

The Chicago High School for the Arts Board of Directors Meeting Agenda

Tuesday, February 6, 2024 @ 5:30 pm Location: Auditorium at ChiArts 2714 W Augusta Blvd Chicago, IL 60622 The Chicago High School for the Arts will convene a regular board meeting on Tuesday, February 6, 2024 beginning at 5:30 PM for an open session. Board members, citizens, and staff may participate in the meeting.

<https://meet.google.com/tpm-pkss-hzo>

Welcome / Call to Order / Roll Call

Approval of Minutes of November 14, 2023*

Duffie Adelson

Student Performance

Executive (Closed) Session - In accordance with section 2(c) of the Open Meetings Act (the discussion of the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, collective bargaining or dismissal of a specific employee or legal counsel for the public body).

Presentations & Reports:

Executive Director's Report

Tina Boyer Brown

- General Update
- Review of Renewal conditions from I&I

Principal's Report

Pavielle Driver

Artistic Director's Report

Greer Reed

Report from ChiArts Foundation

Johnny Merrifield

Committee Reports:

- Program Excellence Committee
- Finance Committee
 - YTD FY 24: Q2 Updates

Janette Cortes-Duewel, Bill Gerstein

Peter Fidler

Parent Support Organization

Michelle Pierre-Farid Ph.D, Yulinda Rahman

Public Comment

New Business

Adjournment

*Requires Vote

2023-2024 Upcoming Full Board Meeting Dates at 5:30 PM

April 9, 2024; June 18, 2024

All meetings will take place at ChiArts 2714 W Augusta Blvd at 5:30 PM



Board Meeting Minutes - February 6, 2024
2714 W. Augusta Blvd, Chicago, IL 60622

5:33pm: Meeting called to order by Duffie Adelson. She welcomed everyone including Mirja Haffner, ChiArts Foundation Board Chair, and Johnny Merrifield, newly appointed Executive Director of the ChiArts Foundation.

Roll call taken by Mike Przygoda.

Board members present: Duffie Adelson, Michael Crawford, Janette Cortes-Duewel, Carmen Echevarria (virtual), Peter Fidler, Karen Fishman (virtual), Christine Gallagher, Bill Gerstein (virtual), Ron Grais (Ex-officio, virtual), Sabrina King, Kay Mabie, John McCambridge, Michelle Pierre-Farid, Yulinda Rahman

Others present: Tina Boyer Brown, Executive Director; Paveille Driver, Principal; Kanika Glover, Assistant Principal (virtual); Mirja Haffner, ChiArts Foundation Board Chair; Johnny Merrifield, ChiArts Foundation Executive Director; Mike Przygoda, Communications and Support Coordinator; Greer Reed, Artistic Director

Motion to approve minutes from previous meeting, November 14, 2023 made by Christine Gallagher and seconded by Sabrina King. Motion carried.

Student performance by pianist Alan Hoffman performing “La Sapin” by Jean Sibelius. “Introduction given by Tina Boyer Brown, Executive Director.

5:43pm: Motion to go into closed session made by John McCambridge, seconded by Sabrina King. Motion carried.

7:08pm: Motion to end closed session made by Kay Mabie, seconded by Janette Cortes-Duewel. Motion approved. All board members returned to Open Session.

Executive Director's Report presented by Tina Boyer Brown, Executive Director.

- Auditions finished in January. The last in-person auditions were canceled due to the weather so callbacks were moved and virtual auditions were extended. Although there were a lower number of students who auditioned, we still expect to continue to have a robust class. Offers are going out at the end of the month. There were 438 students who auditioned (265 in person and 173 virtually). There was an increase in auditions for the Dance Conservatory as well as percussion.
- Contract renewal report. The Chicago Public School Board voted to accept the recommended 2 year renewal term for ChiArts with conditions. There are two additional terms and conditions that the school must meet by June 30, 2024: 1) The school must submit a complaint policy regarding its Students In Temporary Living Situations and 2) The school must update its website to list the process for addressing parent and community concerns (this was already completed on November 8, 2023). The renewal is structured into 3 categories: Academics, operations, and finances.
 - In academics, ChiArts met standards. I & I specifically noted that ChiArts is outperforming in all demographics including black, DL, and EL students. This does not include the arts.
 - ChiArts met standards in student discipline.
 - ChiArts did not meet standards in English Learners or Special Education compliance.
 - In the area of finance, ChiArts did not meet standards for a few reasons, and this is a point of great concern. Our change in net asset ratio did not meet standards because of a \$1,000,000 budget deficit last year. CPS has put ChiArts on a financial remediation plan which includes submitting our cash flow report to CPS once a month as well as attending a webinar about root cause analysis. We are going to appeal for special education funding. Tina Boyer Brown is reaching out to staff, parents, teachers, students, and philanthropic partners in order to increase our fundraising capacity in the short term, and believes strongly that we can meet this challenge.
- School safety. There was a hard lockdown right before winter break. The staff, students, and families will be engaged with a survey and a follow up dialogue about adding screeners or metal detectors to the school.

Principal's Report presented by Pavielle Driver, Principal.

- School safety: On December 20, 2023, we had a hard lockdown. This was due to information (texts and photos) from a variety of students that there was a possible weapon on campus. The lockdown was in place for almost 3 hours. There were a lot of upset parents and also anxiety with staff and students. It was treated like a true lockdown, though Driver and her staff did put themselves in jeopardy by going into the hallway to communicate with teachers who did not hear it on the intercom (protocol is to wait for the police to arrive). The main office staff has talked about what to do during a hard lockdown. In the future, a communication will be posted on ParentSquare to update families. Driver held a parent forum the evening after the lockdown to explain the procedures and protocols of a hard lockdown. We have to stay in a hard lockdown until CPD or CPS Safety and Security ends the hard lockdown status. CPD did not find a weapon, so students and staff were released class by class. Teachers did an excellent job barricading doors and adhering to their safe school training. Some students chose not to attend school the next day because of anxiety, and accommodations were put in place for those students to complete finals. Going forward, we are going to review lockdown protocols (also understanding that we have not been in one outside of drills). If we are in a hard lockdown, there can be no communication during it. Some parents have asked about screeners and metal detectors. Tina has been in communication with the chief of CPS Safety and Security. It is a process that will involve the board as well as the community.
- CIWP Focus - Inclusive and Supportive Practices: Six teachers enrolled in the Bilingual Endorsement Program at Truman College (1 science teacher, 2 English teachers, 1 math teacher, 1 diverse learning teacher, and 1 bilingual teacher). We need this to be in compliance. Five of the teachers have continued and are getting half of their tuition paid. One teacher is paying out of pocket. One teacher did not get in, but we believe they can take the test and pass. That teacher will continue later on. We really want a history teacher to enroll so that all core content areas are covered.
- The math department will transition back to the traditional math approach (Algebra 1, Geometry, Algebra 2 with Trigonometry) for SY 24-25. Karoly Keefe, the math chair has been working with the math team on that transition.
- We are working on possibly switching our bell schedule, and there is a committee that is meeting about it. They will have 3 potential bell schedules to submit by February 16, 2024. Driver will narrow it down to two and then the union will vote on it. The goal is to have this done by the end of February because this will inform how the master schedule is put together. It looks unlikely to have six periods with multiple lunch periods, but we might get two lunch periods. There

may be some block schedules with one skinny day. Driver has been in communication with Greer Reed about minimizing the 15 minute period before conservatory time.

- Curriculum Night. We want to have a curriculum night in the spring for our community to address AP classes: how do students get into them and what the expectations are. We want students and families to understand what to expect from these classes, that they are very rigorous and that the days are long.
- PSAT/SAT. Academic Approach PSAT (interim benchmark assessment) will be administered on February 8, 2024 for grades 9-11. CPS has mandated dates for College Board PSAT/SATs: April 9, 2024 (SAT) for 11th and 12th grade (non attendance day for grades 9-10), April 16, 2024 (PSAT) for 9th and 10th grades (non attendance day for grades 11-12). This is mandatory for graduation.
- IEP Annual Review Update. December: 2 completed on time, 1 completed late (due to parent rescheduling it), 0 past due. January 6 completed on time, 1 complete late (Driver chose to push it to February to align with the re-evaluation), 0 past due. February: 1 completed on time, 0 completed late, 0 past due.
- Misconduct report: 4 students in out of school suspension (2 for an attempt or reasonable threat to inflict injury on someone with a show of force that would cause the victim to expect an immediate unwanted bodily harm, 2 for use or possession of alcohol, drugs, controlled substances, or lookalikes of such substances or contraband). 14 students have been assigned detentions (9 for failing to attend class, 5 for loitering). 9 students currently have a Safety Plan in place (4 are in investigation by CPS Office of Student Protection (OSP), 5 are due to safety measures due to student reports). 2 open OSP investigations (1 is in an informal restorative resolution, 1 is still pending a response from the accuser if they would like an investigation, informal resolution, or to do nothing).
- EMS has been called twice since December (December 6, 2023 for a student who fainted and January 23, 2024 for a student who inflicted self-harm and was transported to the emergency room). We are trying to be vigilant about social emotional needs. Our students are experiencing lots of things in and out of school.
- A total of 134 Student Code of Conduct violations in the current school year.
- Gender Neutral Restrooms. As of February 1, 2024, all restroom signage has been replaced with the CPS approved signs. Parents have been made aware of this. Driver wants to have student assemblies to answer questions and make students aware of this.
- Hiring report. Currently hiring for 1 Computer Science Teacher, 1 Diverse Learning Teacher, 1 Spanish Teacher, 1 Registrar, 1 Certified School Nurse, 1 Healthcare Assistant, and 1 Paraprofessional. Currently Cadre is filling the computer science position. We are on a two week sub plan with Spanish and

Diverse Learners. The Spanish sub is a long term sub through Kokua. An offer was made to a candidate for registrar, but the candidate declined. The contract states that we need either a school nurse or healthcare assistant, Driver is pushing for a school nurse. There is one candidate for the paraprofessional position who was a previous employee at ChiArts, and they are moving their way through the process.

- The difference between teacher aides and student aides needs to be clarified. Students are not covering classes. These are two different positions.
- Vacancies are posted immediately. For Computer Science, we are looking for a quote from Apex.
- There has been some concern from students about their grades in Spanish 2 between different teachers. Kanika Glover is working with Guadalupe Leon to address those.

Artistic Director's Report presented by Greer Reed, Artistic Director.

- The conservatories are very busy, as usual, for February, Black History Month. This includes the senior play (Who Are We, Who We Are), senior musical (Godspell), Black Cultural Showcase, and the return of Journey Of The Brown Tights. Journey of the Brown Tights is having a special showing for the board, hosted by Ms. Reed, on February 15, 2024 that includes dinner and a dance.
- Creative Writing. Levitate Magazine is live and accepting submissions. Susanna Lang, former Creative Writing teacher is visiting for professional development for students working on translating poetry. John Corwin from Northwestern University's National High School Institute will be returning to ChiArts for a Playwriting Residency. Many members of the Creative Writing staff are at the AWP conference this week.
- Dance. In addition to Journey of the Brown Tights, students will have a series of masterclasses with long time partner, Ensemble Espanol. Emani Drake, Deeply Rooted Dance Theater company member and Princess Grace Winner will be setting choreography on the seniors for their senior concert in March. Emani Drake was a former student of Ms. Reed's.
- Music. 13 music students were chosen to represent ChiArts at the Illinois Music Education Association All-State Conference, which is one of the highest honors for music students in Illinois. The Jazz Combo performed live for WGN Midday News. The Chamber Choir will be recording with the Illinois Philharmonic Orchestra for Cedille Records. Seniors have been receiving acceptance letters and scholarships for their post-secondary education. Connections week

continues to be valuable for not only these scholarships but also workshops, giving connections we did not even know existed.

- Connections Week happens every October. Colleges, universities, training programs, and artists in the community are brought in to share with our students. This is valuable because it is hard to get our students out to some of these places on their own.
- Theatre. The Student Lab Show had 2 sold out shows. These shows were completely self produced, directed, designed, and performed by students. The Junior MTs went to go see Hamilton and had the opportunity to eat dinner with cast members before the show. Several students are part of the Lookingglass Youth Ensemble. Up next is the IHSA group interpretation contest, spring play, and the August Wilson New Voices Competition. Ms. Reed was the former artistic director for the August Wilson Center for African American Culture and remains connected there. She looks forward to connecting the students who are chosen to go there with the center and the family of August Wilson.
- Visual Arts. Students continue to be very involved with guest artists and scholarships from Connections Week. This year's First Year, First Look was the first time that Visual Arts students showed their work on the big screen and also had the opportunity to talk about their work to the audience. The Long Live Lafayette Project continues, honoring the history and life that existed in the building prior to ChiArts. This includes murals and photography, telling the stories of the people who were at Lafayette.
- In response to whether the populations within each conservatory are shifting, Ms. Reed believes that all of the arts ebb and flow. It is a priority to recruit novice students in the community and remind them of how they felt when they first stepped into the building and had the exposure to the variety of arts they could study at ChiArts.

ChiArts Foundation Report presented by Johnny Merrifield, Executive Director, ChiArts Foundation.

- Johnny Merrifield is thrilled to be at future meetings. His previous experience in fundraising and development includes time at Victory Gardens Theatre and The Adler Planetarium before joining ChiArts as the Director of Development and Marketing. He assumed the role of Executive Director of the ChiArts Foundation at the end of 2023.
- There is a lot of work to be done. The foundation exists to support the school. Johnny Merrifield has been having conversations with Tina Boyer Brown about where the needs exist. The board is very invested in the work.

- Investment in ChiArts is about opportunity, access to opportunity, brighter futures, alumni out in the world, and also investment in artists as educators. Artists have a very unique opportunity to develop their teaching practices. Chicago needs a place like ChiArts.
- Kerfuffle is going to be on May 2, 2024. This is the largest fundraising event.
- The ChiArts Foundation Board is excited to collaborate with the ChiArts Board of Directors, particularly if there are any introductions that need to be made to the Foundation about potential donors. The Foundation can help facilitate and support communications, meetings, and introductions.
- It is important to reach communities that we have not been in yet. If you know of someone who has not heard of ChiArts who should have, we look forward to working with them.
- Johnny Merrfield is identifying over this fiscal year where the Foundation can save and where they can grow while ensuring structures are still in place.
- The position of Director of Development at the ChiArts Foundation is open, and all referrals for candidates are welcome.

Program Excellence Committee Report, presented by Janette Cortes-Duewel.

- The focus has been on the contract renewal process. We were able to solicit and send many letters of support from various stakeholders which were helpful.
- Working with Principal Driver on the CIWP to look at priorities and make sure that they are being monitored.
- Now that the renewal has been granted, we're looking for more community involvement, including in Humboldt Park. Tina Boyer Brown has been and will be meeting with members of the community including the Puerto Rican Cultural Center and Urban Theater Chicago. Continuing to connect with the Puerto Rican Museum of Art, and looking for connections with Roberto Clemente High School.
- Continuing to discuss in the committee our 5 year strategic plan.
- The committee meets on the first Thursday of every month.

Finance Committee Report, presented by Peter Fidler.

- We are in a tough position. Our cash on hand is about \$937,000. We are supposed to have \$1,000,000. Looking forward, the end of the year that likely puts us in the \$300,000-400,000 range which is too little to operate the school.
- The CBA increased the cost by \$500,000.
- Some good news: The original budget that was approved had a \$420,000 deficit, but we are running better than we anticipated. We are now forecasted to lose

\$175,000-200,000, which is still not where we need to be, but better than the original forecast/budget.

- We are going to have to work collaboratively with all stakeholders to get to the right decisions to engage in the right budgeting process. It is important to value what each stakeholder cares about but also the financial stability of the school.
- The Foundation did step up with an additional \$600,000, but we are still facing a deficit.
- The case should be made to CPS for Title I funding since the population of the school supports receiving that.
- It is important to look at the Bell Schedule for how it affects funding.
- One of the important elements of the CBA was that teachers are now required to teach 1,150 minutes instead of their previous 1,050 minutes (still less than CPS' requirement of 1,250 minutes).
- ChiArts pays a \$1.4 million fee to CPS for services. Included in that is a \$250,000-\$300,000 fee that is not attached to any particular service, but for general administrative purposes.
- Tina Boyer Brown has begun having conversations with CPS about funding in regards to 2 of these things.
- Peter would like to meet with Principal Driver to collaborate on the Bell Schedule in how it affects funding.

PSO Report, presented by Michelle Pierre-Farid.

- \$3,000 raised through concessions.
- New winter hat with ChiArts logo.
- Every day in December, the PSO did something for the staff including a nacho bar.
- The PSO hosted a vaping info session on December 19, 2023.
- The PSO hosted a parent mixer at Dark Matter Coffee Shop.
- Tina Boyer Brown would like to be at the next PSO meeting to share and be transparent about the budget.
- On February 13, 2024 the PSO and Principal Driver will be hosting an internet safety session focused on social media with parents.
- The PSO requested that Board Meetings have a virtual link or hybrid so that more parents could attend.
- PSO Drive is happening for the theatre department, clothes can be donated to the theatre.

Public comment session.

- Megan Pietz (ChiArts teacher and Union rep):
 - Urging the board to exercise oversight over the school with building the necessary supports to students and teachers to meet the mission.
 - A healthcare assistant needs to be hired. Applicants have been waiting for interviews. 3 counselors are needed.
 - Surprised to learn that the Assistant Dean's position was removed.
 - Surprised that an assistant to the executive director was hired.
 - Board needs to investigate internal communication structures. The union issued a survey about communication and submitted it to the board.

- Megan Riley (ChiArts teacher)
 - Requesting that administration look more towards collaboration with staff and students. Administration's reaction to feedback is having a negative effect on the community.
 - The ongoing moratorium on study hall movement should end. In the past, students could visit other teachers for help, but now they are unable to. Students who follow the rules also feel punished. It is not believed that the administration has listened to the reaction from student government or staff.

- Melissa Arning (music teacher)
 - Need for additional support during conservatory. Main office staff day ends at 3pm, but conservatory teachers go until 5pm. Arts staff has less training for situations than academic teachers do.
 - Request for an assistant dean.

- Rebecca Baruc (visual arts teacher)
 - Conservatory teachers are spread thin from a day-to-day security perspective. Urging to hire an assistant dean.
 - Prefers personnel to metal detectors and screeners.

- Alex Cookman (social studies teacher)
 - CBA stipulates that any sub teacher filling 60 days or more gets paid the same as step one lane one teacher. Michael George is a long term sub that has not been paid at that rate. The CBA also stipulates 2 Cadre teachers. We only have one. Urging ChiArts to hire Michael George.
 - Need to hire a nurse, assistant dean, and attendance manager.
 - The NLRB will sue if these are not adhered to.
- Pavielle Driver (Principal)
 - Mr. George is not a ChiArts employee, he is a Kokua employee, which is subcontracted to us. He goes off of Kokua's long term sub pay and is being paid that.
 - A Cadre sub was hired from a union grievance.
 - KoKua subs are not privy to CTU benefits.

New business: None.

8:50pm - Duffie Adelson thanked everyone and asked for a Motion to adjourn: Moved by Sabrina King and seconded by Janette Cortes-Duewel.