

chiarts® THE CHICAGO HIGH SCHOOL FOR THE ARTS

Board Meeting Minutes - April 24, 2024 2714 W. Augusta, Blvd, Chicago, IL 60622

The meeting was called to order at 5:31pm by board chair, Duffie Adelson. The roll was called by Communications and Support Coordinator, Mike Przygoda.

Board Members present: Duffie Adelson, Jannette Cortes-Duewel, Michael Crawford (virtual), Peter Fidler, Karen Fishman, Christine Gallagher, Bill Gerstein, Ron Grais (ex-officio), Sabrina King, John McCambridge, Michelle Pierre-Farid

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

Motion to approve minutes from previous meeting, February 6, 2024 made by Ron Grais and seconded by Janette Cortes-Duewel. Motion carried.

Student performance by dancers Megan Girdick and Mailani McPhan, choreographed by Tyra Outlaw.

Public Comment

- Megan Riley (ChiArts teacher)
 - Wanted to know about closure of bathrooms and timeline of them reopening
 - Does not feel communication is working.
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- Alex Cookman (ChiArts Teacher)
 - Communication feels sporadic and last minue.
- Megan Pietz (ChiArts teacher and Union Representative)
 - Delivered a letter signed by some staff members to the executive director about concerns around communication.

- Concerned about communication.
- Lee Ann Silva (ChiArts Teacher, Bilingual Education and EPLT)
 - Looking for more support with multilingual education. Currently she feels that she's the only one overseeing all things multilingual.
 - There are currently 35 MLs (multilingual learners) at ChiArts, she anticipates the number will be closer to 60 next year.
 - Advocated for 3 or 4 sections of ESL which would require at least one new hire.
- Andrew Van Herik
 - Continued the statement from Silva.
 - Advocated for 4 bilingual co-teachers to be hired to support students socially, academically, and linguistically.

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

- Earlier in the year, the CTU conducted a survey. Communication was the biggest area of need at ChiArts according to that survey. Leadership has been discussing this and is trying to improve communication across the school. Focus is on "One ChiArts," making sure that there is clear communication between the executive director, artistic director, principal, and assistant principal.
- HR is going to be conducting a survey for all staff that will echo some of what was in the CTU survey earlier this year. The intent is to stay focused on issues that will arise.
- There are pathways for communication and it is important that that are used..
- Pavielle Driver has been working diligently and with great detail to restore compliance to the SPED and EL programs.

Principal's report presented by Pavielle Driver, Principal.

- There is a pathway to communication and collaboration, but that is a two way street. The administration can't only collaborate with themselves.
- A "no" from the administration does not mean that administration is against collaboration. Administration needs to stand up for student achievement, legacy, and leadership.
- There have been signs on the bathrooms indicating their closures. This issue has not been brought up before during the PSC. Bathrooms are closed because of sewage and plumbing issues. The building engineer is working on it, but is waiting on CPS. They may not open again until after the end of the school year. This is a CPS issue.
- Bell Schedule: 40 union members voted on this. 36 voted for Option 1, 4 for Option 2.

	A Day	B Day	Skinny Day	A Day	B Day	Skinny Day	
	Monday	Tuesday		Thursday	Friday		
8:00 - 8:20	Home room - Study Hall (20)	Home room - Seminar (20)		Home room - Study Hall (20)	Home room - Seminar (20)	8:00 - 8:30	Homeroom - Seminar (30 min)
8:25 - 9:40	Block 1 (75)	Block 4		Block 1	Block 4	8:35 - 9:10	Block 1 (35)
9:45 - 11:00	Block 2 (75)	Block 5		Block 2	Block 5	9:15 - 9:50	Block 2 (35)
11:05 - 12:05	Study Hall (60 min)	Seminar (60 min)		Study Hall (60 min)	Seminar (60 min)	9:55 - 10:30	Block 3 (35)
A: 12:10 - 1:25	A Block 3 (75)	A Block 6		A Block 3	A Block 6	10:35 - 11:10	A Study Hall (35)
A: 1:25 - 1:55	A Lunch (30)	A Lunch		A Lunch	A Lunch	10:35 - 11:10	A Lunch (35)
B: 12:05 - 12:35	B Lunch (30)	B Lunch		B Lunch	B Lunch	11:15 - 11:50	B Lunch (35)
B: 12:40 - 1:55	B Block 3 (75)	B Block 6		B Block 3	B Block 6	11:15 - 11:50	B Study Hall (35)
1:55 - 2:00	Arts Break (5)	Arts Break		Arts Break	Arts Break	11:55 - 12:30	Block 4 (35)
						12:35 - 1:10	Block 5 (35)
						1:15 - 1:50	Block 6 (35)
						1:50 - 2:00	Arts Break (5)

- Skinny Day will always be on Wednesdays. Skinny days will not be implemented during the weeks in which students are in school less than 5 days per week.
- SAT and PSAT completed.
- WIDA Access for ML students was completed by Lee Ann Silva in March, 2024. Silva is closing out discrepancies with support of Office of Language & Cultural Education (OLCE)
- Illinois Science Assessment took place April 23 and April 24, 2024. It is required for all 11th graders in order to graduate. If they don't take it in 11th grade, they have to take it in 12th grade.
- AP testing window opens on May 6 and runs through May 16, 2024. Assistant Principal Glover has completed all of the assignments for teachers on who can facilitate or proctor each test.
 - All AP, SAT, and PSAT days are designated. ChiArts does not have the option to extend testing. Only certain testing can occur on certain days.
 - Student Services & Supports (IEP's/504's)
 - IEP Annual Review Compliance Summary
 - IEP Evaluation Compliance Summary
 - 504 Plan Update
 - Principal Driver has been in communication with Executive Director Boyer Brown about the need for more staff for the 504 and IEP process. There is currently only one day that both the nurse and school psychologist are both here. We are going to reach out to our partners to see if we can have another part time nurse through the end of the year in order to get us back on track.
 - Vernon Rogers, Case Manager has been completing 5 to 6 IEPs every Tuesday.
- CIWP Focus- Post-Secondary Success, Inclusive & Supportive Practices
 - Post-Secondary Success
 - College Visits/Tours
 - Inclusive & Supportive Practices
 - MTSS Implementation Plan
 - Submitted to CPS on 4/15/2024

- In response to questions about testing accommodations, Assistant Principal Glover explained that it is a standard procedure where the SSD coordinator goes into the system and pinpoints accommodations. Glover notified the teachers via ParentSquare one month in advance to do training, and then followed up with teachers who had not done their training. All materials and procedures were provided to teachers, students, and families ahead of time.
- In response to a question about DL student accommodations, Principal Driver explained that students have autonomy to take tests in a gen ed setting instead of a small group. Teachers have a list of students who are receiving accommodations and which classrooms to hold testing in. When teachers login to College Board, they can see the classroom and teacher that are assigned to each student. All teachers have access to College Board.
- Michelle Pierre-Farid uplifted that the need for accommodations for ML students has been sent to the finance committee. She reiterated that ChiArts wants to serve all children, and that there have been multiple conversations that the board has had about how to best support them, and that the school has moved effectively with accommodations this year.
- In response to a question about the block schedule, Principal Driver explained that homeroom, study hall, and seminar will count towards advisory minutes. Seminar could be used for MTSS. All of this will count towards the 300 instructional minutes. I & I does not need to approve this.
- Regarding ML students, Principal Driver explained that there are many ways to service these students, understanding that with the current situation regarding the budget we may not be able to hire ML or EL staff. There are some workarounds. Silva's schedule was shifted after conversations and collaboration with OLCE. We are unlikely to be 100% compliant going forward, but hoping to be much more compliant. There is a goal to get an ESL class. CIWP monitors the budget closely in regards to inclusive and supportive practices around DL, EL, and MTSS. Principal Driver is working through the master schedule with Case Manager Vernon Rogers and Assistant Principal Glover, and will start by addressing SPED students, then EL, and then other classes.
- Everything in the master schedule has to work within our budgets. We may have to make some cuts (classrooms or staff) in order to work it out for the students. This is because of our finances.

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

- We have begun the process of bringing Finance and HR services in house. The first step is to hire a Director of Finance. The job has been posted and a process will be developed and shared with stakeholders.
- Enrollment.
- Fundraisers.
- Budget process has begun and is ongoing. Currently it is in process for non-personnel items and soon will be beginning personnel items.

- Document timeliness has improved to get us into compliance.
- Academic compliance met standards, the school was rated as “commendable.” Executive Director Boyer Brown elaborated on what “commendable” means as an ISBE summative designation.
- Executive Director Boyer Brown elaborated on the Director of Finance position. Currently finance is outsourced to Quattro. This would be a change to an internal position to have more consistent services, a strategic partner, and consistent reporting to CPS.

Artistic Director’s Report presented by Greer Reed, Artistic Director

- Artistic Director Reed recognized a variety of accomplishments in each department of the school including scholarships, award winners, and media appearances.
- Curtain Call season is currently happening showcasing the culmination of work from the year.
- Working with the CEAR committee to figure out how to keep alumni engaged. This includes adding alumni to an “on call list” for next year to sub as well as join committees during Connections Week to speak to students and families.
- Working with the Foundation on a new video that will be premiered at Kerfuffle.

ChiArts Foundation report, presented by Johnny Merrifield, Executive Director of The ChiArts Foundation

- The Foundation appreciates getting to hear from everyone and the public so that the Foundation can stay connected as a partner.
- Executive Director Merrifield and Executive Director Boyer Brown are having weekly meetings to stay connected on current events.
- Natasha Mraz, Director of Strategic Communications and Marketing has been working with the department heads at ChiArts to figure out how to feature students publicly and raise the profile of the school. Excited about the recent publicity on Fox 32 and the Chicago Reader.
- Kerfuffle is May 2, 2024. Optimistic about the fundraising goal. John Hart and Carol Prince will be honored and will bring representation from Goodman Theatre, Steppenwolf, the MCA, and the Lincoln Park Zoo which is an opportunity to expand arts partners.
- The Foundation is on track to meet their budgeted revenue goal for this fiscal year and is hoping to come a little bit above that.
- An offer has been extended to a Director of Development. The candidate will bring a new skill set to the Foundation with experience in corporate giving. This will be a new opportunity to expand revenue.
- Budgeting will begin in May as soon as Kerfuffle ends, and Executive Director Merrifield has been in contact with the ChiArts board so that discussions can continue in June.
- The Foundation is aware that ChiArts has grown faster than fundraising has, so the Foundation is actively working to identify new prospects. Tours of the school led by

Executive Director Boyer Brown and Artistic Director Reed are the best ways to connect with new potential donors and introduce them to what ChiArts is.

- The Foundation has a part time grant writer.

Program Excellence Committee report presented by Janette Cortes-Duewel and Bill Gerstein

- This will be Bill Gerstein's last board meeting.
- Hoping to improve on the school improvement plan and monitor it, to use it to drive the budget.
- Most of the work of the PEC is to create a strategic plan. This is a requirement for CPS but also it should be done anyway.
- Bill Gerstein stated how special ChiArts is and how much his granddaughter loved the school. He encouraged everyone to truly collaborate, communicate, and make the school the best it can go forward.
- January is the deadline for the strategic plan. It may not be a 5 year plan.
- Executive Director Boyer Brown has been meeting with students to engage them about how they're feeling. She is planning on meeting with the students one more time before the end of the school year and will focus on the arts.
- A stakeholder survey will be sent out to identify the areas that will go into the strategic plan.
- Students completed the 5 Essentials survey, but not enough staff did to get a result.
- Looking for external consultants to help with the strategic plan.

Finance Committee report presented by Peter Fidler, Treasurer

- For year 23-24, we're going to come in better than we had planned originally.
 - Current projections have us coming in at a \$160,000 deficit as opposed to the original \$400,000 deficit.
 - The Foundation stepped up and helped close the gap.
 - An appeal was filed with CPS to get additional SPED funding that we believe we're owed. That could close the size of the deficit even more.
 - Leadership really helped us in running much closer to breakeven than we had originally forecasted.
 - We are not in compliance with CPS' financial scorecard metrics. Two categories where we don't meet the standards: 1) Change in net assets ratio and 2) cash on hand ratio.
 - School will be judged on these on 6/30/24. Looking for ways to solve the cash on hand ratio even if it's a temporary infusion.
- Year 24-25.
 - The preliminary budget from CPS is not encouraging, and could be 7.4% lower than this year. Increasing enrollment is an important lever to push back on this. CPS will release more numbers soon.
 - Fidler stated that he views ChiArts as a civic treasure, and that it's important to work together, and not as adversaries to make this work. The board and staff are

reacting to numbers given by CPS, and that it's important to work as partners to make the best school we can have for our kids. The board is trying to get as big of an allocation as possible from CPS.

- There is enough cash on hand to run in the negative, but it's not prudent. We will probably get through this current year, but next year will have issues. There are not enough reserves that can fix this problem and we cannot run at such a large operating loss with a half million dollar deficit.
- Costs went up significantly this year with the CBA.
- Two levers that are available are getting enrollment up and looking at what classes and programs ChiArts offers.
- Principal Driver is working on the master schedule now which will affect how the budget looks. There is a principal roundtable in May, but Driver is still waiting to learn more about the budget.
- Incoming projected SPED students are 26, 3 of which have full self-contained days. There will need to be an increase in SPED, but ODSS and I & I will have to collaborate in this.
- There are some parents who want to be more engaged on the budget, and Executive Director Boyer Brown will engage them on this.

Parent Support Organization report presented by Michelle Pierre-Farid, Ph. D

- The PSO had a family tech talk about internet safety
- The PSO is trying to partner with the school on how to raise more money. Pi Day raised almost \$1,000 and the students really enjoyed it.

7:41pm: Motion to adjourn into executive/closed session by Sabrina King, seconded by Ron Grais. Motion carried.

8:32: Open Meeting resumed. Motion by Karen Fishman to keep minutes from the September 12, 2023 meeting, the November 14, 2023 meeting, and the February 6, 2024 meeting confidential; seconded by Ron Grais. Motion carried.

No new business.

8:37pm: Motion to adjourn the meeting by Ron Grais, seconded by Janette Cortes-Duewel. Motion carried.