

# Board of Trustees Meeting February 28, 2024 (Virtual) Marion P. Thomas Charter High School of Culinary and Performing Arts 125 Sussex Avenue, Newark, NJ 07103

# February 28, 2024 | 5:00 PM ET Zoom:

https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87205682710?pwd=dWh4bE5qWCtkWk9PcThPSWdLbVZZUT09

## 1. CALL TO ORDER - Open Public Meetings Act - 5:07 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 August 2023.

#### 2. ROLL CALL

NOLL CALL					
Board Member	Present	Absent	Board Member	Present	Absent
Vincent Rouse	<b>✓</b>		Julio Valdivieso	V	
Dashay Carter	$\searrow$		Allan Boomer	N	
Briana Gilchrist	$\checkmark$		Toni Ince	V	
Dr. Princess Towe	<b>V</b>				

Non-Voting Board Mer	mbers Present
Elijah Griffiths (Board Secretary/Administrator)	Tina Jalloh (Board Attorney)
Angela Mincy, Chief School Administrator/Superintendent	Joshua Solow (School Business Administrator)



#### 3. CHAIRMAN'S UPDATE

• Chairman Rouse gave an update.

#### 4. SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE

- Ms. Mincy gave a presentation update.
  - Ince thanked Ms. Mincy for quality vetting of the new Principal at STEAM.
  - Boomer applauded finding new opportunities for community driven events.

#### 5. COMMITTEE REPORTS

**Operations & Finance Committee** 

We had our meeting just two days before Valentine's Day on February 12th. We talked about a few different things. I'll give a guick highlight, first on enrollment. We talked about all the different things we are doing to try to draw more applications and attention to the village. One of the things that we are really pleased is happening is spending more money on digital and social media and we're seeing a big increase in the number of people who are viewing our materials and our ads. But also the number of people who are clicking through and it's really a straight line of the more you spend the more you get people clicking on the website and then hopefully fill out an application to join the village. There is more than just social and digital, there also is canvassing, billboards, etc. We always have a discussion about what else you need and what would be your wish list or dream list of things you can do from an advertising perspective to boost enrollment. Next we talked about facilities. We heard from Mr. Arce about a number of things being worked on. Number one, a boiler project at PAC which is a major undertaking, just giving us an update as to where we are. We know we are using ESSER 3 funding to pay for that. That project in itself is almost \$1 million and we're getting that fully funded by our grant which is amazing. Next we talked about tech. We talked about the camera upgrade being done which is the software camera upgrade. The Shipman tech updates are about 85% done. We also talked about Incident IQ which is the software asset management and keeping an eye on tech issues, the status on different computers that's being rolled out. Next we talked a little bit about the foundation. We had a report on how much was raised from the foundation activities versus how much was spent. We have some open questions that we wait to hear answers from on our next call about the golf outing and the stats for that. Finally moving to finance, things that I need to point out. You're going to see a few reports on the finance side that we will be voting on but the highlights are, our cash balance is higher by about \$4 million versus last month and that's because it's cash that came back to us from the refinancing of our bonds. You will see our Fund balance has grown and is strong. Our audit is complete. This is something that really made me smile. A year ago, I remember our audit had a number of findings, this year our audit is complete with zero findings. I know y'all are clapping. I'm smiling, that's a really really big deal. We have a new auditor and a lot of times when you bring in a new auditor a lot of things get uncovered but in case we got a new auditor and you'll recall last year we had a number of findings and this time we have no findings. Moving on, we went over the bill list and we suggest you approve that today. We also went through the treasurer's report, board secretary report, and that should all be in your materials. And that's it for finance and ops. (Boomer)

#### Curriculum & Instruction Committee

• The committee met on the 20th to go over our current situations or procedures that are coming up. We noticed that we finished the second quarter. Parent and teacher conferences were held on



February 15th, so we are officially into our third quarter of this school year, this academic year. The 11th graders are slated to take the high school graduation test on March 11th and this test will measure whether or not they are graduation ready. I think they were also having another make up time for those who might need additional help with this test but we know that they're gonna do well and pass it. In March, we have Read Across America and some of you may have received invitations already to participate. We hope that some of our board members will be able to do that and that will be held on March 6th. We will also have Pie Night on March 14th. We will also be hosting a women's event because March is women's history month, which will focus on women in STEM and so we hope that some of us will be able to take part in that. With that having been said, we have two items on the agenda to vote on. I guess we can just put them both together. One has to do with home instruction, and the other has to do with field trips that the students will take, that's pre-K through 12 and so that's all for our report. (Towe)

#### Culture & Climate + Alumni Committee

We met on the 20th of this month. The meeting lasted about an hour, starting at 5 o'clock and ending at 6. First thing we discussed was matters surrounding the establishment of our threat assessment which is one of the foremost projects that we're working on. There's definitely a need to step this up. Mr. Williams is doing a great job, trying to push this, build the plane while we fly it. Just reminding everybody, threat assessment team is a new requirement the state of New Jersey implemented for this school year. The guidance wasn't issued until shortly before the start of the school year, so we've been putting it together, moving full speed ahead, getting everybody trained. We talked about potential issues. I would like to say that since we hired this company to produce our policies and draft our policies for us and I see that we have a couple on the agenda. I would ask the executive board to try to move the threat assessment policy building to the front as well as the HIB policy. These are things that need looking at, and that is things the committee discussed. These are super important areas that we need the policy reviewed and redrafted and put out so we have something solid in place as well as the student discipline policy is what we discussed. Our CSA was in attendance at the meeting. She brought up a unique and exciting opportunity to work with a local band the Essex and Union County Marching Band which is a HBCU style band. Shoutout to our attorney who quickly put together an MOU for us to get over to them. They already signed the draft of the MOU that we handed over to them for signatures so what you see attached to the line item in the resolution to approve it looks like it'll be the final copy, and you can vote that through with confidence. We also discussed HIB generally. Mr. Williams provided a review of our first quarter stats on what our HIB looked like. We kind of talk generally about trends, things to look out for, and potential ways to improve. We have key personnel there that will be able to implement these. As far as attendance, we reviewed attendance because we always review it from a culture and climate standpoint to be able to improve it, but nothing significant. We're doing well as our CSA pointed out, so just keep doing what we are doing. On the list as we are compiling the districts, climate and culture calendar like a list of everything we do every month as it relates to culture and climate so at the end of the year we can actually point to the list of things that we did, and what aspect of culture and climate, and the things that we set as goals for our school to achieve, which one of them they support. I need to get with the personnel committee because we track certain employment issues from a culture and climate standpoint, but we don't want to duplicate efforts. Probably off-line, I'll talk to somebody in personnel and make sure the things that we should be tracking versus what they're tracking. We're gonna be taking another look at the next meeting, we will determine the



need to take a look at policies and procedures regarding trauma informed care and child development and just figuring out where we are on that and how we can do a meaningful review. If anybody from the board wants to send suggestions to me, feel free to please. We appreciate it. We are going to be doing an examination of our partnerships because one of the things that we are trying to do a more concentrated effort this year is tracking the partnership. Hopefully by the end of the year we can provide a report of every partnership we ventured into and the aspects of the mission it supports. That's it, we covered a lot but that is the report. (Valdivieso)

- You said HIB policy, student discipline policy, and what 3rd policy? (Rouse)
  - The threat assessment teams, and that one Mr. Williams we're working with DOE because they're still issuing guidance and training even throughout the school year so this is an ongoing project. We really need the policy in place so that the board can vote it in place but also some of the key aspects are still being worked out. I would say if you have them working on it, Mr. Williams needs to be in contact with the policy drafters because he sees really on top of all of those key issues to deal with that policy. (Valdivieso)
- The alumni committee met on February 20th and we had a couple updates. On February 20th there was also a FAFSA & Fajitas event. Mr. Lewis reported that the event was extremely successful. FAFSA & Fajitas was at the high school campus. We had a representative from the New Jersey Higher Education Assistance Authority in attendance. They facilitated the event and were able to answer any questions that parents or other attendees might have had. We had over 80 participants attend this event, so it was a very successful event. Thank you for the team that put this together. I want to put it on everyone's radar that we do have a black history event tomorrow. This will be a student-led experience, featuring cuisine from our culinary program so we are really committed to showing off all the wonderful things that are going on so if anyone is available to stop by please bring an attendee with you. Thank you. (Gilchrist)

#### **Executive Committee**

• I wanted to make sure to continue to allow the goals we set as a board for us to continue to meet those goals. One of those goals is to continue to work on our policies, so today we have before us some policies for us to approve. These are at the forefront so we can continue to make sure the Marion P. Thomas Charter school is run correctly and that we meet the benchmarks in the correct way as well. So you have the policies before you and hopefully you have a chance to review them. We are now ready to vote tonight. I am excited about it because again we are reaching the goals we set to make sure we review all our policies so we can continue to allow MPTCS to grow. (Rouse)

#### Personnel Committee

• The committee met on February 15th. We reviewed the vacancies on the campuses. We have 2 teachers at PAC (Pre-K & social studies teacher), at STEAM we have 2 teachers (kindergarten teacher & academic interventionist), and at the high school we have 7 teachers (2 English teachers, 1 math teacher, 1 chemistry teacher, and 3 special education teachers). Ms. Wilkerson shared updates on the longevity which is dealing with the contract of what longevity will be in this new contract. In addition to sharing those items, she talked about recognition afforded to some of the employees of the school, Ms. Brittany Gordon at PAC, Ciahlyn Kornegay at STEAM, Tony Tawfik at the High School, and Lillian Williams at PAC. Tonight we have several items that need to be approved. There is a note on line item C, it is the personnel report but we will be removing line item 1 under separation. All other items are intact. (Towe)



#### 6. RESOLUTIONS

I. 2024-2-28-A: Approval of the February 28, 2024 MPTCS BOT Meeting Agenda

Voting Members	Motion	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent	Voting Members	Motion	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent
Vincent Rouse	V	V				Julio Valdivieso		<b>\</b>			
Dashay Carter		V				Allan Boomer		K			
Briana Gilchrist					Ŋ	Toni Ince**		\			
Dr. Princess Towe		V									

#### **Discussion:**

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II. 2024-2-28-B: Approval of Regular 1.24.24 BOT Meeting Minutes

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

#### **Discussion:**

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TABLE PERSONNEL REPORT UNTIL AFTER EXECUTIVE SESSIONS.

Motion: Valdivieso - Towe\*\* - Approved

III. 2024-2-28-C: Approval of February 24' Personnel Report (Exclusion Separations Line Item 1)

Voting Members	Motion	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent	Voting Members	Motion	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent
Vincent Rouse	V	V				Julio Valdivieso		<b>\</b>			
Dashay Carter		N				Allan Boomer		\			
Briana Gilchrist		N				Toni Ince**		\			
Dr. Princess Towe		V									



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IV. <u>2024-2-28-D:</u>	Approv	al of U	<u>niversit</u>	y of Ph	noenix l	MOU					
Voting Members	Motion	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent	Voting Members	Motion	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent
Vincent Rouse**		K				Julio Valdivieso		N.			
Dashay Carter		K				Allan Boomer		$\langle$			
Briana Gilchrist		K				Toni Ince					
Dr. Princess Towe	$\checkmark$	<b>\</b>									
<u>Discussion:</u> ●  V. <u>2024-2-28-E:</u>	Approv	al of Do	OL Pay	<u>out</u>							
Voting Members	Motion	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent	Voting Members	Motion	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent
Vincent Rouse		V				Julio Valdivieso		$\checkmark$			
Dashay Carter		$\checkmark$				Allan Boomer		$\checkmark$			
Briana Gilchrist	$\checkmark$	\				Toni Ince		$\checkmark$			
Dr. Princess Towe**		<b>\</b>						-		-	
<u>Discussion:</u> ●  VI. <u>2024-2-28-F:</u>	Approva	al of N.	JDOE S	SOA Di	strict P	rofessional Develo	oment f	<u>Plan</u>			
Voting Members	Motion	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent	Voting Members	Motion	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent
Vincent Rouse		V				Julio Valdivieso		V			
Dashay Carter		N.				Allan Boomer		$\checkmark$			
Briana Gilchrist**		V				Toni Ince					
Dr. Princess Towe	✓	$\checkmark$									

# Discussion:



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VII. 2024-2-28-G: Approval of February 24' Finance Report

Voting Members	Motion	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent	Voting Members	Motion	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent
Vincent Rouse		\ \				Julio Valdivieso		<b>✓</b>			
Dashay Carter		K				Allan Boomer	N.	K			
Briana Gilchrist**		K				Toni Ince		K			
Dr. Princess Towe		<b>\</b>									

#### **Discussion:**

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VIII. 2024-2-28-H: Approval of FY 2024 Amended Budget and Submission to NJDOE

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

#### **Discussion:**

 One item of discussion about the budget that I forgot to mention, we did have a real detailed discussion about that and our things were making sure that we had the right breakdown between instruction, administration, and support. We landed at 60.2% for instruction as a part of this budget update and that was a really big important one for us. We also took a look at where enrollment landed. It was very close to what we expected and so we feel very good about the budget that was put forth that we over allocated to instruction. (Boomer)



IX. <u>2024-2-28-l: A</u>	Approva	l of Jar	nuary 2	024 Pa	yroll A						
Voting Members	Motion	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent	Voting Members	Motion	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent
Vincent Rouse		V				Julio Valdivieso		$\checkmark$			
Dashay Carter		V				Allan Boomer**		$\checkmark$			
Briana Gilchrist	<b>✓</b>	N				Toni Ince		$\checkmark$			
Dr. Princess Towe		$\checkmark$						-		-	
Discussion:  •  X. 2024-2-28-12:	Approv	al of C	oOp P	ricing S	System	Agreement - Berg	en Coui	nty			
Voting Members	Motion	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent	Voting Members	Motion	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent
Vincent Rouse		K				Julio Valdivieso		$\checkmark$			
Dashay Carter		N				Allan Boomer	$\checkmark$	$\checkmark$			
Briana Gilchrist**		$\checkmark$				Toni Ince		$\checkmark$			
Dr. Princess Towe		$\checkmark$									
Discussion:  •  XI. 2024-2-28-13:	<u>Accept</u>	Audito	or's Mar	nagem	ent Rep	port and NJDOE Su	<u>ubmissi</u>	<u>on</u>			
Voting Members	Motion	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent	Voting Members	Motion	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent
Vincent Rouse		<b>\</b>				Julio Valdivieso		$\checkmark$			
Dashay Carter		$\searrow$				Allan Boomer	$\checkmark$	✓			
Briana Gilchrist		$\checkmark$				Toni Ince		✓			
Dr. Princess Towe**		$ \vee $							_		

## Discussion:

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XII. <u>2024-2-28-14:</u>	Accept	Annua	l Com	<u>orehen</u> :	sive Fin	ancial Report and	NJDOE	Subm	<u>ission</u>		
Voting Members	Motion	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent	Voting Members	Motion	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent
Vincent Rouse**		N				Julio Valdivieso		<b>✓</b>			
Dashay Carter		V				Allan Boomer	$\checkmark$	<b>\</b>			
Briana Gilchrist		V				Toni Ince		$\checkmark$			
Dr. Princess Towe		V									
Discussion:  •  XIII. PACKAGE J - 2024-2-28-J: / 2024-2-28-K: /	<u>Approva</u>	al of Ho	ome Ins	structic							
Voting Members	Motion		No		Absent	Voting Members	Motion	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent
Vincent Rouse		N				Julio Valdivieso		$\vee$			
Dashay Carter		\				Allan Boomer		<b>\</b>			
Briana Gilchrist		V				Toni Ince**		$\checkmark$			
Dr. Princess Towe	$\vee$	V									
<u>Discussion:</u> ●  XIV. <u>2024-2-28-K1</u>	: Appro	val of E	Essex 8	k Union	. Count	y Marching Band N	<u> MOU</u>				
Voting Members	Motion	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent	Voting Members	Motion	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent
Vincent Rouse		N				Julio Valdivieso		$\vee$			
Dashay Carter		N				Allan Boomer		$\checkmark$			
Briana Gilchrist		N				Toni Ince	$\checkmark$	$\checkmark$			
Dr. Princess Towe**		<b>\</b>									

# Discussion:

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<sup>\*\*:</sup> Motion Seconded



XV. 2024-2-28-M: Approval of the Mandatory Disc	ciosure Po	Olicy
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Voting Members	Motion	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent	Voting Members	Motion	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent
Vincent Rouse	$\searrow$	Ŋ				Julio Valdivieso		\			
Dashay Carter				$\checkmark$		Allan Boomer		\			
Briana Gilchrist		$\checkmark$				Toni Ince		K			
Dr. Princess Towe**		V									

#### **Discussion:**

- I have one comment of all of them. I am assuming this is the draft version until once approved. There was one with a comment for one about how we enter accounting lines that said double check with an MPTCS account, and one that talks about references such as fill references here. I think it was a capitalization policy. That one does look like it's in its final draft. Do we need to vote on a subject to fill in those missing items? (Valdivieso)
  - You are correct when you say the word draft was there because we haven't approved them, that is why it's there. The one with the comments, everything has been approved and cleaned up. (Jalloh)
  - Okay, perhaps I just have an earlier version. (Valdivieso)
  - I think you do have an earlier version, because I don't see those comments on the capitalization one. (Rouse)
  - We cleaned that up and talked to finance about that they ultimately had to approve it, so it's been cleared up. (Jalloh)
  - We need to update that on the board agenda since it looks like an earlier version, but we can mark the comment as resolved. (Abbaleo)
  - I will note these documents that were uploaded were collaborative documents so they were all slated to be scrubbed and cleaned before they are PDF and uploaded for our records if that is helpful. (Griffiths)

XVI. 2024-2-28-N: Approval of the Cash Management Policy

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



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XVII. 2024-2-28-O: Approval of the Capitalization Policy

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

#### **Discussion:**

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XVIII. 2024-2-28-P: Approval of the School Parent and Family Engagement Policy

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

#### **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 2-minutes to address the BOT.

- Michelle Reed Brooks Orange, NJ I requested the audience with you today because there was a matter I was instructed was posted on the agenda for tonight. Prior to requesting your audience I have very serious concerns in the manner in which certain procedures are being conducted, however Chairman Rouse reached out to me today and Vice Chair. I am just going to do a brief introduction and I will be forwarding an email with more details, and maybe it will help you as you go into your closed session. I don't even know where to begin. The Vice Chair and the Chair have been provided the details about my specific concerns and in the interest of the school at this point what I would like and what I am requesting of the board is for you to take some time for whatever decisions you have to make before you make it, review relevant information that's contributed. Let me give more information. I can't believe the time is already gone. Sorry. I will be sending more information via email.
  - We will be looking out for your email and it will be shared with the board once received.
     (Griffiths)

EXECUTIVE CLOSED SESSIONS Legal & Personnel Matters | Motion: Rouse - Valdivieso\*\* | Approved

RESUME REGULAR SESSION | Motion: Rouse - Valdivieso\*\* | Approved |

Resumed to Personnel Report & C - F Vote Resumed an Executive Committee Update | Added Resolution 2024-2-28-Q

• EXECUTIVE UPDATE: I would like to add a resolution to the agenda on behalf of the executive committee the approval moving forward on getting our young people in MPTCS a gym. That would be resolution 2024-2-28-Q in collaboration with the Gomes LLC. Motion: Rouse - Valdivieso\*\* / Approved

XIX. 2024-2-28-Q: Approval of Gomes LLC LOI

AIX. 2024-2-20-Q. Approval of Gomes LEC LOT											
Voting Members	Motion	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent	Voting Members	Motion	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent
Vincent Rouse	V	Ŋ				Julio Valdivieso**		\			
Dashay Carter		Y				Allan Boomer		\			
Briana Gilchrist		Ŋ				Toni Ince		V			
Dr. Princess Towe		V									

Discussion:

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8. CLOSED SESSION - 6:58 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: 6:58 PM ET Rouse - Towe\*\*

Respectfully submitted at: 2/28/2024 Submitted by: Elijah D. Griffiths