



PROVIDENT CHARTER SCHOOL – CENTRAL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING
OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF PROVIDENT CHARTER SCHOOL
September 9, 2025
6:00 PM
HELD AT PROVIDENT CHARTER SCHOOL – WEST AND VIA ZOOM

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT	BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT	OTHERS PRESENT
Dr. Jean Ferketish	David Baker	Maria Paluselli
Sallie Richards	Mike Brady	Dr. Rachel Owens*
Dan Sponseller		David Mongillo
Julie Shepard		Vivi Besteman
Dan Lynch*		
Terry Smith*		
Curtis Kossman*		
Sheila Conway*		

*Via Zoom

The meeting was preceded by a tour of the PCS West campus, from 5:00 p.m. to 5:45 p.m.

Curtis Kossman convened the meeting at 6:05 p.m.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Election of Board Member

Maria Paluselli shared that Julie Shepard, Senior Manager of Development and Events with the Pittsburgh Promise, will be joining the PCS Board. The Board introduced themselves to Ms. Shepard and expressed their excitement for her tenure on the Board.

ACTION: Upon motion by Dan Sponseller, seconded by Dr. Jean Ferketish, the appointment of Julie Shepard to the PCS Board of Directors was unanimously approved.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the August 12, 2025 meeting were reviewed by the Board.

ACTION: Upon motion by Curtis Kossman, seconded by Dan Sponseller, the August 12, 2025 meeting minutes were unanimously approved.

School Operations & Facilities Update

Travel Reimbursement Policy

Maria Paluselli reviewed revisions to the Travel Reimbursement Policy, which was initially presented to the Board for review during the August Board Meeting. Ms. Paluselli indicated that pursuant to the recommendations made during that meeting, the policy was updated to clarify the specific situations in which employees will receive their daily rate in addition to travel expense reimbursements for summer professional learning that takes place out of state. The revised policy provides that whether or not an employee receives their daily rate depends on whether the school administration requires them to attend training (daily rate received) versus whether the employee voluntarily requests to attend (no daily rate received).

ACTION: Upon motion by Shiela Conway, seconded by Dan Sponseller, the updated Travel Reimbursement Policy was unanimously approved.

Annex AC Bid Review

Maria Paluselli provided an update regarding the AC project for the annex. Ms. Paluselli shared that Desmone Architects was engaged to prepare bid specifications for the project, and that bid proposals were thereafter received from several contractors. After due consideration, Air System Mechanical was selected as the proposed successful bidder for the project, with a total bid in the amount of \$60,400. Ms. Paluselli reminded the Board that the project cost will be paid using EITC funds (which may be applied to renovations supporting innovative programming).

ACTION: Upon motion by Curtis Kossman, seconded by Dan Sponseller, the bid of Air System Mechanical for the annex AC project was unanimously approved.

Enrollment & Hiring Reports

Enrollment and Demographics Report

Maria Paluselli shared that as of September 2025, there are 311 students currently enrolled for the 2025-2026 school year, and two students who are in the process of enrolling, for a total of 313 students. Maximum enrollment capacity for PCS Central is 336 students, meaning that there are 23 available seats. Most of those seats (15) are available in second grade, followed by eighth grade (4), then third grade (2).

Julie Shepard inquired about the significant number of available seats in the second grade. Ms. Paluselli shared that it is sometimes a challenge to fill second grade given that this is the

beginning grade level at PCS Central and there are therefore no existing students advancing from first grade (which is not the case for other grade levels).

Curtis Kossman inquired whether it might make sense to allocate additional seats to fourth and fifth grade given the demand at those grade levels. Ms. Paluselli indicated that there might be challenges in doing so, but that further dialogue should be had on the issue.

In addition, Ms. Paluselli shared the 2025-2026 demographics for PCS Central, highlighting that 67% of students are special education students and 56.6% of students qualify for free and reduced lunch. With respect to race, 59.7% of students identify as White; 28.9% as Black; 10.1% as mixed-race; 0.6% as Asian; and 0.6% as American Indian. The Board discussed the possibility of broadening the network of psychologists at PCS to assist with assessing new students for IEPs in order to ensure that they receive speech, occupational therapy, and other necessary services.

Hiring Report

Maria Paluselli reviewed the monthly hiring report. There were nine salaried new hires to report; no temporary new hires to report; and two hourly new hires to report. Additionally, there were three promotions/role changes to report, and one separation to report.

ACTION: Upon motion by Curtis Kossman, seconded by Dan Sponseller, the September Hiring Report was unanimously approved.

Finance Report & Vendor Purchases

Finance Report

Maria Paluselli presented the financial report for August 2025. Ms. Paluselli highlighted that there was a slight decrease in the bank account balance for the Cafeteria Fund which was a result of ordering supplies for the new school year, as well as outstanding payments due from school districts as a result of the state budget impasse. Ms. Paluselli noted a slight increase in the bank account balance for the Money Market Fund.

Curtis Kossman suggested that the Board should consider whether it might make sense to move some of the excess balance in the Money Market Fund to the Investment (Capital Improvement) Account in order to give greater flexibility for making necessary improvements to the school. Ms. Paluselli indicated she will reach out to First Commonwealth Bank regarding whether they might attend the next Board meeting in order to discuss this matter further.

ACTION: Upon motion by Dan Sponseller, seconded by Dr. Jean Ferketish, the finance report for August 2025 was unanimously approved.

Vendor Purchases

Maria Paluselli presented the vendor purchases for August 2025. The vendor purchases were ordinary and routine. Ms. Paluselli noted that the schools have been sensitive to spending during the period of the state budget impasse.

ACTION: Upon motion by Dan Sponseller, seconded by Dr. Jean Ferketish, the vendor purchases for August 2025 were unanimously approved.

Other

2024-2025 Family Surveys

Maria Paluselli provided an overview of the 2024-2025 end-of-year family surveys, sharing that for PCS Central, 92 individuals participated in the survey (down from 98 the previous year). Overall, 91.3% of survey participants reported that they were either “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with their experience at PCS Central. The open-ended comments to the survey revealed several areas of strength, including the transformational impact of the school; the dedicated school staff; the available academic support; and trust in the PCS community. Areas for growth included updates to communication style and methods; stronger behavior management and middle school supports; and increased transparency and parent involvement.

Foundation Grant Update

Maria Paluselli shared with the Board that the PCS Foundation was recently the recipient of a \$250K grant from the Eden Hall Foundation. Ms. Paluselli indicated that the grant was originally requested as a way to fund the curriculum initiatives being explored by the PCS Foundation, and was intended to be restricted to that purpose. However, as the relationship with Eden Hall developed, it was decided that the use of the grant would be expanded to support operations at the schools. Dr. Jean Ferketish suggested that the Board should host a tour of PCS Central for Eden Hall in October (Dyslexia Awareness Month), in order to showcase some of the exciting opportunities that PCS has to offer.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:48 p.m.