

**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: January 18, 2024
Time: 3:00 pm
Location: Pennsylvania Distance Learning Charter School
and via Teleconference

AGENDA

MEETING TYPE: Regular Special Proposed Approved

A. Call to Order: The meeting convened at 3:01 p.m.

B. Roll Call

Board Member Attendance:

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

Other Attendees:

| | | |
|---|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Michael Leiterra, Chief Executive Officer, PDLCS | xPresent | <input type="checkbox"/> Absent |
| Kelly Crooks, Chief Academic Officer, PDLCS | xPresent | <input type="checkbox"/> Absent |
| Nick Kocuba, Chief Operating Officer, PDLCS | xPresent | <input type="checkbox"/> Absent |
| Dean Pappaterra, Chief Compliance Officer, PDLCS | xPresent | <input type="checkbox"/> Absent |
| Robert DiGiandomenico, Dir of Communications, PDLCS | xPresent | <input type="checkbox"/> Absent |
| Aubrey Ploesch, Elementary Principal, PDLCS | xPresent | <input type="checkbox"/> Absent |
| Kim Crandall, Middle School Principal, PDLCS | xPresent | <input type="checkbox"/> Absent |
| Charles Mort, High School Principal, PDLCS | <input type="checkbox"/> Present | x Absent |
| Stephanie Faith, Special Education Coordinator, PDLCS | xPresent | <input type="checkbox"/> Absent |
| Sheryl Allmon, Procurement Coordinator, PDLCS | xPresent | <input type="checkbox"/> Absent |
| Michael Whisman, Charter Choices | <input type="checkbox"/> Present | x Absent |
| Leigh Anne Lord, Recording Secretary, PDLCS | xPresent | <input type="checkbox"/> Absent |

C. Pledge of Allegiance

D. Public Comment: none

E. Review of Agenda

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F. Standard Business

i. Meeting Minutes December 4, 2023 Board Meeting

Mr. Marous asked for a motion to approve the December 4, 2023 Board Meeting Minutes. Mr. Donahue moved. Mr. Catanzarite seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Ayes: 3

Opposed: 0

G. NEW BUSINESS

i. PA Distance Learning Charter School Charter Renewal

Mr. Marous provided background to the school's rechartering efforts. He emphasized that the school had experienced a success rechartering every five years since inception. Although the last rechartering submission was in 2019, it had not been acted upon and this has been the case with other cyber charter schools. Members of the school leadership team have been in numerous discussions with the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) over the past several years. PDE's stance with regards to rechartering has been to limit enrollments into cyber charter schools. As a public school, our stance has been that we do not want to contemplate limiting enrollment or establishing an enrollment cap as that would go against a "School Choice" model. We have provided several alternative paths.

PDE recognizes our position and our discussions have been constructive. We continue to stress that test scores and graduation rates are not viable metrics to evaluate our school as many of our students have not been enrolled with us for a sufficient period of time to see growth. In the end, an enrollment cap will be in place while the school retains the accountability designation of CSI. Once out of CSI, PDE is willing to enter into a dialogue to withdraw the enrollment cap. In addition, if school funding decreases, PDE has also agreed to meet with the school to discuss a change in the enrollment cap parameter.

Mr. Marous maintained that the school's relationship with PDE remains strong. He indicated that he feels the school has two options: (1) to take the opportunity to accept the charter with the parameters or (2) risk operating without a charter and taking the enrollment cap into litigation. He supports Option 1. He then asked for the opinion of the other Board Members and Dr. Leitera.

Mr. Catanzarite expressed that while not in complete agreement with PDE's stance, he did support approving the agreement as this would enable the School the best means of allocating resources to support teachers and students and raise performance.

Mr. Donahue also agreed with the path the School was taking and ultimately felt that diverting our attention to litigation instead of focusing on our students would not be in the best interest of the School.

Dr. Leitera agreed with the assessment of the Board. He stressed that we have a strong CSI facilitator team who is inclusive of PDE and their level of assistance has been overwhelming. He also stressed that the School's leadership team was dedicated to reaching these parameters in order to be released from the enrollment cap. Mr. Marous asked what the likelihood of meeting the parameters. Dr. Leitera stressed that the School knows what to do and how to do it. The School was making the right actions by using data and curriculum to drive instruction and working proactively with the CSI team.

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Mr. Marous asked if any other present staff members wanted to make a comment. Ms. Crooks stated that while the School has a long road to follow, this was a positive step forward and while there is a lot of work to be accomplished, the School's leadership was positive and optimistic.

Mr. Marous asked for a motion to approve the Charter as approved by the Pennsylvania Department of Education on December 22, 2023. Mr. Donahue made the motion and Mr. Catanzarite seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Ayes: 3

Opposed: 0

ii. Change in Meeting Date

Mr. Marous indicated a business conflict with the March 4, 2024 meeting date. All Board Members agreed to change the meeting date to March 11, 2024.

iii. Possible Non-Profit Partnership

Mr. Marous indicated that there was the possibility of working with a non-profit organization based out of Harrisburg who was looking for a cyber charter school to work with their members. More discussions on this will follow once more information is obtained.

H. Reminder of Next Board Meeting

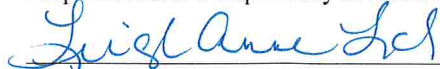
To be held at the Pennsylvania Distance Learning Charter School and by teleconference on March 11, 2024.

I. Executive Session - none

The meeting adjourned at 3:26 p.m.

MINUTES CERTIFICATION

Proposed minutes respectfully submitted.



Recording Secretary, Leigh Anne Lord

3/11/2024

Date



Board Secretary, William Donahue

3-15-24

Date