



**Meeting of the Board of Directors
Wednesday, February 10, 2021 at 4:00pm
Meeting held via Zoom due to COVID-19**

The meeting was called to order at 4:06 p.m.

Board Members in Attendance: Joseph Conwell, Isaac Ewell, Amy Williams Guidi, Steven Kempf, Albert Oehrle, Patrick South, Amir Tucker, Elaine Wells, Wesley Wyatt, Paul Yakulis

Board Members Excused: Stephen Smith, Kerry Wagner Woodward, Walter Zimolong

Staff in Attendance: Dave Hardy, Ruth Gonzalez, Colleen Smith

Guests: Jenna Smalley (Kleinbard LLC)

I. Call to Order: *Wes Wyatt*

Mr. Wyatt calls the meeting to order, and thanks everyone for attending digitally.

Mr. Wyatt introduces a potential new trustee, Amir Tucker, to the board. Mr. Tucker graduated from Boys' Latin in 2012 and has stayed close to the school since.

There is motion to appoint Mr. Tucker to the Boys' Latin Board of Directors, which is moved by Mr. Wyatt and seconded by Mr. Oehrle. The motion passes unanimously.

Mr. Wyatt welcomes Mr. Tucker to the board.

There is a motion to adopt the December 9, 2020 Boys' Latin Board of Directors meeting minutes, which is moved by Ms. Yakulis and seconded by Mr. Kempf. The motion passes unanimously.

Mr. Wyatt then gives an update on Pennsylvania House Bill No. 703, which requires charter schools to publish all board members' contact information on their websites. Mr. Wyatt explains that email addresses are sufficient, so Boys' Latin will create and publish email address for all board members before this new rule goes into effect in June. Mr. Hardy adds that the School District follows this model as well.

II. Interim CEO Report: *Dave Hardy*

Mr. Hardy begins by giving an update on the current 2020-2021 school year. Mr. Hardy explains that due to the virtual environment this year continues to be a battle. Boys' Latin has had to adapt and be more aggressive in its approach to get more students engaged. Mr. Hardy reminds the board that students achieve credit not just by logging in to online classes, but by participation and engagement during those classroom hours. Mr. Hardy describes how the students in the upper 90 percent of average daily attendance do better than students who drop below 89 percent. Boys' Latin's current average daily attendance is at 88 percent.

Mr. Hardy then discusses the limits of virtual education, such as the feelings of isolation amongst students and families, as group programs such as extracurricular activities are limited. Boys' Latin wants to keep the best interests of its students at heart by gradually reopening these programs and offering more support to students, and begin preparing for next year when students will be back in the building. Mr. Hardy describes a full court press of student engagement where teachers make themselves more available. Mr. Hardy explains how one teacher hosts a "Coffee with Ms. K" online session at noon where students can log in to talk about school work or whatever topics they'd like. Mr. Fletcher, a high school Latin teacher, keeps his classroom account open for an extra hour at the end of the day so students can also hang out and voice what's on their minds. Mr. Hardy notes that students can have revelations during these hours which can offer insights as to why they might be struggling. Boys' Latin wants to give students that feeling that they are a part of something, even if clubs and sports are on hold.

Mr. Hardy announces that Boys' Latin will aim to substantially improve its Latin, Math, and English programs between now and the 2021-2022 school year. Mr. Hardy states that so far Boys' Latin has made great strides with the Math program, as today the school had a meeting with a third-party support provider who has agreed to help support the Math program for both the middle and high schools. Mr. Hardy describes how Boys' Latin wants to see all of its middle school students leaving the 8th grade having had Algebra I, and all of its high school students to advance to, at a minimum, Pre-Calculus before graduation. Mr. Hardy states that these skills will help ensure college admission and matriculation for Boys' Latin graduates. Mr. Hardy notes the benefits of virtual learning, which Boys' Latin will not abandon once the school returns to fulltime in-school teaching. Boys' Latin will be drafting new curricula for all three programs.

Mr. Hardy then gives an update on Boys' Latin's middle school, which is coming together nicely. Mr. Hardy describes how the Interim Principal is extremely experienced, and has worked well with her heir apparent. Health and safety measures recently implemented have held up well, and the data received from these new policies has informed Boys' Latin decision making along the way. Mr. Hardy describes how the alumni presence at the school is felt, from Mr. Tucker joining the board, hiring an alumni social worker at the middle school, and employing three alumni teaching residents along with five alumni teaching fellows.

Mr. Hardy then draws the board's attention to the program model for the third trimester of the current school year. Mr. Hardy explains how Boys' Latin sent out parent surveys back in January to get feedback on the current program model. Of the 171 parent responses, 55 percent preferred to continue with the virtual model and 64 percent

wanted to go back to the classroom with 50 percent wanting to see in-person sports and extracurricular activities to resume. Of the 63 staff responses, 75 percent preferred to continue with the virtual model and 65 percent had concerns about resuming in-person instruction. Based on these responses, Mr. Hardy announces that Boys' Latin will stay 100 percent virtual for the third trimester, which runs from March 5 to June 18.

Mr. Wyatt adds that the parent surveys indicated there is a level of comfort with going back to in-person teaching next year, but Boys' Latin will not be making that decision until later this year. Boys' Latin wants to keep what parents and students think is right at heart, which may lead to differences between the faculty and the school down the line.

There is motion to continue virtual learning through the third trimester and remainder of the 2020-2021 school year, which is moved by Mr. Conwell and seconded by Mr. Oehrle. The motion passes unanimously.

Mr. Hardy then gives an overview of the updated School Health and Safety Plan. Though Boys' Latin will continue to be 100 percent virtual for the remainder of this school year, there will be some essential staff physically at the school in the fields of technology, school supplies, meal distribution, and standardized testing. To support the students struggling with virtual learning, Boys' Latin will seek to open a School Access Center in the upcoming Third Trimester. This center will consist of approximately 45 middle school students divided into groups of 10-12 students who are assigned to a classroom and monitored by an apprentice. Staff on site will include the interim principal, assistant principal, student support officer, and the school nurse.

Continuing, Mr. Hardy explains how Boys' Latin seeks to resume a limited in-person athletics program to increase engagement and opportunities for its students. All students and staff who participate in this 15-week program will be tested for COVID-19 twice per week, which is recommended by the Rockefeller Foundation. Tests will be administered by the school nurse and results are returned in 24-48 hours. Mr. Hardy states that testing costs \$12 per test, which will bring the approximate overall cost of testing for the program to \$230,000. Boys' Latin believes this to be a good investment, and will be providing masks and other PPE to students and staff.

Mr. Hardy notes that nothing is guaranteed, and that Boys' Latin is trying to ensure that all students can do as well as they can. Ms. Wells adds that she thinks this is a great idea, as a lot of families she has spoken to have been looking for initiatives like this. Ms. Wells believes parents will be very grateful for this program. Mr. Hardy adds that this program will need to be staffed properly for it to work, and transportation will be another item to sort out.

There is a discussion on transportation, the costs of testing, risks, and logistics related to the proposed School Access Center.

There is a motion in which Boys' Latin seeks approval of the updated Phased School Reopening Health and Safety Plan Template to be implemented effective immediately and submitted to the Pennsylvania Department of Education and the school's authorizer, the School District of Philadelphia, as required, also to include the flexibility

to change these programs as needed without requiring additional board consent, which is moved by Mr. Conwell and seconded by Mr. Yakulis. The motion passes unanimously.

Mr. Hardy concludes his presentation.

III. Parent Liaison Report: Elaine Wells

Ms. Wells begins by letting the board know that she was asked to be a partner with U.C. Green, who performs tree-planting services around Philadelphia to further green initiatives. If Boys' Latin is interested, the school can get free yard trees in the months of April and May. Ms. Wells also joined the Philly Parents Coalition, which is a group of parents from all types of schools who provide support to one another during the pandemic and beyond. Ms. Wells describes how a month or so ago, the coalition held a mental health Zoom forum, and invited some Boys' Latin parents. Ms. Wells received some great feedback from these parents, as the coalition had mental health professionals and yoga instructors on hand to give tips on everyday stress management by providing exercises and resources. Those parents have requested to attend another session next month, which Ms. Wells describes as a great experience for parents.

Ms. Wells concludes her presentation.

IV. Board Committee Reports

a. Finance and Development: Colleen Smith

Ms. Smith states that financials are currently in good shape. Ms. Smith explains how the Finance Committee met last week to review the statements in full and everything is positive: Boys' Latin is currently in a solid financial position, with strong cash on hand. Ms. Smith states that the largest revenue driver is enrollment. Boys' Latin started the year over-enrolled and will likely pull stronger enrollment numbers than budgeted.

Ms. Smith announces that Development is at \$1.58 million in contributions, which exceeds its annual goal. Expenses such as the cost of operating the school is less than budgeted, and less than in previous years, due to virtual learning. The Finance Committee left flexibility in areas such as athletics, extracurricular activities, and technology in the event any of these pursuits resume.

Mr. Wyatt commends the Development Committee for its efforts, as numbers are strong. Ms. Smith thanks Mr. Hardy for his added fundraising successes.

Ms. Smith notes that the budgeting process for the 2021-2022 school year will begin this month. By the next board meeting the Finance Committee will have a solid first draft of the budget for this next school year. Mr. Hardy adds that it will be tricky drafting this future budget because Boys' Latin does not know what its needs will be next year following this pandemic-year.

Ms. Smith concludes her presentation.

b. Facilities: *Joe Conwell*

Mr. Conwell begin by delivering an overview of future middle school campus projects. Mr. Conwell explains that there will be a strong focus on creating an outdoor space at the middle school, which has been a priority of the administration since the school opened. Additional priorities will be to renovate and make the second and potentially third floors of the Fine Arts Building accessible to students, as currently only the first floor is utilized.

Mr. Hardy describes how Boys' Latin now has a strong team over at the middle school, which has looked at what needs to be done to utilize the campus space more efficiently. Mr. Hardy explains how additional floors in the Fine Arts Building could be used for small group instruction, individual student work, and classrooms. As of now, students only have use of the parking lot in terms of outdoor space. That is 300 early teens kept inside all day with limited space to be outside for exercise. Mr. Hardy details one option to put a bubble over the parking lot, which was not feasible. The next idea is to knock down the church, and create the space for the bubble there. If Boys' Latin does not opt for a bubble, the church area would be turned into a parking lot or field.

Mr. Conwell directs the board to an aerial photograph of the campus. Mr. Conwell describes how in the past 3-4 years Boys' Latin has contemplated the conversion of the church building into a gymnasium or multi-purpose building. This option turned out to be expensive and unrealistic as the utility of the space is compromised. Mr. Conwell reminds the board that two years ago Boys' Latin made an effective appeal to the Philadelphia Historical Society to avoid this church building being designated on a historical register. Boys' Latin currently reserves the right to raise the building.

Mr. Conwell states that the Facilities Committee is currently evaluating whether Boys' Latin should demolish the building and create an open site. Mr. Conwell describes how that church site is 12,500 square feet of land, which would be a huge additional to just the parking lot which the student have now. There are three options following demolition: 1) create a parking lot and put fence around it; 2) create a field using either grass or synthetic turf field (which is what most schools use); or 3) installing the bubble that Mr. Hardy noted. Mr. Conwell states that the decision the committee has come to thus far is that Boys' Latin is better off getting rid of the church and then it can figure out what the right surface option is later. The facilities committee believes there are no scenarios in which demolishing the church does not improve the value of the real estate and significantly improve the facility as it relates to serving the students' needs. The facilities committee thinks this is the right decision and wanted to bring the idea to the board for discussion. Mr. Conwell notes the projected cost of the project would be between \$1-2 million.

There is a discussion on the cost and what it entails, and whether there could be hazardous materials in the rubble. Mr. Conwell states that the option for demolition into a parking lot is the lower cost end at approximately \$1 million.

Mr. Hardy adds that the longer Boys' Latin leaves the church up, the more the future cost goes up in terms of demolition. Mr. Conwell adds that storm water management costs would go down following demolition.

Moving on to the Fine Arts Building, Mr. Conwell explains how the building is currently renovated for first floor student use only which includes an arts center with a kiln and music room. The building is functioning well for those uses. Mr. Conwell describes how the entire second and third floors are not useable due to access since Boys' Latin does not have an elevator in that building. Boys' Latin would need to construct an elevator shaft on the exterior of building, at the far end, to create access which would be the major cost of the project. Mr. Conwell details the significant amount of work to be done on those top floors, which include bathroom renovations, flooring, etc. The committee has no financial estimates right now, but anticipates it would be a similar cost to the church demolition project.

Mr. Conwell concludes his presentation.

c. CEO Search Committee: *Wes Wyatt*

Mr. Wyatt begins by thanking his fellow members of the CEO Search Committee that have worked hard to get Boys' Latin to where it is today. Boys' Latin has gone into the market and received a few resumes that the committee will digest. Mr. Wyatt states that the committee will receive weekly updates from the search firm Boys' Latin retained, along with progress reports that detail the vetting of these candidates. The committee is ahead of schedule for an end of April/early-May CEO selection. Mr. Wyatt describes how the committee has drafted a solid job description that is now in the market place, and the process is underway. Ms. Smith adds that stakeholder meetings will be taking place soon between faculty, students, alumni, and parents to make sure their input is heard and part of the search process.

Mr. Wyatt concludes his presentation.

d. Education Committee: *Steve Kempf*

Mr. Kempf begins by explaining how the Education Committee is in its infancy, and currently in the process of defining what the goals and objectives of the committee will be. Mr. Kempf describes how the committee will be given the task of overseeing the markers that will predict and indicate how Boys' Latin is achieving its goals and mission. Attendance is an example of one of those major markers that this committee will be tracking closely. The education committee is comprised of six people and will be working with staff members, faculty, and board members. Before the next board meeting the committee will draft a description of the committee's role and determine which markers can predict success for students to make sure Boy's Latin is on the right path.

Mr. Kempf concludes his presentation.

Mr. Wyatt thanks everyone for attending and appreciates everyone's time and commitment to the school.

The meeting adjourns at 5:36 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Patrick South, Secretary