as remaining payments on the science lab. Ms. Woodward reports a positive net income of \$468,000 which is well ahead of where the school needs to be in terms of debt service coverage ratios on the operating budget and allows the school to invest in capital projects, both deferred maintenance and new investments in the facilities of the school. A discussion follows on these projections.

Ms. Woodward then turns to the audit. Ms. Woodward describes a more active process between auditors and the committee which went smoothly. Ms. Woodward states the audit is clean with no material deficiencies—a few process improvements were recommended to the school that Boys' Latin will comply with, such as updating a procurement policy and electronically uploading credit card receipts. A discussion follows on the audit.

There is a motion to approve the FY2019 Audit, which is moved by Mr. Wyatt and seconded by Mr. Kempf. The motion passes unanimously.

Mr. Wyatt and Ms. Woodward conclude their presentation.

c. Facilities: *Joe Conwell, Bill Thorkelson*

Mr. Thorkelson begins by describing how the facilities committee met with MIS (the third-party entity looking at the feasibility of putting together a master plan) to put together a master plan, which is still in the early stages. Mr. Thorkelson advises there is nothing of substance to report at this time.

Mr. Conwell returns to the completed science lab project, which cost around \$300,000 and has had a successful, positive impact on Boys' Latin. Mr. Conwell states the committee is happy with how the project was run and the final product. Mr. Conwell describes that between the replaced sidewalks, flooring, high school field, and renovated fine arts building—the committee has been able actively invest in the

facilities of the school, which has yielded a better instructional environment for the students. Mr. Conwell explains how the committee will need some time to digest a master plan.

In terms of future projects, Mr. Conwell advises that the high school pointing needs work as water is penetrating the façade of the building. The committee does not yet know how much this project will cost but are getting bids in currently.

Mr. Conwell and Mr. Thorkelson conclude their presentation.

d. Development: *Colleen Smith, Patrick South*

Mr. South begins by stating that so far this school year the committee has already raised half of its targeted development goal of \$1 million. Mr. South describes the three ways of bringing in money: individual donors, EITC donations, and grants from foundations. Right now most of the money raised has come from foundations and individual giving, and the committee expects more individual giving and EITC donations to come in before the year's end. Mr. South announces that the annual appeal is also in the works which will be mailed out to 1,000 current and potential donors, thanks to the hard work of Ms. Smith.

Mr. South then describes the goals for the development committee, which is to bring in newer donors and introduce those new and potential donors to Boys' Latin and Dr. Tennant. Mr. South states that the committee has been debating on whether or not to host the annual event this year, as attendance has been declining, in favor of hosting a few smaller events for donors. In the short term, Ms. Smith will still search for dates and venues and the committee will make a decision by the end of this month after consulting with donors.

Ms. Smith and Mr. South conclude their presentation.

e. Other Business: *Bill Thorkelson*

Mr. Dobson proposes that Boys' Latin embrace a more proactive strategy in terms of the legislation Gov. Wolf is proposing. Mr. Dobson welcomes the opportunity to try to form a political action subcommittee to take a look at said legislation. A discussion follows on the organizations that can be sought out to assist Boys' Latin in fighting the narrative against charter schools.

Mr. Thorkelson concludes his presentation.

*With there being no need for executive session, the meeting adjourns at 6:21 p.m.*

Respectfully submitted,

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Steven Ujifusa, Secretary