

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING  
MINUTES  
May 9, 2018**

**Mastery Charter School High School (Lenfest Campus), Mastery Charter School Thomas Campus, Mastery Charter School Shoemaker Campus, Mastery Charter School Pickett Campus, Mastery Charter School Harrity Elementary, Mastery Charter School Mann Elementary, Mastery Charter School Smedley Elementary, Mastery Charter School Clymer Elementary, Simon Gratz High School Mastery Charter, Hardy Williams Academy Mastery Charter School, Grover Cleveland Mastery Charter School, Francis D. Pastorius Mastery Charter School, Frederick Douglass Mastery Charter School, Mastery Charter School John Wister Campus, Mastery Prep Elementary Charter School**

**May 9, 2018  
6:00-8:40 pm  
Clymer Elementary  
1201 W. Rush Street, Philadelphia, PA 19133**

**DISCUSSION 6:00-6:55pm**

- Dr. Saliyah Cruz, Deputy Chief of School Culture presented on proposed FY19 changes to school culture at Mastery, noting that our aim is to balance high support with high accountability.
- Right now responses across the network are inconsistent: some schools are at an A-, some at a D, we want everyone to be at at least a B+. Therefore, we seek to create a system that is clear and transparent, standardized, student-centered, can be implemented with excellence and will positively impact the lives of students.
- To get to that system, we will employ four strategies:
  1. Creating a strong classroom culture
  2. Standardizing and simplifying discipline response policies (behavior, attendance, and uniform)
  3. Standardizing and simplifying dean response
  4. Streamlining the student support process
- Overall, culture should start in the classroom and teachers need to feel ownership rather than relying on deans
  - Training for teachers will include PDs on classroom management
  - We are pushing for all staff to have strong rapport with students and to build in culturally competent responses like micro-moments
- Interventions vary by age level (e.g. alternative placements for older students; demerits/merits usage varies by school)
- We are unveiling new strategies around attendance and lateness, including treating repeat lateness as an absence
- We also are increasing the number of students who will attend Wayne, though this will still be used as a last resort and based on specific student needs
  - A board member asked whether Wayne is the only option we have.
  - Response: Wayne is usually for students who get in fights or do drugs. If a student has an emotional disability and an IEP, they go to MAPS/KAPS, which is more therapeutic. An in school option is an anchor classroom.
- While students do not get to create the system themselves, we envision having town hall meetings to get their feedback.

- Responding to a board member question, Dr. Cruz noted that we will measure success by a reduction in the number of times that teachers call for support from a dean, and we hope to see a reduction in number of repeat offenses that students get
  - A board member suggested to track by new and returning students as well
- A board member asked about times when a child needs calming down vs. punitive, to which Dr. Cruz noted that our schools will still have calming corners inside the classroom where kids are taught how to identify for themselves when they need to go there.
- Dr. Cruz noted that board members will be asked to review and approve the handbook, which contains the updated policies.

**BUSINESS MEETING: 7:00-8:40pm**

Bob Victor called the meeting to order at 7:00pm

**1. Roll Call**

MCHS: Bob Victor, Robin Olanrewaju, Gerry Emery (by phone); **Quorum: 3/3 members**  
 All Other Boards: Hosea Harvey, Graham Finney, Stacey Sellers, Don Kimelman (by phone), Judy Tschirgi (by phone); Absent: Sulaiman Rahman; **Quorum: 5/6 voting members**

**2. Action Resolutions**

**10 minutes**

- **Accept April 2, 2018 Board of Directors Meeting Minutes: Pages 7-14**  
**R-1 (All Boards)**

***Resolved**, to accept the minutes of the Board meetings of Mastery Charter High School, Mastery Charter Thomas Campus, Mastery Charter Shoemaker Campus, Mastery Charter Pickett Campus, Mastery Charter Mann Elementary, Mastery Charter Harrity Elementary, Mastery Charter Smedley Elementary, Hardy Williams Academy Mastery Charter, Simon Gratz High School Mastery Charter, Mastery Charter Clymer Elementary, Grover Cleveland Mastery Charter, Francis D. Pastorius Mastery Charter, Frederick Douglass Mastery Charter, Mastery Charter John Wister Campus and Mastery Prep Elementary Charter from April 2, 2018.*

**Motion to approve R-1: Hosea Harvey; Second: Graham Finney; Motion passed with unanimous approval.**

- **Hiring Approvals** **Pages 15-16**  
**R-2 (All Boards)**

***Resolved**, to approve hiring, separations, and transfers of staff for Mastery network schools as presented between March 17, 2018 and April 27, 2018.*

**Motion to approve R-2: Hosea Harvey; Second: Graham Finney; Motion passed with unanimous approval.**

- **Policy Approvals** **Pages 17-21**

**Background: As a result of an Office of Civil Rights (OCR) investigation at a Mastery school in Philadelphia, the OCR directed Mastery to adopt a more explicit Title IX notice and grievance procedures.**

**R-3 (All Boards)**

**Resolved**, that the Title IX Notice and Grievance Procedures are hereby adopted for Mastery Charter High School, Mastery Charter Thomas Campus, Mastery Charter Shoemaker Campus, Mastery Charter Pickett Campus, Mastery Charter Mann Elementary, Mastery Charter Harrity Elementary, Mastery Charter Smedley Elementary, Hardy Williams Academy Mastery Charter, Simon Gratz High School Mastery Charter, Mastery Charter Clymer Elementary, Grover Cleveland Mastery Charter, Francis D. Pastorius Mastery Charter, Frederick Douglass Mastery Charter, Mastery Charter John Wister Campus and Mastery Prep Elementary Charter.

- Management noted that Mastery has a system for investigating infractions and a grievance policy.
- However, an incident occurred at one of our schools and a parent contacted the Office of Civil Rights (OCR). OCR found we had handled the incident appropriately but that we did not have a policy that explicitly says Title IX.
- The main difference this change is bringing is in how we document things, not in how we handle things.

**Motion to approve R-3: Robin Olanrewaju; Second: Judy Tschirgi; Motion passed with unanimous approval.**

**3. Finance Committee Report**

**15 minutes**

**Pages 22-25**

- Update on Finance Committee Meetings
- FY18 Enrollment Update
- FY18 Financials Update as of April 2018
  
- Yonca Agatan presented on Mastery financials, noting that budgets are consistent with prior months and that actuals are tracking better than budget expectations
- Enrollment: 11,355 students; 99% of budget target; 24% SpEd;
  - The main enrollment concern is Douglass: their retention rate is lower, during the leadership transition last fall we froze enrollment; and school does not have a waitlist
  - Next year, we are lowering our enrollment targets to be more conservative and we are working toward retaining the kids we have
- Revenues are on track; some savings to date as well (e.g. health benefit claims lower than expected)
- A board member asked a question on greater SpEd number than budgeted
  - Yonca noted we try to get in front of this before the school year starts, we try to spend the money in given year
  - Scott expressed that we likely are either retaining or attracting more students with disabilities

**R-4 (No MCHS)**

**Resolved**, to ratify that the Hardy Williams Academy Charter School PNC money market account be closed and the funds transferred to the Hardy Williams Schwab investment account (i.e., consolidating cash reserve funds in the Schwab account).

**R-5 (No MCHS)**

**Resolved**, to ratify the opening of a Schwab investment account for Frederick Douglass Mastery Charter School.

- We opened Schwab accounts to invest reserve funds; we inherited the PNC account and want to consolidate into Schwab.
- Douglass was newer and we had not yet opened the account.

**Motion to approve R-4 & R-5: Hosea Harvey; Second: Graham Finney; Motion passed with unanimous approval.**

**R-6 (Only MCHS)**

**Resolved,** that Mastery Charter High School requests Mastery Charter Schools Foundation to convert the existing \$500,000 of NST Operating Budget loan to a grant to cover FY18 operating budget needs (i.e., grant revenues will go towards expenditures of the advocacy and outreach, and development functions).

- Recurring resolution every year; foundation meeting is coming up in a couple of weeks

**Motion to approve R-6: Robin Olanrewaju; Second: Gerry Emery; Motion passed with unanimous approval.**

**Mastery Prep Elementary Resolutions**

**R-7(Only MCHS)**

**Resolved,** that Mastery Charter High School (on behalf of Mastery Prep Elementary Charter School) request a \$1,000,000 loan from the Mastery Charter Schools Foundation to fund start-up investments and initial operating budget expenditures, with a payment term date of June 30, 2021 (i.e., loan will be repaid over a 3-year period as expansion grant funds are received).

- We fundraise for new schools when they open, we are placing orders now, so we typically borrow from the foundation and pay it back as the grant dollars come in

**Motion to approve R-7: Gerry Emery; Second: Robin Olanrewaju; Motion passed with unanimous approval.**

**R-8 (Only MCHS)**

**Resolved,** that Mastery Charter High School permits the employees of Mastery Prep Elementary Charter School to join its self-funded insurance program for health insurance and related coverage.

**Motion to approve R-8: Robin Olanrewaju; Second: Gerry Emery; Motion passed with unanimous approval.**

**R-9 (No MCHS)**

**Resolved,** that Mastery Prep Elementary Charter School authorizes Mastery Charter High School to obtain all necessary commercial insurance coverage for Mastery Prep Elementary Charter School.

**R-10 (No MCHS)**

**Resolved**, to authorize the use of electronic signatures by Scott Gordon, CEO, for acceptance of any state and federal grant money received from the Pennsylvania Department of Education for Mastery Prep Elementary Charter School.

**R-11 (No MCHS)**

**Resolved**, that the execution and delivery of the Charter for Mastery Prep Elementary Charter School and the performance of the transactions contemplated thereby is hereby authorized.

**R-12 (No MCHS)**

**Resolved**, that no members of the Board or their immediate family will have business dealings with the Mastery Prep Elementary Charter School and that the Board will comply with the Pennsylvania Public Official and Employee Ethics Act.

**R-13 (No MCHS)**

**Resolved**, that the officers of the Board are hereby authorized to execute the Charter and to request payments under the Charter for Mastery Prep Elementary Charter School.

**Motion to approve R-9, R-10, R-11, R-12 & R-13: Graham Finney; Second: Hosea Harvey; Motion passed with unanimous approval.**

**4. Executive Committee & CEO Report**

**60 minutes**

- Salary Scales & Health Benefits
- NST Financial Sustainability

**Pages 26-46**

- Health Benefits:
  - Scott noted that the district is requiring employees to pay 1.25% of salaries for health care, so we must match this contribution
  - We will phase in the payment over two years, and end of year increases will be at least as great as the charge for health benefits
  - We haven't heard it's a big concern and believe we are very competitive still
- Salary Scales:
  - Principal Union increase of 11% so ours will increase by 11%
  - API increasing by 11% to stay competitive
- New Charter:
  - Board had authorized managed to open a new charter, which would diversify our school type; our charter application was rejected by the SRC
  - Last meeting, board authorized Scott to move forward in exploring resubmitting the application if space is still viable at the 900 Jefferson Facility
  - We have a pledge from an anonymous donor for \$2 million toward a building purchase, must use within the next 4 years
  - There is an existing daycare facility in part of the building with a 10 year lease; this would bring us revenue
  - As a comparison, management showed fundraising dollars required per child that would vary based on how many students the school would enroll.
  - If we are only able to raise that \$2mil, it would cost us between \$16k and \$17.8k per student
  - The daycare center is not a concern because it is mission aligned
  - If we move forward, we would bring on a consultant to try to get a better deal
  - Would request to the foundation that we enter into a \$150k option to hold \$6.8 million price for two years, resubmit charter application for fall 2020 opening

- A question was asked on how hard will it be to raise \$4.5 million given current foundation board structure?
  - Management speculates that PSP may give \$1 m, as they gave \$1.5 for Prep Elem; this brings cost down to \$3.5 mil, not impossible but not easy
- Scott made a recommendation to come back to the board in one year from now
- While little appetite on the management team to go through process again, and we would likely be rejected and need to get approval by Charter Appeals Board (where chances of success are high), the benefits are:
  - Financial gain to offset the increased money we have to raise
  - Some growth creates momentum and excitement
  - We want a more diverse parent base
- Overall the 900 Jefferson facility is the least expense option of what is out there now
- A board member asked a question on asbestos in buildings in light of recent article about the district, to which management noted that when we take over a building, we clean this up; but some of our buildings have space we did not renovate and therefore those spaces are not available to staff or students.

*A resolution was brought by Scott Gordon to authorize the CEO to request from the foundation a \$150k to obtain an option for up to two years to purchase.*

**Motion to approve: Bob Victor; Second: Hosea Harvey; Motion passed unanimously.**

**R-14 (All Boards)**

**Resolved,** to approve the phasing in of an employee contribution towards health benefits consistent with the School District of Philadelphia practices and the requirements of our charter agreement for Mastery Charter High School, Mastery Charter Thomas Campus, Mastery Charter Shoemaker Campus, Mastery Charter Pickett Campus, Mastery Charter Mann Elementary, Mastery Charter Harrity Elementary, Mastery Charter Smedley Elementary, Hardy Williams Academy Mastery Charter, Simon Gratz High School Mastery Charter, Mastery Charter Clymer Elementary, Grover Cleveland Mastery Charter, Francis D. Pastorius Mastery Charter, Frederick Douglass Mastery Charter, Mastery Charter John Wister Campus and Mastery Prep Elementary Charter. The salary contribution will be phased in over the next two school years (i.e., 0.75% in FY19 and 1.25% in FY20).

**R-15 (All Boards)**

**Resolved,** to approve the 2018-19 school year salary scales for teaching and admin staff for Mastery Charter High School, Mastery Charter Thomas Campus, Mastery Charter Shoemaker Campus, Mastery Charter Pickett Campus, Mastery Charter Mann Elementary, Mastery Charter Harrity Elementary, Mastery Charter Smedley Elementary, Hardy Williams Academy Mastery Charter, Simon Gratz High School Mastery Charter, Mastery Charter Clymer Elementary, Grover Cleveland Mastery Charter, Francis D. Pastorius Mastery Charter, Frederick Douglass Mastery Charter, Mastery Charter John Wister Campus and Mastery Prep Elementary Charter as described in the attached memo.

**Motion to approve R-14 & R-15: Hosea Harvey; Second: Graham Finney; Motion passed with unanimous approval.**

**R-16 (Only MCHS)**

**Resolved**, that the Management Agreement be amended to increase the management fee from 8.5% of School District of Philadelphia charter funding to 9.0%, effective July 1, 2018, and that the Chairman of the Board of Mastery Charter High School is hereby authorized to execute that agreement for Mastery Charter High School.

- Management reminded that the board made a decision to slow down growth and we are only opening 2 schools vs. 6 which means our structural deficit will increase
- We have already raised \$11 million and will run out of money at FY 22
- NST budget is \$22 million, 25% is fundraised but 80% of that is tied to federal funding
  - Our annual fundraising drive goes straight to schools, not the NST
- Management will be presenting a proposal to restructure the foundation and if needed to limit the size of the NST but we want to avoid this
- However, we anticipate greater funding because of the cigarette tax and inflation, meaning our NST deficit will likely be smaller
- We are now seeking to increase NST fee from 8.5% to 9.0%
  - With higher funding from the district, schools will not feel this
  - Nationally among charters the fee is 10 to 12%
- We propose coming back to the board annually to provide updates
- Responding to a board member request, management will list out \$11 million, the source, and restrictions for an upcoming Finance Committee Meeting

**Motion to approve R-16: Robin Olanrewaju; Second: Gerry Emery; Motion passed with unanimous approval.**

**R-17 (No MCHS)**

**Resolved**, that the Management Agreement be amended to increase the management fee from 8.5% of School District of Philadelphia charter funding to 9.0%, effective July 1, 2018, and that the CEO is hereby authorized to execute that agreement for Mastery Charter Thomas Campus, Mastery Charter Shoemaker Campus, Mastery Charter Pickett Campus, Mastery Charter Gratz Campus, Mastery Charter Harrity Elementary, Mastery Charter Mann Elementary, Mastery Charter Smedley Elementary, Mastery Charter Hardy Williams Academy, Mastery Charter Clymer Elementary, Grover Cleveland Mastery Charter School, Francis D. Pastorius Mastery Charter School, Mastery Charter School John Wister Campus, Frederick Douglass Mastery Charter School, and Mastery Prep Elementary Charter School.

**Motion to approve R-17: Graham Finney; Second: Hosea Harvey; Motion passed with unanimous approval.**

**R-18 (Only MCHS)**

**Resolved**, that Mastery Charter High School approve contracts in an amount not to exceed \$2.4 million for the services of Workday, Navigator Management Partners, and Lever for core HR and payroll and applicant tracking.

- TIF grant \$16.7 mil overall, up to \$1.4 on TMS
- One-time implementation costs of \$750k covered by TIF grant
- Next 3-5 years, recurring costs
- New vendors, new contracts, funded already

**Motion to approve R-18: Robin Olanrewaju; Second: Gerry Emery; Motion passed with unanimous approval.**

**R-19 (All Boards)**

**Resolved**, to adopt the revised school calendar for 2017-18 as presented reflecting make up days for snow closings (i.e., adding make up days from June 18th through 20th) for Mastery Charter High School, Mastery Charter Thomas Campus, Mastery Charter Shoemaker Campus, Mastery Charter Pickett Campus, Mastery Charter Mann Elementary, Mastery Charter Harrity Elementary, Mastery Charter Smedley Elementary, Hardy Williams Academy Mastery Charter, Simon Gratz High School Mastery Charter, Mastery Charter Clymer Elementary, Grover Cleveland Mastery Charter, Francis D. Pastorius Mastery Charter, Frederick Douglass Mastery Charter, Mastery Charter John Wister Campus and Mastery Prep Elementary Charter.

**Motion to approve R-19: Hosea Harvey; Second: Graham Finney; Motion passed with unanimous approval.**

**R-20 (All Boards)**

**Resolved**, to adopt the school calendar for 2018-19 as presented for Mastery Charter High School, Mastery Charter Thomas Campus, Mastery Charter Shoemaker Campus, Mastery Charter Pickett Campus, Mastery Charter Mann Elementary, Mastery Charter Harrity Elementary, Mastery Charter Smedley Elementary, Hardy Williams Academy Mastery Charter, Simon Gratz High School Mastery Charter, Mastery Charter Clymer Elementary, Grover Cleveland Mastery Charter, Francis D. Pastorius Mastery Charter, Frederick Douglass Mastery Charter, Mastery Charter John Wister Campus and Mastery Prep Elementary Charter and management is directed to recognize Veteran's Day.

- Management presented the draft calendar to staff for their feedback and received about 6 responses concerned about losing a week long spring break
  - While management would also like, we think the proposed calendar does the best job of increasing student days
- Some board members did not think we should cut Veterans Day and a suggestion was made to change the May Election Day PD day to a student day.
  - Management noted that this can be hard for some schools to manage (for example if the polling station is the cafeteria).
- Board members noted that so long as we something in school to celebrate Veteran's Day, that would be ok
- Another board member noted a concern re: over-recognizing vs. other holidays
- Board members requested a report on how management will ask schools to recognize Veteran's Day

**Motion to approve R-20: Don Kimelman; Second: Graham Finney; Motion passed with unanimous approval.**

**R-21 (No MCHS)**

**Resolved**, that Sulaiman Rahman be elected as a member of the Board of Trustees of Mastery Prep Elementary Charter School (formerly known as Mastery Charter School Gillespie Campus), effective November 15, 2017.



**R-22 (No MCHS)**

**Resolved**, to accept the resignation of Board Member Skip Maner, effective April 26, 2018.

**Motion to approve R-21 & R-22: Hosea Harvey; Second: Graham Finney; Motion passed with unanimous approval.**

**5. Development Report**

**10 minutes  
Pages 47-48**

- Managed reported that we were accepted for a William Penn grant, which means another 3 years working with the Children's Literacy Initiative
- Management will update board at June meeting re: status of Hamilton grant, also for early literacy
- Board chair asked the board for 100% giving, nothing how much you give is up to you
- Management will come back to talk about foundation board strategy at a future meeting

**6. Expulsions**

- Regarding R-23, 24, & 25, Gratz has recommended that the expelled students be allowed to finish the school year; Mastery is being thoughtful, creative and finding balanced solution to a difficult problem

**R-23 (No MCHS)**

**Resolved**, to expel HT from Gratz.

**Motion to approve R-23: Hosea Harvey; Second: Graham Finney; Motion passed with unanimous approval.**

**R-24 (No MCHS)**

**Resolved**, to expel AC from Gratz.

**Motion to approve R-24: Hosea Harvey; Second: Graham Finney; Motion passed with unanimous approval.**

**R-25 (No MCHS)**

**Resolved**, to expel NC from Gratz.

**Motion to approve R-25: Hosea Harvey; Second: Graham Finney; Motion passed with unanimous approval.**

**R-26 (No MCHS)**

**Resolved**, that recommendation of the Hearing Examiner in the matter of IH is hereby adopted and IH is not expelled from Gratz.

- Board noted to change the language of R-26 to delete the reference to the report (this has been reflected in resolution language above)
- The student was recommended by hearing examiner for non-expulsion because cumulative level 2 offenses is not explicitly called out as cause for expulsion in our handbook, Gratz is aware of the recommendation and is preparing for solutions to IH to return to school

- Scott noted that we will fix this ambiguity next year in our policy changes, he pressed the board to consider that if the school recommends expulsion, management thinks we should expel, and noted that this will impact other children in a significant way
- Were we to expel and the family pushed back, the remedy would be to restore the student to school, not a civil suit
- Counsel confirmed that the family was not told about the recommendation to not expel nor did they receive a copy of the report
- The board disagreed about appropriate course of action. Some felt that while next year, we might have clearer rules, these rules are not in place today.

**Motion to approve R-26: Graham Finney; Second: Don Kimelman; Motion fails on a 1:1 tie. (Votes: Judy Tschirgi-in favor; Stacey Sellers-opposed; Don Kimelman, Graham Finney, Hosea Harvey: abstain)**

**A motion was made to expel IH from Gratz (effective date is determined by the school): Motion made by: Stacey Sellers; Second: Judy Tschirgi; Motion fails on a 1-4 vote. (Votes: Stacey Sellers-in favor; Judy Tschirgi, Don Kimelman, Hosea Harvey, Graham Finney-opposed).**

- Disposition of the board was to not expel, vote postponed and will be taken up at June meeting

#### **7. Public Comment (3 minutes per public comment)**

- Chiwishi Abney, Hero Philly Unlimited
  - Recent grad of Penn Community Scholars Program, here on behalf of other parents
  - Former extracurricular leader at Gratz
  - Last few months had trouble getting paid, can't be in the school without your clearances, that process is not being followed and bringing to Board's attention
  - Not introduced to principal, terminated over the phone for no apparent reason, several emails of accolades, no problem until she made repeated attempts to get paid
  - Understands heavy responsibilities, asking to investigate the situation and look into this and to be reinstated

#### **8. Adjourn all Boards**

**Motion to adjourn: Hosea Harvey; Second: Graham Finney; Motion passed with unanimous approval.**

**Meeting adjourned at 9:20pm.**