

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors of Trillium Charter School

February 2019

Held: Thursday, February 14, 2019

Board Members Present: Kellie Shaw, Dawn Stanfield (left at 8:14), Jamila Tai. Joe Bryan

Board Members Absent: Rita Ombaka, Sade Garcia

Trillium Faculty Present: Patrice Mays, Karen Bennett

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 6:07

Approval of Minutes: Kellie Shaw moved to approve the minutes from the January board meeting, Jae seconded. Vote was unanimously approved.

Guest Comments:

Ruth Flores, president of TFT (Together for Trillium) read a brief statement regarding the announcement of the Portland Charter Administration' recommendation to Portland Public School (PPS) to revoke Trillium's charter. This would cut off Trillium's primary funding source. TFT has begun planning to contest this recommendation. **Ruth** has reached out to **Tara O'Neil**, Trillium's primary contact person at the charter administration. **Tara O'Neil** recommended a show of support at PPS's public hearing concerning the revocation of Trillium's charter. This decision was found by TFT to be inequitable, and the data used against Trillium seemed obviously, intentionally skewed against Trillium. **Ruth** spoke with Tara directly. **Tara** suggested that a large show of support for Trillium, from Trillium parents, may be enough to sway PPS's finally decision. "The power to change the outcome is ours."

Ruth encouraged Trillium parents, students and faculty to write letters directly to the PPS board of directors or to **Paul Anthony**, Trillium's representative on the board. She stated that she and parent **Alletta Brenner** intend to make a statement at the hearing on Trillium's behalf.

She repeated that the public hearing was to take place on February 20th and the vote, also in a public hearing, was to take place on February 26th. She encouraged the Trillium community to show up en masse.

Kellie Shaw (board president) made a brief statement to the community, stating that although we (the board) do not yet have all of the information, it is our intention to do everything in our power to preserve the Trillium community.

The PPS charter administration is basing their recommendation on data that goes back at least four years, rather than an action plan that was implemented in January of 2018. Math test scores were below state expectations, for children grades 3-8. Trillium was placed on academic probation at that time.

Two years ago there was a change in testing requirements, resulting in the 'opting out' of standardized tests being scored as a 'zero' for that child. Because Trillium is a small school this results in school-wide averages coming down, significantly. There was a school-wide call to families to 'opt in' to testing at this time. Test results for the 2018-19 school year, the year Trillium's action plan went into effect, have not yet been assessed by PPS.

The charter administration gave three reasons for their recommendation to revoke Trillium's charter-

1. Low math test scores grades 3-8
2. Enrollment decline
3. Financial struggles resulting from enrollment decline

Parent **Heather Hawksford** asked- *"Has this (the revocation of Trillium's charter) been recommended before?"*

Kellie replied that although PPS has gone through periods of hostility towards Trillium and other charter school's before, this is the first time we have reached this level of vulnerability.

Heather Hawksford asked- *"Is there a blueprint we could follow of other charter schools who have successfully contested moves like this?"*

Although other charter schools (Pioneer, Kairos, Alliance) have faced difficult struggles to stay open, this is the first time this exact situation has occurred in PPS.

Parent **Sonia Albornoz** commented a need for us to be organized around parent comments. Not everyone will have a chance to speak. Comments should be considered for maximum impact- *"put your statements in writing, because anything*

presented in writing will have to be considered by the board in their decision.” Each person will have a maximum of 2 minutes to speak, 20 minutes total in defense of Trillium. If no one is there to argue against Trillium we may receive an additional 20 minutes of time to testify.

Student **Sophia** asked- *“What can we do as student council members?”*

3rd grade teacher **Brenna** replied that student work and letters are being collected by Trillium faculty, along with evidence of project based work and other, not easily quantified through standardized assessment.

Board member **Joe Bryan** volunteered to collect these testimonials, to print them and to present them to the PPS Board of Directors during the February 20th hearing.

Question from **Heather Hawksford**- *“Could it be advantageous to contact the media?”*

Response from **Sonia Albornoz**- *“Yes, any effort to change the general perception of Trillium as a ‘failed school’ would be welcome”.*

Kellie Shaw added that It is important to remember that any continuation of Trillium’s operation will likely be conditional, based on our performance according to standardized assessments. A good goal might be to seek an extension until Trillium’s charter renewal, in 2022.

Ruth Florez suggested creating a petition to pass among Trillium families.

Financial/Budget Report: Karen Bennett presented the board with a tax report from the 2017-18 school year, along with a more accurate, current balance sheet and a more completed, draft budget. In her work to clean up Trillium’s budgetary reporting she has discovered a discrepancy of \$273, 768.38. This money is in excess to the amounts previously identified in Trillium’s past budgetary statements but it has not been accurately accounted for. **Karen** is doing the work to chase down each individual failure to document income and expenditures, in Trillium’s past. She stated that there was *“no misappropriation, just bad bookkeeping.”* The reality of Trillium’s financial situation is better that has been reported.

There are also grant opportunities that Trillium has not accounted for, resulting in an additional \$37 to 38,000.00 dollars at years end.

Tara O'Neil (the charter administration) also contacted **Karen** with a PPS grant to help subsidize staff salaries and loss of funds from dropping enrollment (this is increasing once again) and the Equity Fund grant that has not be taken into consideration by PPS.

This revised budget needs board approval before it can be submitted to PPS.

Kellie proposed that we approve the unfinished budget with an understanding that it will be amended with a completed budget as soon as possible. **Joe** seconded this proposal. The board voted and unanimously passed the proposal.

Director's Report:

Patrice Mays' shared that the February follow up the the 'state of the school' address had been cancelled, due to the charter administration's announcement of their recommendation to revoke Trillium's charter and conflicting schedule with Trilium Board meeting.

Patrice shared an outreach and enrollment report including a table showing advertisers and the cost of advertising with them:

- The Asian Reporter (\$330.00)
- Nextdoor (no cost)
- KBOO Radio News (\$702.00)
- PDX Observer (\$500.00)
- The Oregonian (\$5,400.00).

At the time of this meeting **Patrice** was still waiting for a click rate analysis from The Oregonian.

Certified Kitchen Report: Multnomah County health inspector will be visiting the school kitchen to assess its viability for commercial renting in the next 1-2 weeks. **Eduardo Gonzales** (Building Maintenance Coordinator) is finishing small improvements to the kitchen. Photos and contact info for kitchen rental will be added to the website as well as advertising through Overlook, Kenton and Arbor Lodge neighborhood organizations.

Assessment Administration Windows:

MAPS-Jan-Feb (pending)

NAEP for 4th graders completed on January 30th

SBAC/ Smarter Balanced- Upcoming in April

ELPA- Upcoming in March

Patrice reported that union negotiations are almost complete, pending the creation of employee handbooks and a salary schedule. The next day for scheduled negotiations is March 4th.

Professional Development for Staff:

- ELL- Occurred in January
- SPED- Taking place in February
- Test Administration Training- Coming up in March

Projects in Development:

- Trillium T-Shirts
- Letter writing to the PPS Board of Directors on behalf of Trillium
- An annual fundraising event **Trillium In Bloom** March 16th
- Latinx Fest 5/18 summer rentals and training. Patrice pointed to a group of Latinx parents who felt that this event was tokenizing and did not accurately reflect the scope and diversity of the Latinx community in Portland. **Joe Bryan** confirmed that he had also heard this perspective from specific parents. Board member **Jamila Tai** asked to be connected to these parents and board member **Joe Bryan** agreed to connect them
- Possible Trillium Farmer's Market in future

Patrice requested a copy of the evaluation tool that the board will be using to assess **Patrice's** performance. **Kellie** assured her that it will be forthcoming.

Meeting Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 9:44 PM