

DC Public Charter School Board
Meeting Minutes

3333 14th Street, NW Suite 210
Washington, DC 20010

June 24, 2013
7:00 pm

Public Hearing

Board Members in attendance: John “Skip” McKoy (Chair), Darren Woodruff (Vice-Chair), Sara Mead, Don Soifer, Scott Pearson (Ex-Officio).

Mr. McKoy called the public hearing to order at 6:40 pm.

Charter Agreement:

Perry Street Preparatory Public Charter School (PCS)

Staff Representative: Monique Miller, Senior Team
School Representative: Shadwick Jenkins, Head of School

On April 8, 2013, Perry Street Prep PCS submitted a request to amend the goals and academic achievement expectations in its charter. PCSB staff met with school leadership for its “Capacity Interview” at which time it was discovered that there had been miscommunication around what it meant for the school to elect to adopt the Performance Management Framework (“PMF”) as its student achievement expectations. After this meeting, Perry Street Prep PCS requested that its public hearing, originally scheduled on May 20, 2013, be postponed so that it could reconsider the goals and academic achievement expectations. Perry Street Prep PCS’s Board of Trustees has since decided to adopt the PMF as its academic achievement expectations for the Early Childhood, Elementary, Middle, and High School grade spans, as per PCSB’s “Elect the PMF Policy”. This policy is listed on the following page. Perry Street Prep PCS has also proposed to revise several mission-specific goals. These are:

1. All students with disabilities will make at least 5% growth in the areas of reading and math on the district approved statewide assessment annually.
2. Eighty percent of non-proficient English Language Learners will make improvements within their English language proficiency level as demonstrated on the annual ACCESS exam, which measures students’ speaking, writing, reading, and listening comprehension skills.

3. Establish partnerships with parents through a Parent Academy that will provide a variety of programs and opportunities to support and increase student achievement.

Mr. Soifer asked Mr. Jenkins whether the Perry Street Board was fully aware that the new goals the school was proposing would be those used in the school's charter renewal analysis, scheduled for the 2013-14 school year. Mr. Jenkins responded that the board was aware of this and was comfortable with this.

Mr. Soifer asked for Mr. Jenkins to speak more on their data processes and issues..

Mr. Jenkins said proper documents were not uploaded to Proactive. There is also an attendance clerk that will focus on the attendance piece. There were several issues with attendance, such as personnel issues, where the correct data was not processed in Proactive. EdOps was brought in to help correct our data problem.

Dr. Woodruff asked what has driven the increase in student disability over the years.

Mr. Jenkins answered that the increase came because of the change of location and meeting specific goal deadlines, and providing customer service skills to our parents. There are also parent surveys that are distributed to parents and the outside special education team.

Discussion: Application Guidelines for New Charter Students

Staff Representatives: Monique Miller

Ms. Miller summarized the board memorandum that PCSB staff made available to the public on Monday, June 10, 2013, which was a draft of the revised Application Guidelines for New Charter Schools. The purpose of the revision is to improve and clarify components of the guidelines and align them with policies recently passed by the PCSB. PCSB staff seeks to gather input from the broader community during the public hearing on June 24, 2013, and through written comments submitted during a 30-day public comment period that will end Tuesday, July 9, 2013.

No Vote

2013-14 Charter Renewal Guidelines

Staff Representative: Sarah Medway, Charter Agreement Team

Ms. Medway summarized the board memorandum that stated the 2013-14 charter renewal guidelines based on feedback from the public, and expanded on the process beyond what was included in the application. This is only open for public hearing until July 9th, and will be put to a vote at the July board meeting.

No Vote

Board of Trustees Compliance Policy

Staff Representatives: Rashida Kennedy, Equality and Fidelity Team

Ms. Kennedy summarized the board memorandum stating the PCSB staff request that the board vote to open the proposed policy for public comment. Beginning in SY 2013–2014, all Local Education Agencies (LEAs) must maintain a compliant board of trustees as outlined by the School Reform Act, or be subject to a Notice of Concern. Schools must have two voting parent members on the board within the first 60 days of the start of a new school year. If a parent member resigns or is removed from the board midyear, the LEA has 60 days to replace that parent member. When the board is out of compliance with the requirement of having an odd number of members or Washington DC resident majority, the school has 60 days to become compliant, or must develop a plan of action and demonstrate that they have exhausted all options to fill the vacant position(s). Failure to perform the above mentioned steps could result in a Notice of Concern.

Mr. McKoy asked how the policy differs from the others.

Ms. Kennedy answered that schools submit their board of trustee's roster throughout the year. The PCSB checks the roster on a case by case basis, and schools are expected to fill the position if a board member resigns. PCSB currently does not have a policy for the consequences of not filling the position.

Mr. Woodruff asked how frequently issues arise with the board of trustee's roster.

Ms. Kennedy answered that PCSB staff have noticed the frequency quarterly, and whenever the roster is checked, there is a change in board members.

Mr. Woodruff asked if 10% of schools have a change in board members quarterly and if this is unusual.

Ms. Kennedy answered that she is unaware of the current percentage and it is not usual to have schools change their board members.

No Vote

Mystery Caller Policy

Staff Representatives: Rashida Kennedy, Equity and Fidelity Team

Ms. Kennedy summarized the board memorandum stating the PCSB staff request that the board vote to open the proposed policy for public comment. This policy

proposes that beginning in 2014, any school that is found to be providing illegal or non-compliant responses to callers posing as parents through PCSB's "Mystery Caller" initiative will be issued a Board Action-Charter Warning. In the mystery caller process, schools are called by PCSB staff members or consultants posing as parents to enroll a child for a year. The caller is asked questions pertaining to the enrollment process, including questions regarding enrolling students with disabilities. If the school answers all questions appropriately, indicating open enrollment, the school has passed. The schools are called at least twice and if a school has answered these questions inappropriately, the school has failed and could be in violation of the School Reform Act.

Mr. Soifer asked if this is the same as what was done in the past.

Ms. Kennedy answered that in the past, PCSB staff contacted schools to inform them that their answers were inappropriate, and added that it was a more formal process to inform the schools that their staff need to be properly trained to answer these questions. The process is the same, but stricter in the sense that there will be consequences for not answering correctly.

Performance Management Framework 2013 Floor Policy

Staff Representative: Rashida Tyler, School Quality and Accountability Team

Ms. Tyler summarized the board memorandum stating that the District of Columbia PCSB staff recommend that its board vote to open for public comment a proposal to increase the floors for some of the Performance Management Framework (PMF) indicators in the elementary/middle and high school PMF for the 2012-2013 school year.

Per the technical guide, floors are set at the 3-year weighted average of the bottom 10th percentile of charter school results. If this weighted average rises, the floors are recalculated. If the weighted average falls, the floors remain the same.

This year, some of the weighted averages rose substantially, resulting in one floor (for eighth grade math) nearly doubling. The PCSB has always been concerned about dramatic year-to-year changes in PMF floors; hence the 3-year weighted average. However, this rolling average has not prevented such dramatic gains in the floor. We, therefore, propose a modification to the PMF Floor Policy: **That in no case will a PMF floor rise by more than 33.3% in any given year.**

Ms. McKoy asked what the difference is between this Performance Management Framework (PMF) and last year's PMF

Ms. Tyler answered that this year the PCSB engaged school leaders in taskforce meetings beginning in January, and are currently holding more taskforce meetings.

The PCSB is able to share the impact analysis ran last year, but the results are pending for this year.

Ms. Mead commented that by raising the PMF floors each year, we are responding as the PMF policy was originally enacted. To her, the floor raising indicates that the PMF is “working” in that charter school performance is rising. She is also glad that there is some flexibility in the implementation, that no indicator will raise more than 33.3%.

Public Comment #1 – Latin American Montessori Bilingual Public Charter School. As you move the benchmark, schools could end up with lower PMF scores. If the job of the PMF is to communicate to the public those schools achieving high standards, then we should keep the same benchmark.

Mr. Woodruff asked what reasonable floors for tiers are. What is the reasonable expectation for year to year growth, particularly for the lowest performing schools. What is a reasonable expectation for schools that are improving?

Ms. DeVeaux said that theirs is the only jurisdiction using this – there is no national research on raising floors. That is why impact analysis is used. A range of 5% would be significant, but not smaller ranges. For these three years, we are not changing any indicator. The floors we are changing are numbers that no school would be proud of. But I want to make sure that as we do raise those floors, we are not creating impossible improvement. That is why this capping is better. To ensure there is no huge increase in any indicator, there cannot be any growth more than by 1/3 so we are controlling the measured growth.

Public Meeting

Board Members in attendance: John “Skip” McKoy (Chair), Darren Woodruff (Vice-Chair), Sara Mead, Don Soifer, Scott Pearson (Ex-Officio).

Mr. McKoy asked if there were any public officials that wished to be recognized. No public officials were announced.

Approval of the Agenda

Mr. Don Soifer moved to approve the agenda; Ms. Mead seconded. The board voted 4-0 to approve the motion.

Approval of the May 20th 2013 Board Minutes

Ms. Mead moved to approve the agenda; Mr. Soifer seconded.

The board voted 4-0 to approve the motion

Submission into the Record of Administrative Contracts

Mr. McKoy accepted into record a list of charter school's contracts valued over \$25,000.

Test Integrity Report: Meridian Public Charter School

Staff Representatives: Rashida Kennedy, Equity and Fidelity Team
School Representative: Chris Siddall, Regional Director

PCSB staff request that its board vote to accept Meridian Public Charter School's DC comprehensive assessment system (DC CAS) test integrity action plan. According to the plan (attached), the Meridian PCS board of trustees has committed to 10 specific actions. Each action has a due date and a trustee and/or staff member is responsible for ensuring the action is carried out. The plan addresses changes to the following areas:

- Making personnel changes (hiring a new principal)
- Implementing a teacher and leader evaluation system
- Recruiting new board members, especially members with an academic background
- Holding a board retreat and training
- Revamping DC CAS test procedures/protocol
- Training staff on new DC CAS test procedures/protocol
- Conducting benchmark assessments prior to the DC CAS
- Conducting a simulation of DC CAS administration prior to the actual administration
- Conducting a full school audit by Ten Square

Mr. Siddall made a statement before the board, informing the board of the steps taken to strengthen the test integrity of Meridian PCS. For the record, the investigation found no record of test tampering to corroborate the specific allegations in the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) report. They did, however, find that the testing procedures, training, and security were insufficient. As a board, we determined that these deficiencies did not warrant administrative actions against specific teachers. We did take decisive and comprehensive actions to eliminate these deficiencies prior to the 2013 DC CAS. The 2012 chairperson was removed, a new test coach was hired, and teachers were rotated to ensure that they were not administering tests to their own classrooms. There was also a change of custody procedures and full cooperation with the OSSE on the test monitoring act.

As a result of the immediate action, we are confident in the security and rigorous action of our 2013 testing process and testing environment. Working with Ten

Squares, we developed an action plan that will strengthen Meridian’s academic and organizational processes and structural balance, and result in the adoption of a stronger staff evaluation system through third party review.

Mr. Woodruff asked if there has been a response from the parent community and from the student body.

Mr. Siddall said the school’s culture is strong and this is turbulence that we have taken very seriously.

Discussion—No Vote

Request to Lift Notice of Concern: Meridian PCS

Staff Representatives: Rashida Kennedy

School Representative: Chris Sidall, Regional Director

Ms. Kennedy read the board memorandum stating that the PCSB staff request that its board lift the Notice of Concern issued to Meridian Public Charter School on April 15, 2013. The Notice of Concern was originally issued due to the school not submitting their monthly discipline records to PCSB for September, October, and January. Since the April 15th board meeting, Meridian PCS has submitted their discipline data on time and has been in close communication with PCSB staff about any data submission issues.

No discussion. Mr. Soifer moved to approve, Mr. Woodruff seconded. The board voted 4-0 to lift the Notice of Concern to Meridian PCS.

Request to Lift Notice of Concern: Perry Street Prep

Staff Representative: Rashida Kennedy, Equity and Fidelity Team

School Representatives: None

Ms. Kennedy read the board memorandum stating that the PCSB staff requests that the board lift the Notice of Concern issued to Perry Street Preparatory Public Charter School (Perry Street Prep PCS) on February 25, 2013. The Notice of Concern was issued due to the school submitting inaccurate attendance data to PCSB’s ProActive data collection system (attached). After conducting a third audit of the attendance records for five randomly selected Perry Street Prep PCS students, PCSB staff found that each of the records matched the attendance data for these same students in ProActive. Furthermore, it is clear that corrections were made to all of its students’ attendance records since the Perry Street Prep PCS’s truancy rate has changed from 0% to a rate that is more in line with the charter sector average.

No discussion–The board voted 4-0

Revise Conditions for Charter Renewal: Community Academy Public Charter School

Staff Representatives: Monique Miller, Charter Agreement Team
School Representative: None

Ms. Miller read the board memorandum stating that the PCSB staff recommend that the board approve the removal of the conditions that Community Academy Public Charter Schools (CAPCS) amend its charter to reflect an enrollment ceiling more closely aligned with actual student enrollment, and that the school offer programming for prekindergarten–8th grade as part of its charter renewal. Further, that the board clarify that the calculation of the 2013 PMF for Amos 3 will include its middle school.

Mr. Woodruff asked if the calculation of the PMF will include the middle school students.

Ms. Miller said yes.

Ms. Mead voted against the motion. Mr. Soifer seconded. Mr. Woodruff moved.

Ms. Mead disagrees with the staff's recommendation and believes the charter should be more in line with what the schools are used to.

Mr. Woodruff asked what it means if the board does not move to approve the conditions.

Mr. Pearson said that Community Academy's charter renewal will be approved with conditions, but Community Academy is objects to the conditions. It was a due process objection because they were offered a chance to a public hearing; however, the PCSB did not inform them of the public hearing in time. Therefore, they were not adequately prepared to represent themselves and have the opportunity to make their argument.

Mr. Woodruff asked for the current number of their enrollment ceiling.

Mr. Miller said it was about 4,000 students.

Mr. Soifer and Mr. Woodruff moved to approve, Ms. Mead opposed. The board voted 3-1. The motion carried.

Charter Amendments for Schools Joining DC International

Staff Representatives: Monique Miller, Charter Agreement Team
School Representatives:

DC Bilingual PCS – Representative: Brenda Moore
E.W. Stokes PCS – Representative: Linda Moore

Latin American Montessori Bilingual PCS – Representative: Laura Fleming
Mundo Verde Bilingual PCS – Representative: Christine

Ms. Miller read the board memorandum stating that the DC Public Charter School Board (PCSB) staff requests that the PCSB approve with conditions the charter amendment requests of DC Bilingual Public Charter School (DC Bilingual PCS), Elsie Whitlow Stokes Public Charter School (Stokes PCS), Latin American Montessori Bilingual Public Charter School (LAMB PCS), and Mundo Verde Public Charter School (Mundo Verde PCS) to expand each charter, where applicable, to serve grades 6 through 12; to contract with the District of Columbia International School, a newly-created non-profit charter management organization; and to increase enrollment ceilings to accommodate the expansion conditioned on each school having maintained its current track record of success at the time of such expansion.

Each of these schools is a member of the District of Columbia International (DCI) School consortium and will be referred to collectively as “Member Schools” in this proposal.

Mr. McKoy asked what “Member School” means exactly for the students.

Ms. Miller answered that for students who are interested in a certain school, this will make the program accessible when they enter school between grades 6 and 9, instead of feeling discouraged or pushed out of the program. Student can have access to the curriculum and that way the student does not miss out on their academics.

Mr. McKoy asked how students will adapt to a new language without prior experience.

Ms. Shaeffener answered that the student will be placed in a beginners’ language course to gain a perspective of the language.

Ms. Mead asked what the PMF reporting for DCI will look like once they are in the secondary PMF.

Ms. Miller answered that each individual school will receive a lower and upper PMF. The middle school will have a second PMF and the high schools will have a PMF score as well.

Ms. DeVaux also said that for DCI parents of 6-8th graders, it will be one school and one PMF. It will make sense for the elementary schools; as long as it is not part of DCI, it will receive separate PMF scores for their elementary portion.

Mr. Soifer moved to accept; Mr. Woodruff seconded. The board voted 4-0.

Charter Amendment to Change School Name: Howard Road PCS

Staff Representative: Monique Miller, Charter Agreement Team

School Representative: Latonya Henderson, Executive Director

Ms. Miller read the board memorandum stating that the PCSB staff recommends that the board approve Howard Road Academy Public Charter School's (HRA PCS) request to amend its by-laws and articles of incorporation to reflect its new name as Cedar Tree Academy Public Charter School (Cedar Tree PCS).

HRA PCS submitted the attached Amendment Request and the PCSB staff confirms that the by-laws reflect a change in name only and that their request is reasonable, especially considering its recently approved charter amendment to consolidate into one campus and serve only grades prekindergarten through kindergarten.

Mr. Woodruff moved to accept the name change; Mr. Soifer seconded. The board voted 4-0.

Charter Amendment Notification of Curriculum Change: Excel Academy PCS

Staff Representative: Monique Miller, Charter Agreement Team

School Representative: Nikki Steward, Chief Academic Officer

Ms. Miller read the board memorandum of the District of Columbia Public Charter School Board' (PCSB) stating that staff received notification on May 20, 2013 of Excel Academy Public Charter School's (Excel Academy PCS) intent to substantially change its math and reading curricula from what was granted in its charter to better align its instructional program with the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and the new state assessments, scheduled to be implemented in SY2014-15.

Starting in SY 2013-2014, Excel Academy PCS proposes to replace its existing math program, Saxon Math, with Envision, and will assess its students using a new set of assessments, including: Strategic Teaching and Evaluation of Progress for reading in grades K-3, Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) for reading and math in grades K-8, and Achievement Network Assessments for grades 2-8 in reading and math. They will retain MCLASS Text Reading Comprehension for grades 4 and above as needed.

The school currently serves grades prekindergarten 3-4th grade, and these changes will apply to the upper grades as they are added to the school. More information about Excel Academy PCS' new curricula and assessments is included in its notification, which is attached to this document.

Ms. Woodruff asked if a fifth grade will be added.

Ms. Steward answered yes

Mr. Woodruff asked about Singapore math

Ms. Steward said that core math standards are modeled after the conceptual Singapore math program.

5- and 10-year Charter Reviews:

Achievement Preparatory PCS

School Representative: Erica Franklin,

Staff Representative: Sarah Medway, Charter Agreement Team

Ms. Medway read the board memorandum that the PCSB staff recommends that the board grant Achievement Preparatory PCS charter continuance based on the school's overall academic, compliant, and fiscal performance.

Ms. Pearson mentioned that Achievement Prep PCS is one of the highest achieving schools.

Mr. Woodruff asked what the thoughts were on the current disciplinary policy and if there is an area for improvement.

Ms. Franklin answered that there is definitely an area for improvement and that is to meet the behavioral roles to support teachers and scholars who struggle academically.

Mr. Soifer moved to approve. Mr. Woodruff seconded. The board voted 4-0.

DC Prep Academy PCS

Staff Representative: Sarah Medway

School Representative: Rick Cruz, CEO

Ms. Medway read the board memorandum that the PCSB staff recommend that the DC Preparatory Academy PCS be granted charter continuance based on the school's overall academic, compliant, and fiscal performance.

Mr. Woodruff moved to approve, Mr. Soifer seconded, and Ms. Mead excused herself from voting. Ms. Bloomfield sent in a proxy vote. The board voted 4-0.

Washington Yu Ying PCS:

Staff Representative: Sarah Medway, Charter Agreement Team

School Representative: Tom Porter, Board of Directors; Maquita Alexander, Head of School

Ms. Medway read the board memorandum stating that the PCSB staff recommends that Washington Yu Ying Public Charter School be granted charter continuance based on the school's overall academic, compliance, and fiscal performance

Mr. Soifer moved to approve. Ms. Mead seconded. The board voted 4-0.

Extend Charter Agreements for Certain Renewed Schools

Staff Representative: Scott Pearson, Executive Director

PCSB staff request that the board vote to authorize the Executive Director to sign legal documents extending through July 29, 2013 of any charter agreements that meet the following criteria:

- 1) Have an expiration date of June 30, 2013;
- 2) Are for schools for which the PCSB voted for charter renewal in 2013.

Schools whose charters are renewed must enter into a new or amended charter agreement to cover the school's new 15-year charter term. Because the process of developing and agreeing to these new terms can be time-consuming, PCSB staff and the affected schools seek this extension to allow the work to continue for an additional 30 days. The new or amended charter agreements would be signed by July 24, with the expectation that these would be voted on at the scheduled July 29 PCSB meeting.

Mr. Soifer moved to approve; Mr. Woodruff seconded. The board voted 4-0.

Full Approval of Charter Agreements

Sela PCS:

Staff Representative: Monique Miller, Charter Agreement Team

Sela Public Charter School Representative: Jason Loady, Executive Director

Ms. Miller read the board memorandum.

Mr. Soifer moved to approve, Mr. Woodruff seconded. The board voted 6-0.

Ingenuity Prep PCS

Staff Representative: Monique Miller, Charter Agreement Team

Ingenuity Prep PCS Representatives: Will Stoetzer, Lauren Outlaw

Ms. Miller read the board memorandum.

Mr. Woodruff moved to approve. Mr. Soifer seconded. The board voted 4-0

Policy Votes

Staff Representative: Tomeika Bowden, Communications Associate

Community Advisory Group: Joseph Younger, Gloria Younger, Koren Stevenson

Ms. Bowden summarized the board memorandum that states after years of operating as an informal body, PCSB's Community Advisory Group seeks to formalize its role, responsibilities, and outputs to reflect the dynamic changes that have happened in the charter school sector and city public education overall. Under its new structure, the group will share general community feedback with PCSB about its policies and on charter schools, and specific feedback on ongoing projects and issues. The group's goal will be to create and engage in a two-way conversation between PCSB and the community that leverages community outreach and input, new technology such as social media, events, and other strategies, resulting in specific outputs.

Mr. Soifer moved to approve, Mr. Woodruff seconded the motion. The board voted 4-0.

Experienced Operator Guidelines

Staff Representative: Ms. Naomi DeVeaux, Deputy Director

Ms. DeVeaux summarized the board memorandum that states the PCSB staff recommends the board vote to approve the 2013 Application Guidelines for Experienced Operators.

Mr. Woodruff moved to approve, Ms. Mead seconded. The board voted 4-0.

Public Comment

None

The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 pm.