

# **MINUTES**



Marion P. Thomas Charter School Board of Trustees  
**Minutes of Scheduled Meeting**  
**October 22, 2018**

**I. Call to order**

The Chair G. Collins called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

**II. Roll Call**

Femi Amorin, the Board Secretary, conducted a roll call of members present. A quorum was confirmed for the meeting.

**Members Present**

Greg Collins

Vincent Rouse

David Blount

Khaatim Sherrer El

Lesley Leslie – Joined by Phone

Dean Taylor Joined by Phone

Rev. Ronald Slaughter

Reginald Petty

Michelle Jones

Tyisha Kidd-Parent board member

Briana Gilchrist-Alumnae board member joined by phone

Misha Simmonds- Interim Chief School Administrator

Femi Amorin – SBA /Board Secretary

**Excused**

Craig Rogers

**Other**

T. Jalloh- Board Counsel

M. Fletcher – Director of Human Resources

Damon White – Director of Operations

Michele Griffin – Chief Communications & Engagement Officer

Rev. Garvey Ince – Executive Director – Friends of MPTCS

**III. ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

The Agenda for the meeting was adopted after a amendment to include a report/updates from the Chair of the Board.

Moved: D. Blount

Second: V. Rouse

**ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

The minutes from the September 24, 2018 meeting were adopted with necessary corrections.

**Moved:** V. Rouse

**Second:** D. Blount

**IV. OPEN PUBLIC FORUM**

- V. The Family Liaison Officer gave updates on attendance matters. The School achieved 80% perfect attendance in the month of September. He noted that there is a direct correlation between attendance and good grades.

**VI. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS**

**1) Community Engagement Report**

The report was presented by Ms. Griffin - - Chief Communications and Community Engagement Officer (CCCEO). She reported that the School participated in Breast Cancer awareness with local communities to raise funds and awareness in the community.

**2) Interim Chief School Administrator Report**

The Interim Chief School Administrator (ICSA), Mr. Misha Simmonds, provided the board with updates on the progress in the following areas:

Updates on Day 1 High School Uniform Incident Updates. He reported that the leadership of the school continues to respond to NJDOE queries prompted by the request of Education Law Center to investigate.

The ICSA provided updates on the Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying Policy and reported on the self-assessment on HIB.

He reported that on Tuesday afternoon 10/16 a bomb threat via a phone was received by STEAM Academy. He noted that several other charter schools also received threats later that week. He explained responses of the school from the incident and lessons learned on how to respond in the future.

The ICSA discussed with the board the status of the plan by the school: Policy # 3517 on Metal Detectors. The policy authorizes the use of walk-through and hand held metal detectors, but was never implemented. A committee has been set up to address concerns of staff and would want a buy in from the Board before it continues its work.

The ICSA also provide updates on the October 15, Enrollment Count. The School enrolled 95% of its target allowed by Charter – 1592 as against 1675.

The ICSA provided updates on the Universal Enrollment (Newark) Enrolls. He noted that the New superintendent of Newark Public Schools (NPS) made a strong commitment to continuing the program. However, at the same time he gutted the enrollment team leaving questions on the capacity of NPS to handle the program. Charter Schools are currently negotiating with NPS on the form and shape of the program in 2019/2020 enrollment.

The ICSA provided a report that appeared to fault decision of the then Senior Leadership and the Board to use its surplus accumulated over the years to prepare the School for expansion. The plan envisaged would increase enrollment from 1,430 to 2,250 by 2023 and provides enough feeders into its high school through the creation of four elementary schools. The plan also created an in-house Child Study Team to handle its increasing special education students which rose from 58 students in 2015 to 164 by 2017. The then Senior Leaders also introduced programs and instructional tools expected to improve academic performance of the school. This resulted in spending about \$6 million from its surplus within two years beyond annual funding from NJDOE to fund the plan.

The school's budget for 2018-2019, approved and submitted in spring 2018, projected that the school would just break even. He pointed out that his budget, however, had several flaws that hid a real deficit over \$2M, continuing the trend of the past 2 years:

- **Overprojected Enrollment & Revenues (~\$900K):** While the budget tried to be conservative and include revenues for only 96% of maximum enrollment, our actual enrollment as of October 15 is 94%, and our paid enrollment is 93%.
- **Undercounted Expenses: (~\$1M):** Major expenses were undercounted, not reflecting historical trends, including Workmen's Comp (assigned \$265K when actually and historically it has been closer to \$500K) and rents (about \$740K more than expected due to need to subsidize sublets, pay for temporary space, and higher than expected rent to cover debt service on purchased buildings).

- **Missing Salaries (~\$500K):** While some staffing was cut, particularly in the area of interventionists and coaches, other areas grew. Furthermore, several major salaries were not included due to lack of interdepartmental communication.

He noted that efforts have been made since July 2018 to address this deficit, including cutting the summer program, not filling in certain vacancies, postponing a renovation project, and freezing spending on non-essential items including field trips, after school activities, and food for adults. Nevertheless, an estimated \$1M deficit still remains:

The ICOSA came up with a planned Reduction in Force that was approved by the board in its entirety.

### 3) **Friends of Marion P Thomas Charter School**

The Executive Director of Friends of MPTCS, Rev. Ince, as per the request of the Board presented Friends of MPTCS Facilities update as of date. He also informed the Board that the renovation of Burnet Street will be ready on or before November 2, 2018. Final walk through by parents would take place before the move in date. He informed the Board that Friends of MPTCS has requested for more information from the City of Newark on South 9<sup>th</sup> Street parking lot.

### 4) **Operations**

The Director of Operations (DOO) Damon White provided members with key notifications and submissions and updates of Safety Facilities and technology units of MPTCS operations.

#### **Priority Notifications/Submissions:**

- NJ Smart SID Upload
  - Oct 15<sup>th</sup> Snapshot submitted – 0 errors.
  - Uploading of new scholars into NJ Smart completed with no errors.
- Charter School Enrollment (CHE)
  - CHE opens 10/26 thru 11/2 for data management (updates, verification for OOD students)

#### **Technology:**

- Support for the fall administration of NWEA MAP testing has concluded.
- Internet and FAX capabilities have been re-installed at the Burnet St. location. Remainder of equipment will be pulled from Norfolk St. next month to complete the install.
- Smartboard installation will commence on Monday.

- Currently repairing the existing cameras at Burnet St. Additional cameras are currently being installed.
- Arrangements currently being made with Canon to relocate copiers from Norfolk St. to Burnet St.

### **Safety:**

- MPTCS STEAM Academy received a bomb threat on 10.16.18. Law enforcement personnel reported to the school and swept the facility with detection canines. The building was deemed safe for occupancy by law enforcement personnel.
- Safety Drill Report (*October - Please see the attached for drills conducted per campus to date*)
- The Burnet facility is currently being audited for any additional security measures necessary.
- We have not received the revised Uniform State Memorandum of Agreement Between Education and Law Enforcement Officials (MOA) for the 2018 – 2019 school year. The 2018 – 2019 review of this document will take place upon receiving the revised document.
- Director of Security, Daniel Christofferson, is currently attending the training for School Safety Specialist.

### **Food Services:**

- Health inspections have been conducted on SELECT, STEAM & PAC Academies.

### **Facilities:**

- PAC Academy – Meeting with moving company 10.23.18.
- Fire inspection conducted at STEAM – Facilities team is currently addressing areas of concern.
- Chimney repair at STEAM is nearing completion and the boiler is now operational.
- Automated Control System (Boiler – STEAM Bldg. A) is not operational and needs to be replaced.
- HVAC work at SELECT scheduled for 10.19.18 and 10.22.18.

### **4) Chairman Updates**

The Char reported that negotiations with the Union on the Collective Bargaining Agreement will resume in November 21, 2018.

The Chair also announced that the Board has been able to secure the services of the Former Acting Superintendent of NPS, Mr. Robert Gregory, as the New Superintendent of the School. He announced that he is expected to start on November 5, 2018. Robert Gregory, who was present at the meeting, in his acceptance speech, said he felt highly honored to be selected for the position. He promised to work with the board at making sure the school attained its lofty goals-in the Community. He promised to present his 60 Day entry plan at the next meeting of the Board

## **VII. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **1) Personnel Committee**

The Chair of the Personnel Committee David Blount presented the personnel committee report concerning new hires, promotions, separations, leaves of absences, and any employees on workers compensation.

The Personnel Committee reported that there are 16 vacancies yet to be filled. He provided the breakdown as follows - Grades PreK to 8: 9 vacancies. High School: 4 vacancies, and Central Office: 3 vacancies.

The Personnel Chair reported that MPTEA and MPTCS have begun mediation for the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA). The next mediation meeting is scheduled for November 29, 2018. He also reported that current Health Insurance Renewal is 39%. The broker is still negotiating with the provider to reduce the rate increase. Open Enrollment and Benefits Fair is scheduled for November 30, 2018.

### **2) Finance Committee**

The Finance Committee report was presented by the School Business Administrator. The bill list for October 2018, in the amount of \$3,058,081.12, was presented to the Board for approval. The SBA also presented the Board Secretary for the months of September 2018

### **3 Legal Updates**

The Board Attorney provided members with updates on the following:

- The Chad School Foundation vs MPTCS
- YJ vs MPTCS

### **VI. CLOSED SESSION**

**The meeting moved to close session to discuss the following:**

Moved by: K. Sherrer El

Seconded by: D. Blount

### **OCTOBER 2018 RESOLUTIONS**

#### **FINANCE**

##### **10-18-1**

The Board of Trustees of Marion P. Thomas Charter School approves the bill list for the month of October 2018 for \$ 3,058,081.12 **Approved**

##### **10-18-2**

The Board of Trustees of Marion P. Thomas Charter School approves the Board Secretary Report for the month of September 2018. **Approved**

##### **10-18-3**

The Board of Trustees of Marion P. Thomas Charter School approves the Treasurer of School Monies report for the month of September, 2018. **Approved**



**HUMAN RESOURCES**

**10-18-4**

The Board of Trustees of Marion P. Thomas Charter School approves the following New Hires for the 2018-2019 School Year. **Approved**

New Hires

**\*= awaiting clearance from Criminal History Review Unit**

Last Name	First Name	Position	Salary	Effective Date	Prorated Salary	10 OR 12 Months
Carter	Mackeel	Teacher - Math	\$58,725.36	10/08/2018	\$54,320.96	10
Deramus	Alonzo	Security Officer	\$21.55 hr	*		10
Jean	Wilnor	Security Officer	\$21.55 hr	*		10
Mosquera	Angel	Security Officer	\$21.55 hr	*		10
Reed	Tayler	Teacher - Science	\$56,004.00	*		10
Anderson	Shanice	Instructional Assistant	\$34,894.00	*		10
Lawrence Hayes	Cheryl	Teacher - Pre-K	\$64,585.00	*		10
Brightman	Makeda	Security Officer	\$21.55 hr	*		10
Hall	Tatyana	Classroom Aide	\$20,905	10/22/2018		10
Pisani	Margaret	Reading Specialist	\$100,000	*		12

New Hire Updates (added start dates from September 2018 Report)

Last Name	First Name	Position	Salary	Effective Date	10 or 12 Months
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Hanks	Gregory	Building Based Sub	\$125/day	10/01/2018	10
Rashwan	Regab	Teacher (Math)	\$56,004	10/01/2018	10

Rehires/Changes:

Last Name	First Name	Position	Effective Date
Patterson-Odom	Winifred	Vice Principal	8/27/18
Valentin	Yalixa	Dean of Students	9/4/18
Bigelow	Paulette	RIF FT Security to PT Security	11/1/2018
Haynes	James	RIF Ft Security to PT Security	11/1/2018
Smith	Kishan	RIF from FT Security to PT Security	11/1/2018
McLeod	Aaron	RIF from FT Security to PT Security	11/1/2018
Okoszko	Leszek	RIF from FT Security to PT Security	11/1/2018
Beresford	Robert	RIF from FT Security to PT Security	11/1/2018
Taylor	Jeanette	From Office Mgr to Enrollment & Special Projects MGR	10/15/2018

**10-18-5**

The Board of Trustees of Marion P. Thomas Charter School approves the following Re-hires /Change of title for the 2018-2019 School Year. **Approved**

Rehires/Changes:

Last Name	First Name	Position	Effective Date
Patterson-Odom	Winifred	Vice Principal	8/27/18
Valentin	Yalixa	Dean of Students	9/4/18
Bigelow	Paulette	RIF FT Security to PT Security	11/1/2018
Haynes	James	RIF Ft Security to PT Security	11/1/2018
Smith	Kishan	RIF from FT Security to PT Security	11/1/2018
McLeod	Aaron	RIF from FT Security to PT Security	11/1/2018
Okoszko	Leszek	RIF from FT Security to PT Security	11/1/2018

		Security	
Beresford	Robert	RIF from FT Security to PT Security	11/1/2018
Taylor	Jeanette	From Office Mgr to Enrollment & Special Projects MGR	10/15/2018

**10-18-6**

The Board of Trustees of Marion P. Thomas Charter School approves the following separations  
**- Approved**

Last Name	First Name	Position	Status	Effective Date
Wilcher	John	part-time security	Resigned	8/19/2018
Pierson	Regina	Enrollment and Special Projects MGR	Resigned	8/26/2018
Mizrahi	Susan	Teacher	Resigned	10/2/2018
Jackson	Juanita	Food Services	Resigned	10/12/2018
Tavarez	Leonor	Food Services	Resigned	10/15/2018
Wilson	Tammy	Counselor	RIF	10/26/2018
Ahmad	Khalid	FT Security	RIF/not returning	10/31/2018
Edwards	Leon	FT Security	RIF/not returning	10/31/2018
McDowell	Berkley	FT Security	RIF/not returning	10/31/2018
Plant	Saif	FT Security	RIF/not returning	10/31/2018
Gaines	Nasir	FT Security	RIF/not returning	10/31/2018
Oliver	Theodore	FT Security	RIF/not returning	10/31/2018
Dral	Marc	Social Studies	Resigned	11/30/2018
Sanchez	Elizabeth	Teacher	Resigned	11/30/2018
Brant	Justin	Dir. of Marketing and Development	RIF	12/3/2018

**10-18-7**

The Board of Trustees of Marion P. Thomas Charter School approves the following Leaves of Absence - New and Updated **Approved**

Leaves of Absence (New and Updated):

Last Name	First Name	Position	Type of Leave	Leave Date	Return Date
Williams	Ramona	Assistant SBA	Maternity Leave	7/16/2018	11/1/2018
Lopez	Nilsa	custodian	Sick Leave	7/26/2018	TBD
Aisagbonhi	Aderonke	Instructional Assistant	maternity leave	9/19/2018	11/15/2018
Davis	Solange	Office Manager	sick leave	11/8/2018	12/10/2018
<b>Turner</b>	<b>Mahogany</b>	<b>Security</b>	<b>Bonding Leave</b>	<b>10/15/2018</b>	<b>11/12/2018</b>
<b>Wilson</b>	<b>Andray</b>	<b>Custodian</b>	<b>Sick Leave</b>	<b>10/15/2018</b>	<b>TBD</b>
<b>Felix</b>	<b>Bernardo</b>	<b>Teacher</b>	<b>Sick Leave</b>	<b>10/12/2018</b>	<b>11/15/2018</b>
<b>Jamison</b>	<b>Shaheerah</b>	<b>College Counselor</b>	<b>Sick Leave</b>	<b>10/25/2018</b>	<b>TBD</b>

Workmen Compensation Leave

Last Name	First Name	Position	Loss Time	Location
Cordero	Leni	Teacher	0	STEAM

**OTHER****10-18-8**

The Board of Trustees of Marion P. Thomas Charter School resolves to approve the **Lease Agreement** (this "**Lease**"), dated this 25th day of September, 2018 (the "**Effective Date**") between **The Friends of Marion P. Thomas Charter School, A New Jersey Non-Profit Corporation**, a New Jersey non-profit corporation, having an office at 125 Sussex Avenue, Newark, New Jersey 07103 ("**Landlord**") and **Marion P. Thomas Charter School, Inc. ("Tenant")**, a New Jersey non-profit corporation, having an office at 125 Sussex Avenue, Newark, New Jersey 07103 on the use of the Property located at 28-34 Burnet Street, Newark for the use as a Public Charter School at a rate of \$84,923.45 per month. **Approved**

**10-18-9**

The Board of Trustees of Marion P. Thomas Charter School resolves to approve the **Lease Agreement** (this "**Lease**"), dated this 25th day of September, 2018 (the "**Effective Date**") between **The Friends of Marion P. Thomas Charter School, A New Jersey Non-Profit Corporation**, a New Jersey non-profit corporation, having an office at 125 Sussex Avenue, Newark, New Jersey 07103 ("**Landlord**") and **Marion P. Thomas Charter School, Inc. ("Tenant")**, a New Jersey non-profit corporation, having an office at 125 Sussex Avenue, Newark, New Jersey 07103 on the use of the Property located at 534-544 Clinton Avenue, Newark for the use as a Public Charter School at a rate of \$43,831.46 per month. **Approved**

**10-18-10**

The Board of Trustees of Marion P. Thomas Charter School resolves to approve the **Lease Agreement** (this "**Lease**"), dated this 25th day of September, 2018 (the "**Effective Date**") between **The Friends of Marion P. Thomas Charter School, A New Jersey Non-Profit Corporation**, a New Jersey non-profit corporation, having an office at 125 Sussex Avenue, Newark, New Jersey 07103 ("**Landlord**") and **Marion P. Thomas Charter School, Inc. ("Tenant")**, a New Jersey non-profit corporation, having an office at 125 Sussex Avenue, Newark, New Jersey 07103 on the use of the Property located at 588-109 Shipman Street, Newark for the use as a Public Charter School at a rate of \$42,461.73 per month. **Approved**

**10-18-11**

The Board of Trustees of Marion P. Thomas Charter School resolves to approve the Sublease Agreement between The Team Charter School and Marion P Thomas Charter School for the use of Classrooms and Offices at its property located at 18-36 Norfolk Street, Newark at the rate of \$33,084 per month with effect from August 28, 2018. **Approved**

**10-18-12**

The Board of Trustees of Marion P. Thomas Charter School resolves to approve the Lease Agreement between The Team Charter School and Marion P Thomas Charter School for the use of the Gym Space at its property located at 18 Norfolk Street, Newark at the rate of \$10,000 per month with effect from August 28, 2018 to June 30, 2019 **Approved**

**10-18-13**

The Board of Trustees of Marion P. Thomas Charter School resolves to approve the participation of Ms Vernetta Rivera to participate in the Annual NJ School Nutrition Association Conference at Atlantic -City on November the 7<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> 2018 at a cost of \$375 excluding travels and accommodation. **Approved**

**10-18-14**

The Board of Trustees of Marion P. Thomas Charter School resolves to approve the designation of day 1 absences due to uniform violations as “excused.” **Approved**

**10-18-15**

The Board of Trustees of Marion P. Thomas Charter School resolves to approve the attached updated Policy #5512: Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying. **Approved**

**10-18-16**

The Board of Trustees of Marion P. Thomas Charter School resolves to approve the attached recommendation of HIB allegation reported on September 21 as unconfirmed. **Approved**

**10-18-17**

The Board of Trustees of Marion P. Thomas Charter School resolves to approve the attached HIB Self-Assessment. **Approved**

**10-18-18**

The Board of Trustees of Marion P. Thomas Charter School resolves to approve a Reduction in Force for the following positions: School Business Administrator, Director of Operations, Food Service Manager, Facilities Assistant, Senior Marketing Manager, Maintenance & Custodial Workers, Dean, Music Teacher, Master Teacher, In-School Suspension Teacher, Food Handler, Family Liaison, and Attendance Counselor. **Approved**

**Adjournment:**

Moved by K Sherrer El  
Seconded by: D Blount

**Prepared by:** Femi Amorin  
**School Business Administrator/Board Secretary**

**Approved by:**  
**Board of Trustees**

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