The School District of Philadelphia

Board of Education
Public Meeting
Minutes
October 20, 2022

A public meeting of the Board of Education was held in hybrid format on October 20, 2022. Some Board Members, select staff, and some registered speakers participated in-person, while others participated remotely. Members of the general public who did not attend in-person participated via Zoom meeting platform.

The meeting was convened at 4:02 p.m., by Joyce Wilkerson, President. President Wilkerson reported/commented on the following:

- Acknowledgement of the Superintendent's 80 member transition team for their hard work and dedication to improving key areas of the School District and making an invaluable contribution to our new strategic plan.

- Recognition of the City of Philadelphia's Chief Education Officer Otis Hackney for his dedication and commitment to the success of Philadelphia's children as he prepares to step down from his post.

Vice President Egea-Hinton made announcements concerning recording, copyright, participation in, and viewing of the meeting.

Board Member Fix-Lopez provided brief remarks encouraging members of the community to register to vote no later than October 24, 2022, in preparation for the upcoming election on November 8, 2022.

Roll Call, Minutes, Announcements

Lynn Rauch, General Counsel, announced that the Board met in executive session on October 3, to discuss privileged, confidential personnel matters; on October 13, to discuss privileged, confidential, quasi-judicial charter school matters; and on October 20, 2022 to discuss confidential, privileged, personnel, safety and security, labor relations, and quasi-judicial charter school matters, and information or strategy in connection with the following litigation: APPS and UrbEd v. Board of Education, Philadelphia County Court of Common Pleas, No. 210302041 (alleging Sunshine Act violation); Sargent et al. v. The School District of Philadelphia, U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania, No. 22-cv-1509 (alleging discrimination in the school selection process); and Watson v. The School District of Philadelphia, Philadelphia County Court of Common Pleas, No. 200800222 (alleging claims under exception to the Pennsylvania Tort Claims Act).

Ms. Rauch conducted Roll Call.

> Members Present: Ms. Andrews, Ms. Danzy, Vice President Egea-Hinton, Ms. Lam, Ms. Fix-Lopez*,* Ms. Salley, Mr. Streater, Ms. Thompson *(remotely),* President Wilkerson – 9
>
> Attending: William R. Hite, Jr., Ed.D., Superintendent, and Angelica "Love" Speech, Student Board Representative

Attending: Tony B. Watlington, Ed.D, Superintendent

The minutes from the September 22, 2022 meetings of the Board of Education were presented for approval.

Yes: Ms. Andrews, Ms. Danzy, Vice President Egea-Hinton, Ms. Lam, Ms. Fix-Lopez, Ms. Salley, Mr. Streater, Ms. Thompson, President Wilkerson - 9

No: 0

Committee Reports

Board Member Thompson provided a report from the Parent and Community Advisory Council, including:

- Recognition of Advisory Council Members' participation as members of Dr. Watlington's Transition Team
- Recognition of Advisory Council members who register to speak at Board Action Meetings
- Advisory Council members met on October 13, 2022, to discuss a proposed mission statement for the work of the Parent and Community Advisory Council to guide the work of their service
- Advisory Council member shared feedback on Board Policy 916 - Volunteers
- Recognition that an Advisory Council member was featured on Good Day Philadelphia for the work of their organization, Taller Inc, providing a creative outlet for our scholars in the District
- Recognition of National Disability Employment Awareness
- Recognition of scholars and staff living with Down Syndrome, Dyslexia, ADD/ADHD, Audiology, Sensory Processing, Spina Bifida, World Blindness

Student Board Representative Angelica "Love" Speech reported on her and fellow Student Board Representative Sophia Roach's activities including their participation in a meeting with Mayor Jim Kenney hosted by the Mayor's Office of Youth Engagement on October 19, 2022, to discuss gun violence throughout the City of Philadelphia. Miss Speech shared that during the discussion youth leaders spoke with city officials to share their views on the current climate of gun violence in Philadelphia, organizations that they are a part of, and their solutions to the current problem in our city. Miss Speech noted that those in attendance for the round table discussion focused on four main solutions - unifying the city, youth engagement, access to programming, and mental health. Miss Speech also shared that she and Miss Roach encouraged the Board of Education to vote to approve Action Item 8 - Contracts with community agencies to support students experiencing homelessness ($3,000,000), and Action Item 9 - Contract with The City of Philadelphia's Office of Homeless Services (OHS).

Superintendent Remarks

President Wilkerson invited Dr. Watlington to provide remarks. Dr. Watlington reported/commented on:

- Capital Improvement Projects at Cassidy Elementary School and Richmond Elementary School
- Superintendent Transition Process

Dr. Watlington invited the following to provide a report on the work of the Superintendent's Transition Team:

- Ms. Andrea Custis, Transition Team Co-Chair
- Dr. Guy General, Transition Team Co-Chair
- Dr. Betty Morgan

Copies of presentations are included with meeting materials.

At approximately 5:45 p.m. Vice President Egea-Hinton made a motion for the Board of Education to enter into executive session.

The Board of Education reconvened at approximately 6:09 p.m. President Wilkerson announced that the Board met in executive session to discuss confidential, privileged, and quasi-judicial charter matters..

Public Testimony and Registered Student and General Speakers

Board Member Salley acknowledged the receipt of and summarized written testimony submitted to the Board from:

- Lizzie Rothwell
- Horace Clouden
- Julio Nunez
- Dr. Cheri Micheau
- SDP Speech-Language Pathologists

Complete copies of the written testimony are included with the meeting materials.

The meeting was opened to the public for presentation of statements by registered student speakers and general speakers. Board Member Fix-Lopez provided the applicable provisions of the speakers' policy for the meeting.

The following individuals spoke:

The following individuals expressed concerns regarding the current building and environmental conditions throughout District schools:

- Eleanor Black, Student
- Sonja Bekken, Student
- David Backer, Parent

Lisa Haver, community member, expressed concerns regarding lack of communication and information from the Board regarding charter school renewals and urged the Board to hold renewal hearings for charter schools. Ms. Haver also expressed concerns regarding the Superintendent's Transition Team Report and lack of specific recommendations within the report. Ms. Haver, on behalf of the Alliance for Philadelphia Public Schools, stated an objection under the Pennsylvania Sunshine Act on Item No. 23. First Philadelphia Preparatory Charter School – Application for Charter Renewal, Item No. 24. Tacony Academy Charter School – Application for Charter Renewal, and Item No. 25. The Philadelphia Charter School for the Arts and Sciences at H.R. Edmunds – Application for Charter Renewal.

Mama Gail Clouden, community member, expressed concern regarding the well being of students throughout the District and noted that she came to declare and decree that willful neglect of District students would end.

Horace Clouden, community member, urged the Board of Education and the District to bring back junior high schools for students.

The following community members expressed the importance of all schools having libraries and licensed librarians:

- Lynda Rubin
- Ilene Poses

- Deborah Grill

Leah Clouden, community member, spoke about the importance of having licensed building engineers in every school and utilizing resources to encourage student achievement and success, and urged the Board and the District to reopen junior high schools citing the impact that junior high schools have on incoming ninth grade students. Ms. Clouden also demanded that the Board reopen all seven swimming pools across the District, inquired about the head of procurement, and asked about teacher attendance in all schools.

Scott Peterman, community member, reminded the Board of their commitment to discuss changes made to the charter school framework at a public action meeting. Mr. Peterman also shared that his organization, Philadelphia Charters for Excellence, is prepared to work collaboratively with the Board of Education to schedule school visits and discussions.

Mary Beth Morgan, community member, spoke about the importance of transition services for students with disabilities and emphasized the importance of the MentoringTransitioning Voices program/ curriculum.

Diane Payne, community member, expressed concerns regarding the listening tour as a part of the Superintendent's Transition plan, questioned community engagement as a part of the transition process, and expressed disappointment in the District's decision to refer to stakeholders as customers.

Lynn Landes, community member, spoke about the adverse effects of COVID-19 mandates such as vaccines and masks.

Consideration of Action Items

President Wilkerson described the process for consideration Action Items:

- Action Items Nos. 4, 11, 20 were withdrawn by staff.
- Action Items Nos. 2, 3, 5 will be considered as Group 1 - Talent Items
- Action Items Nos. 22-25 will be considered as Group 2 - Charter Items
- Action Item No. 8 will be considered as Group 3 - Student Support Items
- Action Items Nos. 10 and 15 will be considered as Group 4 - Academic Support Items
- Action Items Nos. 13, 14 and 17-19 will be considered as Group 5 - Operations Items
- Action Items Nos. 1, 6, 7, 9, 12, 16 and 21 will be presented together.

Item No. 1. Amendment to Adoption of Board of Education Public Meeting Schedule 2022

Yes: Ms. Andrews, Ms. Danzy, Vice President Egea-Hinton, Ms. Lam, Ms. Fix-Lopez, Ms. Salley, Mr. Streater, Ms. Thompson, President Wilkerson – 9

No: 0

Item No. 2. Approval of Personnel Hires (Updated 10.13.2022)

Yes: Ms. Andrews, Ms. Danzy, Vice President Egea-Hinton, Ms. Lam, Ms. Fix-Lopez, Ms. Salley, Mr. Streater, Ms. Thompson, President Wilkerson – 9

No: 0

Item No. 3. Approval of Personnel Terminations (Updated 10.20.2022)

Yes: Ms. Andrews, Ms. Danzy, Vice President Egea-Hinton, Ms. Lam, Ms. Fix-Lopez, Ms. Salley, Mr. Streater, Ms. Thompson, President Wilkerson – 9

No: 0

Item No. 4. Administration's Recommendation for Termination of Professional Employees - WITHDRAWN BY STAFF

Item No. 5. Approval of Retirements and Resignations (Updated 10.20.2022)

Yes: Ms. Andrews, Ms. Danzy, Vice President Egea-Hinton, Ms. Lam, Ms. Fix-Lopez, Ms. Salley, Mr. Streater, Ms. Thompson, President Wilkerson – 9

No: 0

Item No. 6. Contract with Cigna Health and Life Insurance Company - Dental Insurance Program ($5,388,560)

Yes: Ms. Andrews, Ms. Danzy, Vice President Egea-Hinton, Ms. Lam, Ms. Fix-Lopez, Ms. Salley, Mr. Streater, Ms. Thompson, President Wilkerson – 9

No: 0

Item No. 7. Agreement for Services - Blackhawk Network Holdings, Inc.

Yes: Ms. Andrews, Ms. Danzy, Vice President Egea-Hinton, Ms. Lam, Ms. Fix-Lopez, Ms. Salley, Mr. Streater, Ms. Thompson, President Wilkerson – 9

No: 0

Item No. 8. Contracts with community agencies to support students experiencing homelessness ($3,000,000)

Board Member Lam and Salley asked clarifying questions regarding the services that will be provided through the action item. ShaVon Savage, Deputy Superintendent for Academic Services responded.

Yes: Ms. Andrews, Ms. Danzy, Vice President Egea-Hinton, Ms. Lam, Ms. Fix-Lopez, Ms. Salley, Mr. Streater, President Wilkerson – 8

No: 0

Abstention: Ms. Thompson - 1

Item No. 9. Contract with The City of Philadelphia’s Office of Homeless Services (OHS)

Yes: Ms. Andrews, Ms. Danzy, Vice President Egea-Hinton, Ms. Lam, Ms. Fix-Lopez, Ms. Salley, Mr. Streater, Ms. Thompson, President Wilkerson – 9

No: 0

Item No. 10. Contract with Jewish Family and Children's Service of Greater Philadelphia for PreK Parenting Education ($69,338)

Board Member Thompson asked a clarifying question to understand if data was reviewed in selecting this vendor/program. ShaVon Savage, Deputy Superintendent for Academic Services responded.

Yes: Ms. Andrews, Ms. Danzy, Vice President Egea-Hinton, Ms. Lam, Ms. Fix-Lopez, Ms. Salley, Mr. Streater, Ms. Thompson, President Wilkerson – 9

No: 0

Item No. 11. Memorandum of Understanding with Educating Communities for Parenting (no cost) - WITHDRAWN BY STAFF 10.19.22

Item No. 12. Authorization to Make Payments to Middle States Association Commissions on Elementary and Secondary Schools - Accreditation ($85,000)

Yes: Ms. Andrews, Ms. Danzy, Vice President Egea-Hinton, Ms. Lam, Ms. Fix-Lopez, Ms. Salley, Mr. Streater, Ms. Thompson, President Wilkerson – 9

No: 0

Item No. 13. Capital Awards at Various Locations ($5,956,926) - Added 10.3.2022

Board Member Salley asked clarifying questions regarding spending in the action item and asked for a comprehensive overview. Uri Monson, Deputy Superintendent of Operations responded.

Yes: Ms. Andrews, Ms. Danzy, Vice President Egea-Hinton, Ms. Lam, Ms. Fix-Lopez, Ms. Salley, Mr. Streater, Ms. Thompson, President Wilkerson – 9

No: 0

Item No. 14. Change Orders at Various Locations ($356,735) - Added 10.3.2022

Board Member Thompson expressed concerns regarding the District’s change orders rate. Uri Monson, Deputy Superintendent of Operations responded.

Vice President Egea-Hinton acknowledged the work that the District has done to decrease the number of change orders and encouraged the District to keep up the good work.

Yes: Ms. Andrews, Ms. Danzy, Vice President Egea-Hinton, Ms. Lam, Ms. Fix-Lopez, Ms. Salley, Mr. Streater, Ms. Thompson, President Wilkerson – 9

No: 0

Item No. 15. Contract Amendments with Various Vendors for the provision of Web-Based Tele-Therapy Platforms and Online Remote Student Therapeutic Related Services ($600,000) - Added 10.6.2022

Board Members asked a clarifying question and requested data to understand the District's plan regarding tele-health services and effectiveness for speech therapy. ShaVon Savage, Deputy Superintendent for Academic Services responded.

Yes: Ms. Andrews, Ms. Danzy, Vice President Egea-Hinton, Ms. Lam, Ms. Fix-Lopez, Ms. Salley, Mr. Streater, Ms. Thompson, President Wilkerson – 9

No: 0

Item No. 16. Contract with L. M. Kutys & Associates - Auditing Services for Office of Inspector General ($90,000) - Added 10.11.2022

Yes: Ms. Andrews, Ms. Danzy, Vice President Egea-Hinton, Ms. Lam, Ms. Fix-Lopez, Ms. Salley, Mr. Streater, Ms. Thompson, President Wilkerson – 9

No: 0

Item No. 17. Amendment of Contracts with R. F. Design & Integration Inc., Schneider Electric Buildings Americas Inc. for Security Camera System Installation - Added 10.12.22

Yes: Ms. Andrews, Ms. Danzy, Vice President Egea-Hinton, Ms. Lam, Ms. Fix-Lopez, Ms. Salley, Mr. Streater, Ms. Thompson, President Wilkerson – 9

No: 0

Item No. 18. Contract with SDG Security LLC for Alarm and Fire Telecommunications Services - Added 10.12.22

Yes: Ms. Andrews, Ms. Danzy, Vice President Egea-Hinton, Ms. Lam, Ms. Fix-Lopez, Ms. Salley, Mr. Streater, Ms. Thompson, President Wilkerson – 9

No: 0

Item No. 19. Contract with Verizon Business for Alarm System Telecommunications Services ($75,000) - Added 10.12.22

Yes: Ms. Andrews, Ms. Danzy, Vice President Egea-Hinton, Ms. Lam, Ms. Fix-Lopez, Ms. Salley, Mr. Streater, Ms. Thompson, President Wilkerson – 9

No: 0

Item No. 20 Contract with Yondr, Inc - Phone Free School Program ($5,000,000) - WITHDRAWN BY STAFF 10.20.22

Item No. 21. Settlement of Civil Action – Carl Watson and Dorothy Watson v. The School District of Philadelphia - Added 10.12.22

Yes: Ms. Andrews, Ms. Danzy, Vice President Egea-Hinton, Ms. Lam, Ms. Fix-Lopez, Ms. Salley, Mr. Streater, Ms. Thompson, President Wilkerson – 9

No: 0

Item No. 22. Laboratory Charter School for Communication and Languages: Authorization to Execute Agreement on One-Year Renewal and Renew Charter for One Year - Added 10.17.22

Peng Chao, Acting Chief of Charter Schools provided a presentation and overview of the proposed action item. Board members asked clarifying questions to better understand the timeline for renewal of the current charter for Laboratory Charter School for Communication and Languages. Board Members also asked Mr. Chao to provide clarification around possible changes in circumstances that led to the proposed action item.

A motion was made and seconded to execute the agreement and approve the one year renewal for Laboratory Charter School for Communication and Languages effective July 1, 2022.

Yes: Ms. Andrews, Vice President Egea-Hinton, Ms. Fix-Lopez, Mr. Streater, Ms. Thompson, President Wilkerson – 6

No: Ms. Danzy, Ms. Lam, Ms. Salley - 3

Item No. 23. First Philadelphia Preparatory Charter School – Application for Charter Renewal - Added 10.18.2022 - FAILED

Board Member Streater expressed concerns and a request for some additional legal analysis. Board Member Streater asked if the Board of Education passes a motion to grant a renewal charter, whether that means the school would receive a renewal charter effective July 1, 2022; and if the motion to grant a renewal charter fails, whether that means that the motion does not pass or means that the Board is making a decision to pursue a nonrenewal hearing for the charter school. Lynn Rauch, General Counsel, responded that if five Board members vote yes on the motion, then the Board is passing the motion and granting the renewal charter; that if the motion does not receive five yes votes or receives five no votes, that means that the Board has not granted a renewal charter at this time but it does not constitute a decision to proceed with nonrenewal hearings; and that the Board may consider a vote on a motion to renew this charter at a later time. Board Member Streater asked Ms. Rauch to clarify that the response provided would also apply to Action Item 24 and 25. Ms. Rauch confirmed that the response provided would apply to Action Items 24 and 25.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the renewal charter for First Philadelphia Preparatory Charter School effective July 1, 2022.

Yes: 0

No: Ms. Andrews, Ms. Danzy, Vice President Egea-Hinton, Ms. Lam, Ms. Fix-Lopez, Ms. Salley, Mr. Streater, Ms. Thompson, President Wilkerson – 9

Item No. 24. Tacony Academy Charter School – Application for Charter Renewal - Added 10.18.2022 - FAILED

A motion was made and seconded to approve the renewal charter for Tacony Academy Charter School effective July 1, 2022.

Yes: 0

No: Ms. Andrews, Ms. Danzy, Vice President Egea-Hinton, Ms. Lam, Ms. Fix-Lopez, Ms. Salley, Mr. Streater, Ms. Thompson, President Wilkerson – 9

Item No. 25. The Philadelphia Charter School for the Arts and Sciences at H.R. Edmunds – Application for Charter Renewal - Added 10.18.2022 - FAILED

A motion was made and seconded to approve the renewal charter for The Philadelphia Charter School for the Arts and Sciences at H.R. Edmunds effective July 1, 2022.

Yes: Ms. Lam – 1

No: Ms. Andrews, Ms. Danzy, Vice President Egea-Hinton, Ms. Fix-Lopez, Ms. Salley, Mr. Streater, Ms. Thompson, President Wilkerson - 8

Adjournment

President Wilkerson announced that the Board will be holding its next regularly scheduled Action Meeting on November 17, 2022, at 4:00 p.m.

On motion, the meeting was adjourned at 7:54 p.m.

Joyce S. Wilkerson, President
Board of Education

Tony Watlington, Ed.D.
Superintendent