

Board of Trustees Meeting May 22, 2024 (Virtual) Marion P. Thomas Charter High School of Culinary and Performing Arts 125 Sussex Avenue, Newark, NJ 07103

May 22, 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	\checkmark		Julio Valdivieso	\checkmark	
Dashay Carter	\checkmark		Allan Boomer	\checkmark	
Briana Gilchrist			Toni Ince		V
Dr. Princess Towe					

• Julio Valdivieso arrived to vote on G.

Non-Voting Board Mer	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.

5. COMMITTEE REPORTS

Personnel Committee

• The report for the personnel committee is the following. We have staffing that is going to be done and the supervisor of that department indicated that there are several non-renewals that we have. It was broken down for us. 42 in total non renewals. 26 cuts thru economics and reorganization that will not be filled in the next school year and make up a mix of teachers positions, classroom support, security, etc. Also, 15 positions created vacancies, and out of 15 we already filled 4. Non renewal non tenured staff process we allow for a Donaldson hearing which is scheduled for June 3rd if we have a need for that hearing. There are 3 resolutions that we need to approve. Horizon staffing and looking to do a direct hire for a school nurse. We have approval of the personnel report and personnel actions that are the individual breakdown. (Towe)

Operations & Finance Committee

We had our meeting last week, and I will review a couple of key items from the meeting. First, we reviewed the school calendar for the 24 - 25 school year. To summarize the calendar, there are 186 days for student instruction, a total of 196 days for the new staff members, and 193 days for the returning staff members. We also have more instruction days than Newark Public schools on average. Next, we talked about enrollment. It looks like we are targeting 1673 students for all the younger grades with preschool included. Our student count right now is 1294, so we at present have a gap of 338. We did discuss the enrollment strategy and the steps we are doing to close that gap. We also talked about some of the ways we are spending money on advertising, and how financially efficient our spending is on advertising. Next we had updates on IT. The first is regarding the 10GB internet fiber update that happened at 125 Sussex, 28 Burnet Street, and 370 7th Street. That all started last week. We talked also about Crown Castle who are waiting for their permits to begin the fiber cable work at 88 Shipman campus. We heard an update earlier from Shankar on NJSLA, and we just talked about IT needs and how we are trending toward our goal for NJSLA testing. Next we got a facility update. Our boiler project is on schedule. Then finally moving on to financial reports. You will know that are cash balance is about 4 million dollars higher than it was 1 year ago. Although it is about 1 million dollars lower than the prior month. Finally we discussed the food service bid. As you all know every year we have to get our food contractor vendor re-approved. We put out a RFP. We fielded a number of different vendors and ultimately received 2 proposals. We evaluated and assessed the narrative of each proposal and some of the references for each proposal, and the staff suggested we move forward with a contract with Aramark, so there will be a vote for that contract as a part of that vote today. (Boomer)

Curriculum & Instruction Committee

• The curriculum and instruction committee met last week. We had a very interesting meeting with good information. The testing part of it has already been provided by Abbaleo. We finished testing today. I would like to say we had a good discussion looking at how the students were behaving



differently then past testing. They were using their scratch paper, and taking their time. There is a shift in the attitude of how the students perceive testing. I think there are cues and clues to let us know our students are headed in the right direction. (Towe)

- You hit the nail on the head. We are pleased to see a lot of the things we are coaching and supporting our instructional teachers we are seeing in our student work. I had the chance to debrief, and they felt very confident with themselves. It was encouraging to hear it from the students and teachers, and highlights we are on the right track. (Abbaleo)
- Another good thing that came out of our meeting is that we are developing a curriculum committee.
 Mr. Abbaleo, you might want to tell us how that went. The purpose of that meeting is to gather information and look at the methodologies that are working to begin to assess the programs we are using. (Towe)
 - o That is exactly it. It was this time last year that the Levinia group presented to us. We have obviously been assessing their efforts throughout the year, but we are trying to assess if we want to stay with them long term or move to another curriculum company to get us to the spot with the holistic literacy block. Students are learning to read and write at high levels. It also helps to assess the gaps that may be present at different grade levels. It's not about getting a percentage to pass NJSLA, but making sure that we truly prepare each of our scholars for the next level. So when they leave middle school, they are ready for high school, and when they leave high school they are ready for whatever is on their post secondary path. We are in the process of going through that. We did have a meeting yesterday, and small findings today. We will present our findings in June requesting approval for the findings we have. (Abbaleo)
- One of my concerns is that we have these programs but how are we assessing them? So I was very pleased that we were creating this committee to do that assessment, and do a deep dive on if the companies are doing what they said they would do, and if not we might need to go in another direction. We have three items to approve. The first one is H which is a standard contract and something we are doing already because the student is in our district but going to school outside. Ms. Jalloh has already looked at all the contracts. The other piece is the approval of field trips. We have several and there are a list of final field trips for the year that we would be approving. (Towe)
 - It is just a couple end of year celebrations for our 8th grade classes, and we are targeting our 3rd and 8th grade students to attend Liberty science center. I am trying to make sure each of the grades have equal opportunity for learning experiences out of the classroom. (Abbaleo)
 - There were a couple I wanted to comment on, but I just have a messy desk so thank you for that. We have 3 items to approve today. (Towe)

Culture & Climate + Alumni Committee

Culture & Climate

• We met yesterday to give people more time. We wanted to focus this meeting on the development and beefing up end of the year reports so we could go over many different subjects that we do cover. We looked at the development of the threat assessment teams, student discipline, harassment, intimidation and bullying. We looked at them from a statistical perspective. Another great report by Ms. Griffin focused on parent academy and all the great ways we communicate with parents. We looked at the district calendar for the year to see how we have done to incorporate events that further our core values and mission and also the goals we set for the year for the board and superintendent. Another great job by the school to gather all that information, I think that will be very useful for the board going forward. We took a look at attendance to try and notice trends. We



noticed there was a dip around spring break that was right before and after. I don't know if there is anything we can do about that. We looked at partnerships, and varsity sports. These were all presented in report format just with the ability to ask questions or highlight particular things. Having that this is our first year as a NJSIA certified school so the good things we have instituted for the coaches in regards to CPR training. We took a look at the paraprofessional staffing which is an area of concern on our side because it does translate that affects culture and climate to not have enough coverage. We kind of re-emphasized the importance. Ms. Griffin is on both committees and reassured us that the Personnel committee is working on this to the best of their abilities. We did not check in about where we are in the marching band. It is still in the implementation phase. We are looking to maybe start this summer or fall. We looked at how it went at the Ujamaa Cafe. Ms. Mincy already covered this in her report. We are looking for survey results or feedback from the student. We have 1 more meeting before the end of the year, and will continue to look at what we've accomplished to make recommendations to the board. (Valdivieso)

- The marching band is actually having a meeting tomorrow. It's been a process to make sure everyone was properly fingerprinted. They are having another interest meeting tomorrow. (Mincy) Alumni
- The alumni committee met yesterday, and discussed a few things and got updates on them. One thing we discussed is the foundation scholarships. They are currently closed, and we are setting up interviews. One piece of feedback is that we did not receive 100% of the students applying and so we are going to push to try to at least have all the kids in the running for the scholarship. We spoke about the alumni newsletter, and what we can expect to see in that. This will be very beneficial because one of our goals is to make sure our alumni have access to new jobs and how to apply to jobs in our village. We are also trying to get an alumni tab on the website. Those are the few things we covered yesterday and that ends my report. (Gilchrist)

Executive Committee

- We want to start with our school calendar, and I will ask that we pull the school calendar and vote on it next month in order to make some adjustments. (Rouse)
 - The collective bargaining agreement we want to hold to do both of those simultaneously. (Mincy)
- Next, we have the approval of Marion P Thomas Charter school manual which was one of our goals
 as a board, so when we have new trustees on the team they would have a manual. Lastly tonight is
 the extension of the sub-lease for Clinton avenue. Our attorney Jalloh and superintendent have
 worked diligently to get that ready for us. There is an increase in rent and an extension in the amount
 of years for the lease. I ask you to vote for L & M tonight. (Rouse)



6. RESOLUTIONS

1.	2024-5-22-A: Approval	of the May 22.	2024 MPTCS	BOT Meeting A	aenda
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Voting Members	Motion	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent	Voting Members	Motion	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent
Vincent Rouse	V	V				Julio Valdivieso					\checkmark
Dashay Carter		V				Allan Boomer		K			
Briana Gilchrist		V				Toni Ince					\checkmark
Dr. Princess Towe**		V									

Discussion:

2024-5-22-B: Approval of Regular 4.24.24 BOT Meeting Minutes //.

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

Discussion:

PACKAGE C - E | Motion: Towe - Gilchrist** | Approved III.

2024-5-22-C: Approval of May 24' Personnel Report 2024-5-22-D: Approval of May 24-25 Personnel Actions 2024-5-22-E: Approval of Horizon Staffing Resources Contract

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



Discussion:

• I am very confident that our staff will make sure the vacancies can be filled. (Rouse)

IV. 2024-5-22-F: Approval of May 24' Finance Report 2024-5-22-G: Approve the Aramark Food Service Contract

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

Discussion:

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V. 2024-5-22-G: Approve the Aramark Food Service Contract

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

Discussion:

- One of the things we discussed in our committee meeting, I want to say it's sort of a disappointment
 we don't have other good choices for food service. I know this is a really big contract. We only got
 two proposals. I would love in the future to make sure we do some outreach in the future to try and
 get more bidders. I think our students are being served okay in the current capacity, but I think there's
 better food service options in the future. I do think we have to go with some vendor and make sure
 there is continuity. (Boomer)
- I am sorry for running late, I had a fire meeting run late. I see the document that we got appears to be a proposal. Are we voting to approve the contract that goes forward in the proposal? (Valdivieso)
- The state of New Jersey requires that we get board approval before we can initiate a contract with the vendor. So what is on the agenda is the proposal that we are approving tonight, and then we will submit some other stuff to the State of New Jersey, and then they generate a standardized contract from the state of New Jersey. Then that requires the Chairman and School Administrator signature and then a signature from Aramark. But first, we are required to get board approval. (Solow)



- Are we then going to have to approve the later contract at another meeting or can we approve this and power our attorney to figure out details? (Valdivieso)
 - This is approving the contract that these are the numbers that will be displayed in the contract in the motion itself when you open up that resolution. It lays out the flat fee, total cost, and the guarantee. That number is a guarantee based on the cash balance they are saying we will generate. That was significantly higher than the other vendor. That is the process, it is a little wonky that they have us get board approval before the contract is in hand, but it is the process the state is requiring we follow. (Solow)
- So do we need a second vote? (Valdivieso)
 - We do not, this is the only one. (Solow)
- Should the vote be to vote on the resolution and additionally give our attorney the power to negotiate more particular items in the contract? (Valdivieso)
 - o I don't think it's necessary because the numbers are not changing, but if you want that language you can add it. (Solow)
 - I have no problem with that language. (Jalloh)
 - o Isn't this standard with all schools, there is nothing to negotiate. Aren't we getting the same contract all schools in New Jersey are receiving? (Carter)
 - Essentially the state puts all the language about what this company is required to provide for the school, and there are some school specific details like address and the fees they are charging us but everything else is standard. Basically we type in this information, and the state types it into a contract. (Solow)
 - No particular terms can be negotiated, besides what we are voting for today? (Valdivieso)
 - That is correct. I also want to say I would love to have more options for food vendors, but unfortunately there are not a lot of vendors. The school is comfortable with what they are getting currently to continue their service. (Solow)
- I want to explain more of what we mean. I know we are limited with the companies that are certified to provide this work. We are training students in the culinary field, and nothing in the contract allows them to be a subcontractor. I would love to see our students be able to be a subcontractor in the future and generate more experience for our students. I would love to have more businesses that help prepare our students. (Boomer)
- There have been some racial issues in the past and based on our student demographic, it would be nice to deal with a company that was more sensitive to those issues. (Valdivieso)



VI. PACKAGE H - J | Motion: Towe - Gilchrist** | Approved
2024-5-22-H: Approval of NJDOE Mandated Tuition Contract with WestBridge Academy
2024-5-22-I: Approval of Field Trips
2024-5-22-J: Approval of Home Instruction Contract

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

Discussion:

- I am excited about these trips. (Rouse)
- VII. 2024-5-22-K: Approval of 2024-2025 School Calendar (Pulled)

VIII. 2024-5-22-L: Approval of MPTCS BOT Onboarding Manual

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

Discussion:

- On the board of trustees onboarding manual, do we need to pass that meeting? There are things that could change by the end of the year. Do you think it would make more sense to hold it? (Valdivieso)
 - Those things are going to consistently shift like our goals, but we need to pass that manual because it's time to bring some new people as part of the team. But those things are always going to shift. (Rouse)
 - I thought we were voting for this draft. I am trying to avoid voting on it now, and voting again on it in 2 months. (Valdivieso)
 - The goals are a separate document, so when the goals or policies are updated they will be a supporting complimenting document. This is literally the onboarding template manual. I hope that helps. (Griffiths)



- You're saying most of those pieces will be in the addendum. I see page 10 that has each board member with specific committee meetings. (Valdivieso)
- Can I ask we table this and bring it back next meeting? (Carter)
 - We can, but we have some work to do to onboarding some trustees. In the future if we could ask any questions about this before the meeting. (Rouse)
 - I would like to put something in place, because I would love to have had something like this and personally love to see this in place today. If 80% of the manual is accurate then I would prefer we pass it today. (Boomer)
 - I was just asking. I have no problem with us continuing with the vote. (Valdivieso)
 - The supporting documentation will shift as we continue to move forward, but that is not something we would have to re-vote on. (Rouse)
 - Well the committee dates and assignments are in that document but those are minor changes. (Valdivieso)
 - I think it's important to do it right the first time. (Carter)
 - I wonder what will shift so much as a new member. As Mr. Boomer said I would love to have this document. (Towe)
 - Are we going to have any new members before the board retreat? (Carter)
 - No we will not. (Towe)
 - I have a quick question, how did you develop it? (Mincy)
 - The manual is developing firstly how we conduct our meetings, and suggestions given prior. We talked about this a year ago as to how to create a manual. Our consultant and friend from NJSLA had a lot to do with this. (Rouse)
 - My concerns were not in the document. I think it has great information, but I was just thinking about the possible changes. My concerns are resolved. (Valdivieso)

IX. 2024-5-22-M: Approval of 2nd Extension and Amendment to Sublease - 534-544 Clinton Ave

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

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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.
 - No speaker's for public comment.
- 8. CLOSED SESSION 6:21 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: 6:21 PM ET Carter - Boomer** | Approved

Respectfully submitted at: 5/22/2024 Submitted by: Elijah D. Griffiths