



Special Meeting: Committee of the Whole

The Chicago High School for the Arts Board of Directors Meeting

February 23, 2022 at 4:00pm

Location: Online, via Zoom

To attend via video conferencing, please reach out to Ursula McGregory (umcgregory@chiarts.org), who will send the appropriate information.

Votes are expected to be taken at this meeting

Welcome / Call to Order / Roll Call	Cynthia Plouché
Board Chair Report	Cynthia Plouché
Head of School Report	Terri Milsap
Committee Reports	
Program Excellence Committee	Duffie Adelson
Governance Committee	John McCambridge
Parent Support Organization	Janette Cortez-Duewel and Angela Kiefer
Actions to be Taken by Board	Cynthia Plouché
Public Comment	
Adjournment	
Next Board Meeting: March 14, 2022 at 4:00pm	

The Chicago High School for the Arts (ChiArts®) develops the next generation of diverse, artistically promising scholar-artists through intensive pre-professional training in the arts, combined with a comprehensive college preparatory curriculum.



ChiArts Board Meeting February 23, 2022

The Chicago High School for the Arts
Board of Directors Meeting
4:00 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.
Online - via Zoom
Minutes for February 23, 2022

Present (on call): Duffie Adelson, Carlos Azcoitia, Deirdra Donahue, Lesley-Ann Brown-Henderson, Warren Chapman, Janette Cortes-Duewel, Inger Burnett-Zeigler, Kay Mabie, Chris Falcon, Christine Gallagher, John McCambridge, Carol Friedman, and Cynthia Plouché

Others Present: Terri Milsap (Head of School & Principal), Tina Boyer Brown (Artistic Director), Abbey Cullen (Assistant Principal), Ursula McGregory (Executive Assistant)

Quorum: Yes

The meeting of the Board of Directors (the “Board”) of The Chicago High School for the Arts (“ChiArts”) was held pursuant to a Call & Notice served on all Directors. Board Chair, Cynthia Plouché (“Cynthia”) called the general assembly to order at 4:00 p.m.

BOARD BRIEF

The ChiArts Board of Directors is grateful to the parents, students and teachers who have reached out to share thoughts, ideas and concerns. One common theme we have heard is about the need for more frequent and transparent communication on key topics being addressed by the Board. We have heard you and we agree. This communication is the first edition of a *Board Briefs* document that will be distributed to our school community and posted on our website as soon as possible following each of our board meetings.

COMMITMENT TO SCHOOL SAFETY FOR ALL

We are committed to providing a safe, secure and respectful learning environment in our school and classrooms. The Student Code of Conduct details our school policies regarding conduct, attendance, conflict resolution, discipline and more. The Board has requested that Principal Milsap work with our new Dean of Students to distribute, share, discuss and answer any questions about this document, as well as our shared school values, with all ChiArts students. These documents will also be provided to ChiArts parents and staff.

There have been some concerns raised about incidents in our gender-neutral bathroom on the second

floor. That bathroom was established mainly for transgender and non-binary students based on their feedback on where they would be most comfortable – previously, their only option outside of our typical gender-based bathrooms was a locked single-stall bathroom where a key was needed each time it was used. Since learning recently about potential instances of bullying in this gender-neutral bathroom, school leaders have taken several actions, which Principal Milsap shared at the Board meeting:

- Reviewing videotape from security footage to take disciplinary action, if warranted
- Talking with students, especially those who identify as transgender and non-binary directly about their concerns and their ideas for solutions that would help everyone feel safe
- Reaching out to other schools who are experiencing similar issues for their suggested solutions
- Advising our security guard to do additional rounds near that bathroom and, with the addition of our new Dean of Students, asking him to do the same
- Sharing with all students a presentation that was created by ChiArts teachers about respecting sexual and gender differences and supporting each other
- Considering moving the bathroom from the second floor—more centrally located among our three floors—to the one right outside of the school office on the first floor

Please note that, as a contract school in the Chicago Public School (CPS) system, any allegation related to sexual or gender-based misconduct must be reported to and handled based on direction provided by the CPS Office of Student Protection (OSP). Our responses to such complaints, which may include an investigation, appropriate discipline, counseling and other recommended supportive measures, must be implemented consistent with the Office of Student Protection policy. Specific actions and outcomes are confidential based on legal obligations for protecting student privacy.

MEETINGS WITH CONSERVATORY TEACHERS

Principal Milsap recently reached out with an invitation to meet, either individually or in pairs at the choice of the teachers, with members of our Theatre faculty. To inform our preparatory strategic planning work around how to enhance and strengthen our conservatory programs, the Board would like to schedule similar meetings with Theatre faculty after those with Principal Milsap. We will send out some windows of opportunity for our Board members next week.

The Board will also schedule similar meetings with faculty members from the other conservatory programs in the next several weeks.

STRATEGIC PLANNING/SURVEY UPDATE

The Board's Executive Committee is currently interviewing consultants with experience in arts education



and nonprofit best practices to guide us through the strategic planning process. We have scheduled preliminary meetings with three firms and are waiting to hear from two others.

We are currently working to identify a research partner to develop and implement a survey of all ChiArts students, faculty, staff, parents and Board members. This survey will help us better understand the culture and climate of the school, as well as to identify areas where we need to focus both our planning and resources. We hope to conduct this survey within the next few weeks.

Stay tuned for more information about other opportunities to participate in the strategic planning process.

HUMAN RESOURCE (HR) REVIEW STATUS

We have engaged an independent human resources expert to thoroughly review and make any recommendations necessary to ensure that our HR processes and practices regarding hiring, evaluation, professional development, discipline, grievance and termination are thorough and fair, implemented in a timely and consistent manner that is respectful of our employees and their privacy, compliant with our contractual obligations to our union and to Chicago Public Schools, and, most importantly, that they serve to support the growth and development of our faculty and staff at every stage of their careers.

This work will begin this week and we expect that this review will take approximately 14-21 days to complete. An executive summary of the findings and recommendations from that process will be shared with our parents and staff after being fully reviewed by the Board.

As we do each spring, the Board will conduct an annual performance review of the school principal.

COMMUNICATIONS AUDIT PROPOSAL REQUESTED

The Board is currently in discussions to obtain a proposal from a consultant with expertise in K-12 education to conduct a comprehensive audit of our current communications, and offer recommendations to ensure that they are timely, transparent, clear and address matters of concern, while providing opportunities for feedback from our school community. Here, too, an executive summary of the findings and recommendations will be shared with our school community after being fully reviewed by the Board.

We expect to have this consultant on board soon so that they can also participate in the development of and review the findings from our survey of the ChiArts community.



PARENT, TEACHER AND STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

The Parent Support Organization (PSO) is a valued partner to the Board. We encourage all parents, staff and students to participate in this group's work to build and strengthen relationships among ChiArts stakeholders and to advocate for initiatives to support our students and staff. As previously communicated, at our March 14 Board meeting, I will propose that the Board consider changes necessary for two PSO representatives on the Board.

The Board welcomes feedback and ideas from our school community via our new email at board@chiarts.org, as well as through public participation at our Board meetings. A schedule of upcoming Board meeting dates, agenda and minutes are available on the ChiArts [website](#). Please note that, to support both immediate actions and our strategic planning process, we added three additional Board meetings this spring, with the first one held this past Wednesday. Our next regular Board meeting on Monday, March 14 will be conducted onsite at ChiArts. We anticipate that our April and June Committee of the Whole meetings will also be held onsite and are planning for these meetings to be scheduled after 5:00 p.m.

Cynthia Plouché
Board Chair