

Board of Trustees Meeting April 24, 2024 (Virtual) Marion P. Thomas Charter High School of Culinary and Performing Arts 125 Sussex Avenue, Newark, NJ 07103

April 24, 2024 | 5:00 PM ET Zoom:

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

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 August 2023.

2. ROLL CALL

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

Non-Voting Board Members 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.
 - QUESTIONS
 - Do we have a plan in place for June attendance which typically is a time of lower attendance to try and get the students to come in? (Carter)
 - We want to get through testing first, but then make sure to plan fun things for the students to attend. Then steps to take to encourage them by continuing to send home letters to those families and continue to keep foot on the gas. June always makes me nervous in terms of attendance because you don't know what it will bring. We will continue to do everything in our power. Typically when we look at attendance, we look at month to month. At the end you will see overall, but we are looking at it from the last month and prior months. We definitely want to plan to do some fun things, right now we are in testing bootcamp mode. Sometimes what you see is people are tired at the end so they are starting to give up. We are going to make sure we are more in the buildings. We are going to make sure instruction does not start losing ground. (Mincy)
 - I would love to hear more about sips and kicks? (Carter)
 - I think they are at a few other schools besides Marion P. We partner with the NJ Red Bulls to have some of their professional soccer teams come in and train some of our students with some basic soccer skills and for those more advanced taking them through the advanced skills. They enjoy some sips (drinks) at the end of the program. They come in here at least once per week at both campuses. That is something that has been in place since we've been here. I don't know if it has proceeded me, but it has been here since my first year. (Abbaleo)

5. COMMITTEE REPORTS

Personnel Committee

• The committee met on the 11th. There are several areas discussed. The vector training that is required by all staff is up to 92.35%. We have 17 staff members that have passed two assignments. This also includes new hires. We are still working with them to make sure they get everything completed. Back in February, we were at 84% and now at 92%. That information was gained from Ms. Wilkerson. Another topic has to do with staffing. Our current vaccines at STEAM is still 3 positions but the positions are being covered. The teacher elementary positions are being covered by an assistant teacher. Teacher ELA and Spanish are being covered by a long term sub from Scoot. PAC Academy has 4 vacancies. The Pre-K positions are being covered by those assistant teachers that are assigned to that classroom, and then one elementary position. There is a social studies position that has been vacant since the start of the school year, however we have identified an assistant teacher that we will put in that spot. The high school has an English vacancy covered by Elevate. In history there is a vacancy that was created last month. This is now being covered by substitutes. And also 6 periods, there are 5 other history teachers so they are taking an additional period to make sure this class is covered. That is where we are with vacancies and we understand



they are working very diligently trying to fill those vacancies but we do acknowledge that they have worked hard to get those classes covered. Another topic deals with the hiring fair and village fair. The superintendent spoke about that briefly. She gave us the numbers regarding that. They are in the planning stages for the first ever village fest. This is happening on May 18th. This is a community event where we invite all surrounding communities to come out and see what Marion P. is about. We will have recruitment there for both staff and students. I hope that turns out as successful as this fair did, and I am sure that it will. We talked about the renewal process at length. The next meeting will be May 9th where Ms. Wilkerson will be sharing with us who will be renewed and who will be non-renewed. They will be notified the following week of May 15th, and hand delivery will be in process from the Principal. They will get it hand to hand. They will receive an email from the notice, and then they have up until May 27th to request a Donaldson hearing. As many of you know a Donaldson hearing is held for people to contest or want some mitigations or looked into in terms of their position. Then we have voting items for personnel. We have the approval of the April 24th report and approval of NextGen contract. We are in the process of updating our timekeeping system and are going with NextGen. NextGen workforce systems connect directly with our Bamboo HR system. Many of the companies when they have systems are 4 -5 systems and do not speak to each other, so it's a lot of manual work. But for this item it speaks directly to our Bamboo HR system and will be able to track double tracking. That is the conclusion of the report with the exception of the two items that need to be voted on. (Towe)

Operations & Finance Committee

We had our meeting on April 17th. We went through the facilities. The big thing happened with facilities the dismantling and reconstruction of the boiler. The goal is to have the two boilers replaced by the start of the September school year. We went through our tech issues and focused on NJSLA testing which happens next month. We talked about all the computer equipment needed for that, and also talked about GTA testing which we've done. Moving on to enrollment, we went through all the enrollment numbers. One thing we are really glad about is the number of families that ranked us number 1 is higher than it was a year ago. We have about 236 families that ranked us first and 116 families on the waitlist, with a total of 352 being tracked through the enrollment pipeline. We also talked about the strategy for enrollment and felt really good about everything happening in enrollment. I will say there is a lot of work that goes into enrollment. Next, we went through the finance items. We went through the bills list, and had a lot of questions and got answers on a lot of different bills. We went through our treasure report which is submitted as a part of our package that we are going to vote on today. Then we went through our budget which is a big one. We went into excruciating detail about the budget for the next year and will be voting on that today. We budgeted an enrollment count 1300 which is really close to the budgeted count from this year. We are always concerned about the number being under, so I think this is a good conservative target for enrollment. Our revenue budget is 30.5 million, and we went through our expenses. The one difference in our budget is we did include a small deficit meaning we are expecting to lose a little bit of money this coming school year. The reason why is because we are retooling our Shipman campus to be able to potentially bring it online in the future. We have to spend some money in order to expand our capacity for the future, so in discussion with the finance committee we felt very comfortable approving a deficit budget. We know that we have significant cash on hand, and we should be able to endure. There is also a chance that we outperform the budget. Our cash position is really strong on our Treasures report, you will see that we have 17 million in our FUND balance which



is 3.3 million higher than it was a year ago. Some things we are talking about in the finance committee is trying to figure out how to get some additional yield to get us more of a return on our cash. That is it for our finance report. One last thing with budget, we are always big on 60/40 split, and what I mean by 60/40 split is instruction versus admin support. The state wants the majority of the budget to be spent in the classroom. Our numbers are 62.7% where the target is 60%, so we are almost 3% points higher with how we are going to allocate dollars to the budget. So that is a very strong budget. (Boomer)

QUESTIONS

- What are the fire alarm fees? (Valdivieso)
 - Those were fire alarms that went off. They exceeded the amount allowed by the city so they fined us. (Jalloh)
- They fined us because we have too many fire alarms? (Valdivieso)
 - Yes, they fined us because we had too many false fire alarms that were over the allowance given by the state. (Jalloh)
- So this false alarm happened because someone pulled them who wasn't supposed to? (Valdivieso)
 - Actually they are not monitored the way they are supposed to be monitored and there is a reason the false alarms keep going off. (Jalloh)
- I have a question about the false alarms, wasn't this a problem around this time a year or two ago? Have we not rectified the problem? (Carter)
 - My understanding is it was rectified because it stopped for a while, but this is the first time it happened again since that time which is over a year ago. (Jalloh)
- What is the problem now? (Carter)
 - That I don't know exactly. (Jalloh)
- I will have to circle back but I know there have been some false alarms related to water leaks in regards to censors that have been tripped. I can circle back to a list of the reasons why. One was from a faulty sensor. (Abbaleo)
 - So this is different, so we addressed the issues we had a couple years ago? (Carter)
- Yes we addressed those issues and those were resolved. Some are facilities related to rain and leaks, and others are equipment related. (Abbaleo)

Curriculum & Instruction Committee

• The committee met on the 9th. We discussed the testing update, which you already received through the superintendent report, so I won't repeat that. A couple of items that we need to address for voting has to do with the Essex regional homeschool commission. The contract is for the 24-25 school year. This agency provides home instruction services to public school students. We regularly contract them for students in need of instruction typically for medical reasons. The second item in need of approval is one of our standards of our field trips. You can view them on the board agenda. The final piece to be approved is the ReThink Ed program which is a social and emotional learning curriculum. Full launch of the curriculum will take place in the 24-25 school year. The curriculum adoption committee was spearheaded by Ms. Vanessa Jean-Louis department chair person of guidance. The rethink ed will be launched in September of 2024 with K - 8 homeroom teachers and high school PE & health teachers providing 1 tier 1 lesson to all students on a weekly basis. Student support staff will utilize the ReThink platform to provide the additional tier 2 and tier 3 supports for students in smaller groups and 1-1 settings. The scope and sequence will be designed to make sure



students are receiving age and grade level appropriate topics that address the holistic child. And with that our report is finished. (Towe)

Culture & Climate + Alumni Committee

Culture & Climate

- We met on the 9th of April. We went over several reports. The threat assessment team, I guess Mr. Williams has been doing a great job of trying to fly that airplane while we fly it. It was a statutory requirement that the state imposed on us. We were supposed to have this up and running by the beginning of the year, but the New Jersey Department of Education had to develop their guidance. Training has been ongoing. The program has not been as completely developed as it will be hopefully by the start of the next school year, but it is definitely functional in some respects at this point. We talked about trends in school discipline as incidents have risen recently. We talked about that in ways of working to bring that number now with resolutions for alternative discipline with restorative justice. We are doing a lot of great climate and culture events, and tracking them on the calendar. We are doing good oversight of tracking those events and tying those to the specific goals we set out to accomplish from a climate and culture standpoint. And also linking those to our mission and crest and making those relevant. I think this is a good way to show we are not just talking the talk but doing it through our events. We spent a significant amount of time going over the parent academy initiative and the wonderful things that are happening over there. There was a brochure going around about the academy, and we were encouraged. There seems to be a good number of opportunities for parents to engage with the administration about their concerns and have them addressed. The communication with the parents and having that avenue and access is super important, and the academy is providing those opportunities. Ms. Mincy is going to include more information about the Academy at the next board meeting. The school is being proactive in soliciting parent input. That is pretty much all I have for the report. (Valdivieso) Alumni
- The alumni committee also met on April 9th at 5PM. The first topic we covered is the foundation scholarship. The scholarship is open. The flyer is posted around the school and everyone has shared it with Seniors. The scholarship is open until April 30th, so make sure to tell your students to apply. If you don't have any Seniors, let your rising juniors and rising sophomores get prepared for the scholarship. Two of the scholarships that I want to point out are the Reverend Charles E. Thomas scholarship. It was started in honor of the pastor who started MPTCS and is available to apply for anyone who went to MPTCS from kindergarten to senior year. This is not just merit based but just about your commitment to being involved in the Village. We also have a Scholars of Promise scholarship for students who have improved their grades, so make sure you're applying. We require a personal statement that is 500 words. We do ask for letters of recommendation from a teacher, and from a non-teacher. If you're applying for the community service scholarship, please know you do need a letter of recommendation from the volunteer organization that you volunteer with. The foundation will work with your college counselors to get your transcript. You can apply until April 30th. Only a few days left, it's never too late. Next item is the Alumni newsletter. The school is going to be starting an Alumni newsletter. This newsletter is going to be very important since it will be direct communication to the alumni in an effort to build and strengthen the relationship with the alumni. It is going to spotlight the Seniors so we can begin to develop better communication before students become alumni. We also want to use the newsletter to advertise jobs, so they could come back to join the village. College decision day is May 1st. They will be hosting a luncheon for students



and parents to celebrate whatever they decide to do post high school. This is a great initiative and I can't wait to see the photos. Ms. Kayla Kirkland Johnson is one of our alumni, and we are spotlighting her because she is a culture and climate specialist at STEAM academy and she is going to be working on the Alumni Newsletter. She graduated in 2017, and went on to Spelman University and graduated from there in 2021 and now she is back working at the village. Thank you Kayla for coming back to work and being a part of the village and continuing the legacy. That is all for my report. (Gilchrist)

Executive Committee

• The executive committee continues to work along with the Friends board to make sure that we have facilities for our young people that are conducive to learning and also other business matters so we can continue to enhance the village in many ways. We will have a full report about that so people can be aware of the work that goes on behind the scenes. I want to applaud the hard work of our full board, and the superintendent and her team. It is not easy work, and they have been working very hard. Thank you. We don't get it right everytime, but when we get knocked down we don't stay down. We get up. This commitment goes beyond a paycheck. I want to ask that we have a report on May 18th and how we can support community day. If we can get out to decision making day to celebrate our scholars that would be great. That is the end of my report. (Rouse)



6. RESOLUTIONS

I. 2024-4-24-A: Approval of the April 24, 2024 MPTCS BOT Meeting Agenda

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

Discussion:

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II. 2024-4-24-B: Approval of Regular 3.27.24 BOT Meeting Minutes

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

Discussion:

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III. 2024-4-24-C: Approval of April 24' Personnel Report

III. <u>2024-4-24-C. Approvar of April 24. Fersonner Report</u>											
Voting Members	Motion	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent	Voting Members	Motion	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent
Vincent Rouse		N				Julio Valdivieso		K			
Dashay Carter	V	\				Allan Boomer		K			
Briana Gilchrist		V				Toni Ince		K			
Dr. Princess Towe**		K								-	

Discussion:

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^{**:} Motion Seconded



2024-4-24-D: Approval of NextGen Contract IV. Abstain Absent Abstain Absent Motion No Voting Members | Motion No **Voting Members** Yes Yes Vincent Rouse $\overline{\mathbf{A}}$ Julio Valdivieso $\overline{\mathbf{A}}$ Dashay Carter $\overline{\mathbf{A}}$ $\overline{\mathbf{A}}$ Allan Boomer Briana Gilchrist $\overline{\mathbf{A}}$ ☐ Toni Ince $\overline{\mathbf{A}}$ Dr. Princess Towe** $\overline{\mathbf{A}}$ **Discussion:** PACKAGE E - G | Motion: Boomer - Carter** | Approved V. 2024-4-24-E: Approval of April 24' Finance Report 2024-4-24-F: Approval of FY 2025 Projected Budget 2024-4-24-G: Approve the Submission of 2024 Safety Grant Program - \$6,634.00 Abstain Absent Abstain Absent **Voting Members** Motion Yes No Voting Members Motion Yes No Vincent Rouse $\overline{\mathbf{A}}$ Julio Valdivieso \square Dashay Carter $\overline{\mathbf{A}}$ Allan Boomer $\overline{\mathbf{A}}$ Briana Gilchrist $\overline{\mathbf{A}}$ Toni Ince Dr. Princess Towe** $\overline{\mathbf{A}}$ **Discussion:** 2024-4-24-I: Approval of Field Trips VI. **Voting Members** Motion Yes No Abstain Absent Voting Members Motion Yes No Abstain Absent Vincent Rouse Julio Valdivieso $\overline{\mathbf{A}}$ \square Dashay Carter** Allan Boomer $\overline{\mathbf{A}}$ \square Briana Gilchrist Toni Ince $\overline{\mathbf{A}}$ \square

Discussion:

**: Motion Seconded

Dr. Princess Towe

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- Line item H was pulled prior to this meeting. (Griffiths)
- There is a field trip that says West Orange and it's not specified. I was wondering what is the purpose of that trip? (Valdivieso)
 - That is Turtle Back Zoo. My apologies for that missing info that was a copy and paste error. (Abbaleo)

V. 2024-4-24-J: Approval of ReThink Ed Agreement

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

• I had the opportunity to sit in on this meeting with Ms. Jean-Louis. It is an amazing program that allows scholars to be their authentic selves and not feel pressured to fit in. I think it's a very good program and am glad it's being introduced to the 24-25 school year. (Ince)



- 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.
 - No speaker's for public comment.
- 8. CLOSED SESSION 6:06 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: 6:06 PM ET Ince - Valdivieso** | Approved

Respectfully submitted at: 4/24/2024 Submitted by: Elijah D. Griffiths