



# Palisades Charter High School

More Than 50 Years of Innovation and Excellence



## BOARD OF TRUSTEES

### BOARD MEETING MINUTES September 15, 2015 5:00 PM, Gilbert Hall

#### I. PRELIMINARY:

- A. CALL TO ORDER: 5:10 PM
- B. ROLL CALL: 5:10 PM

	Present	Absent		Present	Absent
Emilie Larew	X		Leslie Woolley	X	
Allison Holdorff Polhill	X		Ellen Pfahler	X	
Monica Iannessa	X		Dara Williams	X	
Marcia Haskin	X		Torino Johnson		X
Greg Nepomuceno		X	Alexander Shuhgalter	X	
Amanda Campbell	X				

#### NON-VOTING MEMBERS

	Present	Absent
Evan Holland	X	

#### PCHS MANAGEMENT/STAFF

	Present	Absent
Pamela Magee	X	
Greg Wood	X	

**II. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES:**

**A. REGULAR MEETING – JULY 21, 2015**

*Action: Dara Williams moved to approve the July 21, 2015 minutes as amended.*

*Seconded the motion: Leslie Woolley*

*Minutes approved as amended.*

	Yes	No	Ab		Yes	No	Ab
Emilie Larew	X			Torino Johnson ( <b>not present</b> )			
Allison Holdorff Polhill	X			Ellen Pfahler	X		
Monica Iannessa	X			Alexander Shuhgalter			X
Greg Nepomuceno ( <b>not present</b> )				Dara Williams	X		
Marcia Haskin	X			Leslie Woolley	X		
Amanda Campbell	X						

**B. REGULAR MEETING – AUGUST 18, 2015**

*Action: Ellen Pfahler moved to approve the August 18, 2015 minutes.*

*Seconded the motion: Marcia Haskin.*

*Minutes approved.*

	Yes	No	Ab		Yes	No	Ab
Emilie Larew	X			Torino Johnson ( <b>not present</b> )			
Allison Holdorff Polhill	X			Ellen Pfahler	X		
Monica Iannessa	X			Alexander Shuhgalter	X		
Greg Nepomuceno ( <b>not present</b> )				Dara Williams	X		
Marcia Haskin	X			Leslie Woolley	X		
Amanda Campbell	X						

**III. PUBLIC COMMENT**

*Non-agenda items: No individual presentation shall be for more than two (2) minutes and the total time for this purpose shall not exceed sixteen (16) minutes. Board members will not respond to presentations and no action can be taken. However, the Board may give direction to staff following a presentation. Speakers may choose to speak during the public comment segment and/or at the time an agenda item is presented.*

There was no public comment.

## **IV. PRESENTATION ITEMS**

### **A. PCHS Climate Facilitators Presentation – Allen Rasmussen, Richard V. Tauer**

Facilitators Allen Rasmussen and Richard Tauer were invited by Dr. Magee, Dave Suarez and Steve Klima to move the school forward regarding climate and communication. They have interviewed approximately 75 faculty and staff and reported that everyone interviewed was respectful. The facilitators will look at conflict within PCHS and how to address it. They suggested that without conflict there is no growth and it is a matter of managing conflict. They cautioned that this will take time. The facilitators reported that many great things are going on at PCHS, especially with the student body.

Based on their findings, the facilitators will focus on three areas:

1. Communication – PCHS is a large and complex school. Many forms of communication are used and certain methods lack nuance (for example, emails between staff are less able to indicate tone as opposed to verbal exchanges).
2. Decision-making is very important (how are people involved in the decision making process); and
3. Accountability – all organization members are accountable to each other.

The facilitators will present detailed findings and an Action Plan at a future Board meeting. They also want to monitor and share the ongoing results through the school year. This could help improve the organization throughout the year in a transparent manner.

### **B. 2014-15 Unaudited Actuals – Greg Wood**

Greg Wood reported that PCHS had a deficit of close to \$800,000 for the 2014/2015 budget year. Many steps are in place to avoid a deficit in the future. Contributing factors and solutions to the larger than projected budget deficit include:

- Lower than budgeted ADA of 85 from the original budget, which amounted to approximately \$600,000 lower revenue than originally budgeted. Attendance monitoring is now happening on a daily basis and students have been pulled off the Wait List to back fill students that transfer at the beginning of the school year.
- Utilities charged by LAUSD were received late in 2014-2015 and included amounts estimated to be at least 18 months of utilities. This amounted to an amount of approximately \$190,000 in additional utility costs in 2014-15 that were unbudgeted. LAUSD has been contacted to rectify the lateness of the billing and the lack of details provided. A meeting with other Conversion Charters at LAUSD is pending. PCHS has budgeted the 2015-16 Utilities expense to anticipate these amounts for a full year.
- Other areas under review include classified salaries that will be analyzed by HR & Payroll and consulting fees that have been budgeted at a vendor level and will be reviewed regularly.

### **C. College Center Update – Ruth Grubb**

Ruth Grubb began her presentation with a huge thank you to David Riccardi, Rocky

Montz and all of the custodial staff for cleaning and renovating the College Center. Ms. Grubb stated that there has been a 12% increase in AP test scores over the last two years. She reported that over 90 students have opened their files for early college applications. The PCHS College Fair is on September 29, 2015 at 6pm with over 100 colleges to be in attendance. The first hour is only open to seniors and juniors; Ms. Grubb and her team just attended a UC Conference and will be attending a College Board Conference and Cal State Conference in the near future. Ms. Grubb thanked Boosters for funding the conference fees. The PSAT will be given to all 9th, 10th and 11th graders on October 14, 2015. The College Center is encouraging seniors to tour colleges or otherwise be proactive about participating in something college-related that day. PCHS teacher Karen Newbill is arranging senior tours of four local colleges that day: LMU, SMC, UCLA and CSUN. There will also be college application workshops on campus. The College Center is asking for parent volunteers to handle crowd control on that day.

**D. PCHS Safety Plan – David Riccardi**

David Riccardi presented a comprehensive 238-page Safety Plan including a detailed list of protocols for all types of emergencies. The Board unanimously approved the Safety Plan. Dara Williams requested that the Safety Plan ensure that each individual listed has a buddy assigned and Mr. Riccardi agreed on this revision.

*Action: Allison Holdorff Polhill moved to approve PCHS Safety Plan as amended.*

*Seconded the motion: Ellen Pfahler.*

*Motion passed unanimously.*

	Yes	No	Ab		Yes	No	Ab
Emilie Larew	X			Torino Johnson ( <b>not present</b> )			
Allison Holdorff Polhill	X			Ellen Pfahler	X		
Monica Iannessa	X			Alexander Shuhgalter	X		
Greg Nepomuceno ( <b>not present</b> )				Dara Williams	X		
Marcia Haskin	X			Leslie Woolley	X		
Amanda Campbell	X						

**V. ORGANIZATIONAL REPORTS**

*Organizational reports shall be submitted in writing, it is recommended that oral reports be limited to less than 3 minutes.*

**A. Executive Director & Principal – Dr. Magee**

Report stands as submitted. Dr. Magee also praised the students who presented during the faculty meeting. She commended the teachers and students who persevered during the recent heat wave. Dr. Magee and Mr. Riccardi communicated steps taken for cooling additional classrooms and potential opportunities for funding.

- B. Chief Business Officer – Greg Wood  
Report stands as submitted.
- C. Director of Operations - Dave Riccardi  
See “Presentations, D.”
- D. Human Resources Director – Amy Nguyen  
Report stands as submitted.
- E. Classified Report – Torino Johnson  
Report stands as submitted.
- F. Student’s Report – Evan Holland  
Evan reported on working on the faculty presentation which was based on a survey by Health teacher Susan Ackerman. Football Fest is coming up. Homecoming is Oct. 24 at Madame Tussauds in Hollywood.
- G. Parent’s Report – Allison Holdorff Polhill, Dara Williams, Greg Nepomuceno  
Booster Club had two successful meetings at local homes. PTSA held a “Meet the Admin” and “Meet the AA team.” Parents asked about air conditioning.
- H. Faculty Report – Amanda Campbell  
Lisa Saxon expressed concerns about room temperature and thanking David Riccardi for providing a fan. Parents suggested fundraising for air conditioning. Alex Van Name asked for there to be videotaping of the Board meetings in addition to the current audiotaping.
- I. Budget & Finance – Dr. Minh Ha Ngo, Olivia Castro  
Budget and Finance will hold their first meeting Sept. 21.
- J. Audit – Greg Nepomuceno, Dara Williams, Amanda Campbell  
The committee has not met yet.
- K. Post-Retirement Health Care Benefits Subcommittee – Ellen Pfahler, Michael Stryer  
The first meeting will take place in early October.
- L. Academic Accountability Committee – Monica Iannessa, Evan Holland  
Chris Lee has rejoined. The first meeting will be held in mid-October.
- M. Election Committee – Emilie Larew  
The first meeting is Sept. 28 at 3:30pm.

## VI. DISCUSSION ITEMS

- A. **Recap of the Retreat** – Emilie Larew  
Board retreat at St. Matthews was productive with a good turnout. The 2015-16 Board Goals as produced at the Aug. 29 Board Retreat:  
Goal 1.PCHS will establish appropriate types of communication for all stakeholders in order to ensure a respectful well-informed community, sincere acknowledgment of communication, and an understanding of the proper avenues of communications.  
Goal 2. PCHS will ensure that curriculum will be aligned vertically and horizontally to enhance student success in all subjects.

Goal 3. PCHS will increase student success through positive classroom climate and increasing student pass rates.

Goal 4. PCHS will establish procedures/norms to foster a positive school climate and to build trust among Board members, administrators, faculty and staff, students and parents.

Goal 5. PCHS will identify all current funding sources in an effort to expand support for Palisades Charter High School.

Dr. Magee added that she had shared the Goals with her administrative team, the Curriculum Council, and presented them to parents at Back to School night.

**B. Governing Policies – Periodic Monitoring – Emilie Larew**

Emilie Larew noted that Governing Policy 2.4A needed revision. She suggested that the policy be amended to state that the Board will solicit input at least quarterly from each standing stakeholder Board committee.

*ACTION: Dara Williams moved to revise Governing Policy 2.4A to add that “Input will also be sought from standing committees at least quarterly regarding updates for agenda items.”*

*Seconded the motion: Marcia Haskin.*

*Unanimously passed.*

	Yes	No	Ab		Yes	No	Ab
Emilie Larew	X			Torino Johnson ( <b>not present</b> )			
Allison Holdorff Polhill	X			Ellen Pfahler	X		
Monica Iannessa	X			Alexander Shuhgalter	X		
Greg Nepomuceno( <b>not present</b> )				Dara Williams	X		
Marcia Haskin	X			Leslie Woolley	X		
Amanda Campbell	X						

**C. Board Member Response to Communication, Board Communication Protocol – Emilie Larew, Allison Holdorff Polhill**

The Board discussed policies, the Brown Act, and Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests. A discussion ensued regarding Board protocols and policies in addressing emails sent to the entire board and emails sent to individual Board members. The Board’s Governing Policy dictates that the Board Chair is the primary liaison communicating to the public at large and communicating Board decisions unless otherwise delegated. Individual Board members can respond to inquiries and acknowledge that they have received the email and answer a question to the best of their ability. Dara Williams gave an example of how she appropriately communicated with a parent recently regarding an air conditioning

inquiry. In addition, Board members may, in specific cases, refer such communications to the Board officers and the EDP. According to PCHS' Governing Policies, individual Board members are not to give to instructions to upper management, instead any and all instructions go to the EDP. Monica Iannessa shared research she had gathered regarding other school boards' communication protocols. She suggested PCHS prepare such protocols. She also emphasized that the EDP should be included in such communications. Allison Holdorff Polhill pointed out that communications related to the evaluation of the EDP should be directed to the Chair of the Evaluations Committee.

Under the Brown Act, according to attorney Lisa Corr:

1. If a Board member wishes to engage the Board or individual Board members in discussion outside of a properly agendaized meeting, can he/she do so lawfully under the Brown Act? Short Answer: While a one-way communication may occur outside a properly agendaized meeting for the purposes of providing information to the Board or individual members, there can be no back and forth discussion or a relay of discussion amongst a majority of the Board.

2. If a Board member is also a parent or employee, do the above restrictions against unlawful serial communications still apply? Short Answer: For purposes of compliance with the Brown Act, once a parent or employee becomes a Board member of a non-profit corporation, such restrictions take precedence over any asserted rights of a parent or employee to communicate with Board members outside of properly agendaized meetings.

Regarding the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), it was noted that all communications sent by anyone to a Board member is a public record discoverable by any FOIA request unless it is deemed privileged (for example attorney-client privileged). It was emphasized that parents, faculty, and staff members should understand that communications sent to the Board are generally not private. For example, recently an individual requested that the current Board Chair and the former Board Chair provide any and all communications from the faculty and all members of the general public for the last two years. If this individual had not retracted their request, the Board would have to provide such data to the public. It was suggested that a policy be put into effect ensuring that emails were kept for a certain period of time. It was also suggested that all non-employee members of the board be provided with a Pali email account.

The Board created an ad hoc committee regarding communication protocols and policies. Dara Williams, Monica Iannessa and Alison Holdorff Polhill agreed to serve as members of the ad hoc committee.

#### D. **Updating Board Committee Membership** – Emilie Larew, Allison Holdorff Polhill

Alex Shuhgalter agreed to be part of the Lifetime Benefits Committee. Marcia Haskin suggested creating a committee related to climate and communication. After being informed that there is a Long Term Strategic Planning Committee regarding Family and Community that covers these topics, Ms. Haskin agreed to be part of this committee.

**ACTION:** Allison Holdorff Polhill moved to reinstate Chris Lee onto Academic Accountability Committee.

Seconded the motion: Monica Iannessa

Unanimously passed.

	Yes	No	Ab		Yes	No	Ab
Emilie Larew	X			Torino Johnson ( <b>not present</b> )			
Allison Holdorff Polhill	X			Ellen Pfahler	X		
Monica Iannessa	X			Alexander Shuhgalter	X		
Greg Nepomuceno( <b>not present</b> )				Dara Williams	X		
Marcia Haskin	X			Leslie Woolley			
Amanda Campbell	X						

## VII. CONSENT AGENDA

### A. APPROVAL OF REIMBURSEMENTS FOR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR/PRINCIPAL

There was not a reimbursement request submitted.

### B. APPROVAL OF FIELD TRIPS

9/25-27 field trip to McGill Campground chaperoned by Maggie Nance.

## VIII. OUTSTANDING BUSINESS

No outstanding business.

## IX. NEW BUSINESS – Allison Holdorff Polhill

There will be a Charter committee meeting before the next meeting. Board members are Ms. Polhill, Monica Iannessa, Dara Williams, Torino Johnson, Evan Holland. Ms. Williams and Leslie Woolley will hold first Civility Committee meeting before next Board meeting. Both meetings are open to PCHS stakeholders.

## XI. CLOSED SESSION

*Board Chair will report publicly on any closed session action items for which a vote occurred.*

The Board did not go into closed session.

## XIII. ADJOURNMENT

*(Meeting Materials can be found on the Pali website under Governance, Board of Trustees, Agendas and Minutes, Material for Board Meetings)*

The meeting adjourned at 7:45 pm