

**Board of Trustees Meeting for
Pennsylvania Distance Learning Charter School**
2605 Nicholson Road, Suite 4100, Sewickley, PA 15143
Telephone: (888) 997-3352 Facsimile: (866) 977-3527
Website: www.padistance.org

Board Meeting

Date: September 13, 2023
Time: 4:00 pm
Location: PA Distance Learning Charter School and via
Teleconference at 888.988.2893, access 73527

MINUTES

MEETING TYPE: Regular Special Proposed Approved

A. Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 4:02 p.m.

B. Roll Call

Board Member Attendance:

John Marous, President	xPresent	<input type="checkbox"/> Absent
William Donahue, Vice President	xPresent - phone	<input type="checkbox"/> Absent
Stephen Catanzarite, Trustee	xPresent	<input type="checkbox"/> Absent

Other Attendees:

Michael Leitera, CEO, PDLCS	<input type="checkbox"/> Present	x Absent
Aubrey Ploesch, Elementary Principal, PDLCS	x Present	<input type="checkbox"/> Absent
Kelly Crooks, Chief Academic Officer, PDLCS	x Present	<input type="checkbox"/> Absent
Kimberly Crandall, MS Principal, PDLCS	x Present	<input type="checkbox"/> Absent
Michael Whisman, Charter Choices	x Present	<input type="checkbox"/> Absent
Nicholas Kocuba, Chief Operating Officer, PDLCS	x Present	<input type="checkbox"/> Absent
Charles Mort, HS Principal, PDLCS	x Present	<input type="checkbox"/> Absent
Dean Pappaterra, Chief Compliance Officer, PDLCS	x Present	<input type="checkbox"/> Absent
Robert DiGiandomenico, Dir of Comms, PDLCS	x Present	<input type="checkbox"/> Absent
Stephanie Faith, Special Education Co., PDLCS	x Present	<input type="checkbox"/> Absent
Leigh Anne Lord, Recording Secretary, PDLCS	x Present	<input type="checkbox"/> Absent
Sheryl Allmon, Procurement Coordinator, PDLCS	x Present	<input type="checkbox"/> Absent

C. Pledge of Allegiance

D. Public Comment: none

E. Review of Agenda

F. Standard Business

i. Meeting Minutes of June 26, 2023 Board Meeting

Mr. Marous asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the June 26, 2023 Board Meeting.
Mr. Donahue made the motion; Mr. Catanzarite seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Ayes: 3

Opposed: 0

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G. New Business

i. Student Report - none

ii. Financial Report

Mr. Whisman provided the financials for June 30, 2023. He indicated that the annual audit had been started in August and there are no expected changes to the end of fiscal year financials. Current assets are up slightly from June 30, 2022; while total revenues were down slightly. Expenditures were under budget due primarily to a reduction in personnel costs. Mr. Marous inquired as to the investment status of the fund balance. Mr. Whisman indicated that while currently, the balance was invested in certificates of deposit through PNC, with rising interest rates, it may be worthwhile to investigate investing a portion of the fund balance in the PSDLAF, Pennsylvania School District Liquid Asset Fund which is currently offering a 7-day average rate of 5.2%.

Mr. Marous asked for a motion to conditionally approve the move of half of the fund balance to the PSDLAF pending confirmation of investment parameters. Mr. Catazarite made the motion; Mr. Donahue seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Ayes: 3

Opposed: 0

iii. State of the School Report

In the absence of Dr. Leitera, Mr. Kocuba and Ms. Crooks presented the majority of the State of the School Report. Mr. Kocuba started by presenting the current school enrollment figures including total enrollment, enrollment by grade level and returning students vs new students in 2023-2024. Mr. Marous questioned the current school procedure on student retention. Ms. Crooks explained that in Grades K-8, retention was based on building level principal recommendation, while retention in Grades 9-12 was based on credits. Mr. Kocuba went on to provide staffing information. Mr. DiGiandomenico, Director of Communications, provided an overview of the communication efforts for the upcoming school year. Mr. Marous explained that the focus of the December Board Meeting would be to explore our messaging in a more in-depth manner. Mr. Kocuba provided an update concerning the transition of the Student Information System to Infinite Campus. In his assessment, the implementation has met expectations. As of September 1, 2023, 98.5% of the active students had accessed the student portal. Mr. Marous asked if it would be expected for this percentage to increase to 100%. Mr. Kocuba explained that 48 students had not started attending the school. Mr. Pappaterra indicated that it is highly possible these students would be considered as "DNS" (Did Not Show) if, after ten consecutive days, the student had not logged onto the system. Mr. Marous asked if the school had attempted to reach the 48 students. Mr. Pappaterra answered that per our attendance procedures, families receive an automated phone call, text message and email each day of absence. Additionally, the Attendance team makes a personal call and sends a letter home at both three and six days of unexcused absences.

Mr. Marous provided an update to the Charter renewal process and indicated that there had been productive discussions with PDE and the process had been very positive. There is the intent to have the process finalized in the upcoming weeks.

Ms. Crooks provided data information regarding CSI, standardized testing and school rankings. She emphasized that creating a data culture would be a heavy focus for the 2023 – 2024 school year. Data

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surrounding achievement and growth in Math, ELA and Science was provided spanning the past five years. She stressed that the delivery of this information to the staff has been quite beneficial and the school's continued work with Teacher Clarity and partnerships with School Frontiers should support our efforts to meet our CSI goals.

Mr. Mort, Ms. Crandall and Dr. Ploesch presented the definition of "engagement" vs. "attendance" at the high, middle and elementary school levels. Many parameters of this "definition" are quantifiable and, again, supports the data culture mindset.

Mr. Kocuba explained the school's efforts with GoGuardian to use this program a bit differently which should provide the school with enhanced data with regards to a student's internet browsing activity which should allow teachers and leadership the ability to assess engagement.

Mr. Marous commended the school's direction for the school year and asked for a motion to approve the State of the School report. Mr. Donahue made the motion; Mr. Catanzarite seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Ayes: 3

Opposed: 0

iv. Employee Handbook 2023-2024 Proposed Changes

Ms. Lord presented the changes to the Employment Handbook which entailed the creation of an appendix focused on Reasonable Accommodations for Pregnant Workers and an appendix detailing the school's Lactation Policy as mandated by the federal Pregnant Workers Fairness Act (PWFA).

Mr. Marous asked for a motion to approve the proposed changes. Mr. Catanzarite made the motion; Mr. Donahue seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Ayes: 3

Opposed: 0

H. Reminder of Next Board Meeting

To be held at the Pennsylvania Distance Learning Charter School and by teleconference on December 4, 2023.

I. Executive Session (if necessary)

The meeting adjourned at 5:26 p.m. and into Executive Session

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MINUTES CERTIFICATION

Proposed minutes respectfully submitted,

Leigh Anne Lord
Recording Secretary, Leigh Anne Lord

12-5-23
Date

William Donahue
Board Secretary, William Donahue

12-5-23
Date