

Board of Trustees Meeting May 24, 2023 (Virtual) Marion P. Thomas Charter High School of Culinary and Performing Arts 125 Sussex Avenue, Newark, NJ 07103

May 24, 2023 | 5:00 PM ET Zoom:

https://us02web.zoom.us/i/87205682710?pwd=dWh4bE5aWCtkWk9PcThPSWdLbVZZUT09

1. CALL TO ORDER - Open Public Meetings Act - 5:08 PM

• The New Jersey Open Public Meetings Act ("Act") was enacted to ensure the right of the public to have advance notice of, and to attend meetings of public bodies at which any business affecting their interests is discussed or acted upon. In accordance with the provisions of this Act, the Marion P Thomas Charter School Board of Trustees has caused notice of this meeting to be advertised by having the date, time, and place there of posted on the district's website (www.mptcs.org), in the office of the Clerk of the City of Newark, and was published in the Star-Ledger in February 2023.

2. ROLL CALL

Board Member	Present	Absent	Board Member	Present	Absent
Vincent Rouse	N		Julio Valdivieso	N	
Dashay Carter	N		Allan Boomer	V	
Briana Gilchrist	V		Toni Ince	\searrow	
Dr. Princess Towe	V				

Non-Voting Board Members Present									
Elijah Griffiths (Board Secretary/Administrator)	Tina Jalloh (Board Attorney)								
Angela Mincy, Chief School Administrator/Superintendent	Kristina Haugen (School Business Administrator)								



3. CHAIRMAN'S UPDATE

• Chairman Rouse gave an update.

4. SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE

- Abbaleo gave a presentation update including different team member updates.
 - Lavinia Group Presentation
 - QUESTIONS
 - Am I to understand this correctly, you utilize the science of reading approach that is grounded in phonics that North Star Academy uses? (Valdivieso)
 - Absolutely. (Stephanie Keemoy)
 - The success stories are very encouraging, but it seems like the success stories already had really good starts. How do you handle less successful stories? Are there examples of schools who have had less successful results and what was missing there? And what can we do to best ensure success? (Valdivieso)
 - I work with 18 different partners this year as a partnership manager and there are none who are not gonna have strong outcomes this year. There are some who will have less growth than others. I think the question you are asking is how can we ensure our schools are the ones that have the most growth, I would say leader investment really matters. The more investment we have from leaders the more traction we are going to make and the more growth the leaders are going to make in their practice. (Stephanie Keemoy)
 - My last question would be when you were approached to work with Marian P., what attracted you to our school? (Valdivieso)
 - The New Jersey Children's Foundation speaks very highly of this network. They really encouraged us to partner with you guys and told us the board and school administrative team was very supportive. We had heard that there was a lot of transition but that everyone was very optimistic about the road ahead. Everyone was noted as eager and willing to put in the hard work, so it sounded like a very good fit and is the type of partner we look for. We also have been working more in New Jersey so our consultants really understand the complex nature of the standards and post pandemic world so I think we are really well equipped to support your students because of that. (Julia Pockros)
 - I will just add that we started working in several schools in Newark, the community really matters to us. We have new employees who came from high performing schools in Newark now assisting us.. Kyle who works at the Children's Foundation stated there is a real opportunity because people are supportive and willing to make changes, and that is the people we like to partner with and how we see the most growth. (Stephanie Keemoy)
 - I would like to hear about some of the secret sauce in your methodology particularly involving motivation to get students to show up on time and put in the effort. I know there are things the school administration can do. I just wanted to know if there was any guidance behind increasing the school readiness of our scholars? (Boomer)
 - I feel like you are asking about how we can make it so all of our scholars are truly engaged and excited and invested to learn everyday, is that what you are asking? (Stephanie Keemoy)



- Yes, absolutely especially when you are dealing with folks who have systemic issues with readiness for school. (Boomer)
 - I think the answer I have is simple, yet very hard to do. The simple answer is the number 1 way we get kids excited, invested, and motivated to be at school is to make them excited about what they are learning. The content drives investment and whether our students look forward to school. If the teachers are not ready to show up everyday and make the students excited about the content then we will not see the levels of engagement and investment we want to have. We see our job is making sure teachers are constant experts and teachers are excited. That is number 1. The other thing we do is help teachers really develop a bar for students. We set a bar very high from what we expect from students, and I've found students are more invested when the bar is high and they feel the adults around them truly believe in them and feel that they can reach those heights. Our secret sauce is we set really high expectations for kids, we help teachers have that bar, we help teachers become content experts so students love what they are learning regardless of what it is. (Stephanie Keemoy)
 - The other element I would add there is our methodology around intellectual preparation and work study. These are two practices we are going to introduce from day 1. One is the intellectual prep process on how we prepare for a lesson. It means intellectually preparing to be in front of kids, making sure as adults we understand our level of mastery, we know the pathway there, we anticipate student misconceptions, and think about different techniques and engagement strategies. We are going to have teachers consider all of that as they prepare for their lessons daily. The other element is student work study, so we are going to encourage and model and bring in protocol to studying student work on a daily basis. That is really how we see a rapid change of results when teachers are taking the artifact of learning, finding any misconceptions and taking the time to address it the next day. Those are two elements you will definitely see in place next year. (Julia Pockros)
- I am hearing a lot of great things about this group, one of my inquiries is that the parents play
 a pivotal role in this process. How do you become visible to the parents? (Ince)
 - I will say in most of our partnerships we are invisible. We are an invisible partner to our parents, but our presence will be felt. I think that you will notice the difference is, my hypothesis is you will see an increase in more communication, you will see more information coming home about how your students are performing, you will more concretely know how your students are doing in school but that communication will not come from me, but will come from the school. We will just be in the background helping those systems and structures happen. (Stephanie Keemoy)
 - We intend to really build the capacity of the school leaders and educators so eventually we do not need the Lavinia group. We hope to create a pipeline so we will have the experts in each school from all the information they learn on how to structure the processes developed with the Lavinia group. With the new systems in our schools, we are going to really learn on the Lavinia group to provide the best processes and structures so it's one less thing the administrators need to develop as staffing changes are happening.



We need everyone to buy into this to be successful. If approved, we will be kicking this off within the coming weeks. (Abbaleo)

- I was going to say with our new leadership in the building, that bringing in the Lavinia group to be able to start fresh is what everyone is looking forward to. We are excited about the opportunity and what the Lavinia group will be able to bring to our district. (Mickens)
- I am excited about the building capacity part of this, not only will you have building leaders but peer collaboration which will have the teachers assisting each other which is key. I think we are moving completely in the right direction. At the end of this will have our own experts in the building which is great. (Towe)
- This board has invested in a lot of additional resources, has anything we have invested in jump out to you as a good investment that works well with your synergy? As you strategies we appreciate to know about any new items that would be beneficial to invest in and any items that we have invested in that could have a diminishing return. (Valdivieso)
 - We did not get in depth with Stephanie and Julia about the curriculum. (Abbaleo)
 - One of the first steps is to really understand all the pieces in place and conduct our own needs assessment. At that point, we will make recommendations based on what we find. We are very accomplished for schools that work with different partners, we want to work with any other partners in the building to make sure there are no competing messages. (Julia Pockros)
- My last question, does working with charter schools allow you to be daring with your recommendations? Maybe daring isn't the right term. Does being a charter school allow you to work in a different way to produce better results? (Valdivieso)
 - Charters and districts have very different barriers. One thing that makes me a little
 nervous with charter schools is we move too quickly and chase the shiny objects instead
 of doubling down on what works. We have seen tremendous work with both, it's not
 necessary about the structure of the school but comes down to more the investment of
 the leaders and willingness of the team to work side by side with us. (Julia Pockros)

5. COMMITTEE REPORTS

Personnel Committee

- The personnel committee met on May 24th, the meeting was called to order at 5:09PM. We went over our vacancies at that time we had 78 vacancies. That was due to non-renews, new positions, bring security in house, STEAM greater population requiring an additional teacher. We also added another PreK at both campuses. We don't want you to be alarmed by that number, we already have people in the pipeline. It is said by the end of June and even July we will have filled at least half of those vacancies. There are 31 vacancies at STEAM, 25 at PAC, and 23 at the high school. We had 23 non-renews, many of them due to those who did not meet the job requirements. If they receive their certifications by July 1st, they would be moved to our renewal list if we haven't hired for that position already. We had 188 renewals which is better than last year. Last year we had 137 renewals. We are asking that you vote in the affirmative on both items. K. Grundy will be providing medical assistance for the campus. (Carter)
 - QUESTIONS
 - Is this the first time we have an actual physician on contract? (Valdivieso)



- I think we had one before. (Carter)
- Yes, we had one in years past. We are required by law to have one appointed annually, so you will see the 22-23 contract is effective May 15 of this year and there is a contract for the 23-24 school year. (Abbaleo)
- Just to answer Valdivieso's question, we have had doctors on contract in the past.
 (Mickens)
- Just to look at what they cover, it seems to be mostly consultation. The school nurses are the first line of defense and examining students. There is a line for referral. So they actually have the ability to say if a student is sick, doesn't know why, would that scholar get seen by a nurse and referred to that physician? Are there options for students in that instance? (Valdivieso)
 - They're there for the nurse to provide a consultation but it is more so in case a child needs to hold a prescription, the school has to have a physician so the school can hold the prescription. So in case we need epi pens, we need a physician to sign off on those because nurses can not order them. It is more for medical administration. (Haugen)
 - As far as school readiness, one of the main things is health which impacts attendance.
 We're worried about pushing attendance, while also making sure kids afflicted are looked after. The availability of meaningful health services to our students could be important.
 (Valdivieso)

Operations & Finance Committee

- Operations & Finance
 - First we went through the non renewal information. We went into a bit more depth on facilities. We talked about the sidewalk being done to our satisfaction. The electrician's work is almost being completed in the auditorium in PAC academy. We spent a good amount of time talking about Aramark food service to get a report of how well they did food service and about discrepancy in money not received. We paused their next payment until we heard about this incident. We went through our reconciliation report. We took a dip in our cash from We all approved the reports to be presented today. We had two meetings. Aramark states they were properly compensated and wrong data set being used since given. We asked for a written report for how well they did. We voted internally and decided it would be good to proceed with the next payment for Aramark. (Boomer)
 - QUESTIONS
 - Do you agree with their explanation from Aramark? (Valdivieso)
 - Yes, we agreed with it. We are planning to send the final report back to the auditors for review. They highlighted some of the ways they actually out performed their contract. (Boomer)
 - We are waiting for the final report. We were satisfied with the explanation and have plans in place for moving forward. (Haugen)
 - We also talked about our dissatisfaction. They did also take accountability to make sure that no surprises happen again. (Boomer)

Curriculum & Instruction Committee

 The curriculum committee met on May 9th, myself, Dr. Towe, Ms. Ince, and Dr. Moore were in attendance. The reports have included a lot of information, so the only thing I will add is that the New Jersey Children Foundation is awarding us \$150,000 toward this contract with Levinia. If you look at the Levinia contract you will see it is still being marked up by Jalloh because we are finalizing



the terms as far as content and number of visits we worked through already. Only other thing is field trips, most of them are end of year celebrations. One is sending our middle school students to our highschool so they can view our culinary program, and sending our English learners to Ellis Island. (Abbaleo)

Culture & Climate + Alumni Committee

- The committee met on May 9th at 5PM. Those in attendance were myself, Dr. Towe, Mr. Valdivieso, Ms. Ince, Mr. Abbaleo, Mr. Mickens, Ms. Murray. We went over a number of topics, the first of which is we will be having Teach for America teach at our school this summer. We also are going to have mediation training. Ms. Murray has been working with the state bar foundation and they offered to do this training at the village. They will train students to help their peers and even adults in mediation. They will also provide mentoring. We talked about our highschool voter registration to help students understand the importance of voting. We also had arbor day at the village where students spruced up buildings with plants. We talked about mental health support and pilot programs. We had a fundraiser for mental health. The pilot tutoring program will consist of 9th graders who will be tutored in math. The incentive is to have them have a stronger math and STEM foundation. They will receive money from the foundation for attending those programs. Mr. Mickens attended an event where two of our scholars were honored. We are so proud of our scholars and all they are accomplishing. We also have an all star after school program starting. The after school program will be for 4th - 8th graders and will be for the full school year. The program will be grant funded offered for 75 students to participate. We are vetting potential candidates for our Kean Scholar program. They are selected in 8th grade and get to earn credit from Kean. We also went over our suspension and HIB report: 3 students suspended from PAC in May and 1 from the high school. We will be MPT Foundation awarding some scholarships and our parents awards coming up. (Gilchrist)
- We are proud of our first cohort of Kean scholars who are wrapping up their first year. They have successfully passed all 4 college classes and both of them will be earning 12 college credits. (Mickens)
- QUESTIONS
 - Were there any statistics on college acceptance we can share with the board? (Boomer)
 - We are compiling that data for our next board meeting. (Abbaleo)

Enrollment Ad Hoc Committee

• No report.

Executive Committee

No report



6. RESOLUTIONS

I. <u>2023-5-24-A: Approval of the May 24, 2023 BOT Meeting Agenda</u>

Voting Members	Motion	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent	Voting Members	Motion	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent
Vincent Rouse	\searrow	V				Julio Valdivieso		\			
Dashay Carter		V				Allan Boomer		K			
Briana Gilchrist		V				Toni Ince		K			
Dr. Princess Towe**		✓									

Discussion:

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II. 2023-5-24-B: Approval of the April 26, 2023 BOT Meeting Minutes

Voting Members	Motion	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent	Voting Members	Motion	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent
Vincent Rouse**		V				Julio Valdivieso		N			
Dashay Carter		N.				Allan Boomer		V			
Briana Gilchrist		K				Toni Ince		\checkmark			
Dr. Princess Towe		∀									

Discussion:

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III. 2023-5-24-C: Approval of May 23' Personnel Report

III. 2023-3-24-C. Approval of May 23 Fersoniler Report											
Voting Members	Motion	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent	Voting Members	Motion	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent
Vincent Rouse		N				Julio Valdivieso		\			
Dashay Carter	\vee	\				Allan Boomer		K			
Briana Gilchrist		V				Toni Ince**		K			
Dr. Princess Towe		\vee									

Discussion:

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^{**:} Motion Seconded



2023-5-24-D: Approval of School Physician Contract(s) - K. Grundy IV. Abstain Absent Abstain Absent **Voting Members** Motion Voting Members | Motion No Yes No Yes Vincent Rouse $\overline{\mathbf{A}}$ Julio Valdivieso $\overline{\mathbf{A}}$ Dashay Carter $\overline{\mathbf{A}}$ П Allan Boomer ☐ Toni Ince** Briana Gilchrist $\overline{\mathbf{A}}$ \square Dr. Princess Towe $\overline{\mathbf{A}}$ Discussion: 2023-5-24-E: Approval of May 2023 Finance Report Abstain Absent Voting Members Motion Voting Members Motion Yes No Yes No Abstain Absent Vincent Rouse** Julio Valdivieso \square Allan Boomer Dashay Carter $\overline{\mathbf{A}}$ $\overline{\mathbf{A}}$ \square Briana Gilchrist Toni Ince \square Dr. Princess Towe $\overline{\mathbf{A}}$ Discussion: 2023-5-24-F: Approval of Alliance Pest Control Contract Abstain Absent Abstain Absent Motion Voting Members | Motion **Voting Members** Yes No Yes No Vincent Rouse $\overline{\mathbf{A}}$ ☐ Julio Valdivieso** Dashay Carter $\overline{\mathbf{A}}$ $\overline{\mathbf{A}}$ Allan Boomer $\overline{\mathbf{A}}$ Briana Gilchrist $\overline{\mathbf{A}}$ Toni Ince $\overline{\mathbf{A}}$ Dr. Princess Towe $\overline{\mathbf{A}}$

Discussion:

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**: Motion Seconded



VII. 2023-5-24-F1: Approval of Aramark Food Service Contract Renewal 23-24 Abstain Absent Abstain Absent Motion Yes Voting Members Motion No **Voting Members** No Yes Vincent Rouse $\overline{\mathbf{A}}$ Julio Valdivieso Dashay Carter $\overline{\mathbf{A}}$ \Box П Allan Boomer $\overline{\mathbf{A}}$ $\overline{\mathbf{A}}$ ☐ Toni Ince Briana Gilchrist $\overline{\mathbf{A}}$ $\overline{\mathbf{A}}$ Dr. Princess Towe** $\overline{\mathbf{A}}$ Discussion: I just want to say that I am voting in the affirmative with a view to revisit next year. I was satisfied with their response. We are always on the lookout for diversity and want to make sure we are lined up properly for the next school year. (Boomer) I've had reservations about this company, but plan to vote yes after looking into this matter about holding the company accountable. (Valdivieso) VIII. 2023-5-24-G: Approval of Field Trips **Voting Members** Motion Yes No Abstain Absent Voting Members Motion Yes No Abstain Absent Vincent Rouse** $\overline{\mathbf{A}}$ ☐ Julio Valdivieso $\overline{\mathbf{A}}$ $\overline{\mathbf{A}}$ \Box Dashay Carter Allan Boomer \square Briana Gilchrist П Toni Ince П Dr. Princess Towe $\overline{\mathbf{A}}$ П **Discussion:** IX. 2023-5-24-H: Approval of Lavinia Group Contract + NJCF Grant Agreement Abstain Absent Abstain Absent **Voting Members** Motion Yes No Voting Members Motion No Yes Vincent Rouse Julio Valdivieso \square \Box Ш Allan Boomer Dashay Carter $\overline{\mathbf{A}}$ \square ☐ Toni Ince** Briana Gilchrist $\overline{\mathbf{A}}$ **V** Dr. Princess Towe $\overline{\mathbf{A}}$ $\overline{\mathbf{A}}$



Discussion:

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- 7. PUBLIC COMMENT It is now time for public participation. To engage in public comment, all speakers must register via the district's website no later than 5 calendar days prior to the advertised meeting by 5:00 PM ET. Please state your name and address for the record. All speakers will have 3-minutes to address the BOT.
 - No registered speakers
- 8. CLOSED SESSION 6:49 PM
- 9. CLOSING REMARKS FROM BOARD CHAIR:

Thank you to all for your hard work and dedication to the village. Have a great evening! Committees thank you for meeting.

10. MOTION TO ADJOURN: 6:49 PM ET Carter- Towe**

Respectfully submitted at: 5/24/2023 Submitted by: Elijah D. Griffiths