



Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

State Board of Private Academic Schools

607 South Drive, Harrisburg, PA 17120-0600

June 21, 2024

The meeting of the State Board of Private Academic Schools convened on Friday, June 21, 2024, via hybrid meeting on Microsoft Teams and in-person at Pennsylvania Training and Technical Assistance Network (PaTTAN) in Harrisburg, PA. Public notice of the meeting was published in accordance with the Sunshine Meeting Act of 1986. The meeting was called to order at 9:05 a.m. by Jane Allis, Chairperson.

Board Members in Attendance

Jane Allis
Jim Buckheit
Douglas Carlquist
Carol Lopus
Dr. Abby Mahone
Suzann Morris

Board Counsel

Robert Tomaine

Staff

Zachary Stritzinger, Staff Counsel
Monica L. Washington, School Services Director
Renee Shade, Board Secretary
Kathleen Senft, Teacher Certification
Maryanne Olley, Office of Child Development & Early Learning
Stephanie Nauss, Staff
Anita Harvin, Staff
Jamee Jopy, Staff
Lilian Uzokwe, Staff

ROLL CALL

L. Uzokwe conducted the roll call of Board members.

SUNSHINE ACT MEETING NOTICES

Thursday and Friday Private Academic School Board meetings were published in accordance with the Sunshine Act of 1986.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Upon motion by D. Carlquist, seconded by C. Lopus, the April 19, 2024, Board meeting minutes were approved by unanimous voice vote.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

OLD BUSINESS

Hearing Requests – Robert Tomaine

There were no active hearing requests.

Presentation of Motions – Zachary Stritzinger

No motions were presented.

Previously Submitted Applications – Staff

No previously submitted applications.

NEW BUSINESS

New Supplemental Applications for Board Approval

13 schools submitted supplemental applications for Board approval.

Discovery Montessori, Scranton, Lackawanna Co

The Board asked for clarification on the school's progress report and confirmed that the report offers space for narrative feedback. The school expounded on their process of reviewing teachers and provided information on the resources available to teachers.

Upon motion by A. Mahone, seconded by S. Morris, Discovery Montessori, Scranton's supplemental application was approved as presented by unanimous voice vote.

Brookeside Montessori, Bechtelsville, Berks Co

The Board enjoyed the list of materials provided by the school. They commented that the school should work to ensure that students are ready to transition back to public school by working with their school districts. The Board noted that they would like to see no more than three grade levels per classroom. Should that number increase to five or more, the Board would like to see an additional classroom for the students.

Upon motion by J. Buckheit, seconded by D. Carlquist, Brookeside Montessori, Bechtelsville's supplemental application was approved as presented by unanimous voice vote.

Summit Academy, Herman, Butler Co

The Board asked for clarification on how the curriculum is presented. The school clarified that the curriculum is majority textbooks and online resources are supplemental. The Board asked for more information on how the school plans on supporting teachers. The school provided that they work with their school district to create professional development trainings, meet with staff to discuss the needs of kids and go over tools and necessary steps for working with kids.

Upon motion by C. Lopus, seconded by J. Buckheit, Summit Academy, Herman's supplemental application was approved as presented by unanimous voice vote.

The Wetherill School, Gladwyne, Montgomery Co

No representative was available to attend.

Upon motion by C. Lopus, seconded by A. Mahone, The Wetherill School, Gladwyne's supplemental application as approved as presented by unanimous voice vote.

Devereux PA Brandywine School, West Chester, Chester Co

No representative was available to attend.

Upon motion by S. Morris, seconded by D. Carlquist, Devereux PA Brandywine School, West Chester's supplemental application was approved with one condition by unanimous voice vote. The condition that must be met before licensure is:

1. Renovated restrooms to accommodate student population.

Upon motion by S. Morris, seconded by D. Carlquist,

Longmore Academy, Mars, Butler Co

Merakey Autism Center, Enola, Cumberland Co

Penn Highland Connellsville Center for Autism, Connellsville, Fayette Co

PLEA School, Homestead, Allegheny Co

Devereux PA School for Integrated Learning, West Chester, Chester Co

St. David's Episcopal Day School, Wayne, Delaware Co

and *Steel City Academies, West Mifflin, Allegheny Co* supplemental applications were approved by unanimous voice vote.

New Schools Applications for Board Approval

Six new schools were presented for Board approval.

Devereux TCV Day Academy, Homestead

Prior to the meeting, the school sent additional information on questions the Board had. The school provided information on their differentiation. The school utilizes tiered intervention models, preferential seating, modifying assignments, modifying grades to match assessments, supplemental reading, and ELA materials for students. For students who require different curriculums, the school purchased alternative curriculums.

Upon motion by J. Buckheit, seconded by A. Mahone, Devereux TCV Day Academy, Homestead's new school application was approved as presented by unanimous voice vote.

The Goddard School of Hampton

The Board asked for clarification on question 6 regarding differentiated instruction. The school explained that they have hands on observational assignments and make modifications to activities to meet the needs of children. If the student needs independent time, they have materials and resources to provide. The Board suggested the school consider providing additional time for students' center time.

Upon motion by C. Lopus, seconded by D. Carlquist, The Goddard School of Hampton's new school application was approved as presented by unanimous voice vote.

The Goddard School of Malvern

Please note the agenda incorrectly omitted the word "school" from the school's name.

The Board complimented the school on their answers, asked for clarification on whether the school provides parent conferences. The school responded that they have parent conferences twice a year. The Board asked the school to explain the key used on their progress report.

Upon motion by D. Carlquist, seconded by S. Morris, The Goddard School of Malvern's new school application was approved as presented by unanimous voice vote.

Graham Academy, Mayfield

The Board commented that the school has an ambitious new program, they appreciated all the additional materials provided by the school before the meeting. The Board asked for clarification on if/when the school provides parent conferences and whether those conferences are confidential. The school responded that they provide parent conferences twice a year, prior to the school year and in March, and that conferences can be made confidential.

Upon motion by J. Buckheit, seconded by D. Carlquist, Graham Academy, Mayfield's new school application was approved with one condition by unanimous voice vote. The condition that must be met before licensure is:

1. Revised initial application.

Poinciana Montessori, Philadelphia

The Board commented that the school provided an interesting program. They asked for clarification on if the school provides parent conferences. The Board asked how the school individualizes their progress report for all grade levels and confirmed that the school has additional materials that still need to be set up.

Upon motion by C. Lopus, seconded by D. Carlquist, Poinciana Montessori, Philadelphia's new school application was approved with one condition by unanimous voice vote. The condition that must be met before licensure is:

1. Hiring an additional staff person with all clearances and health reports submitted to Private Academic Schools staff to review.

Sylvan Learning Center of Exton

The Board did not have any questions or concerns. They commended the school for addressing the issue of accessibility.

Upon motion by D. Carlquist, seconded by J. Buckheit, Sylvan Learning Center of Exton's new school application was approved as presented by unanimous voice vote.

Education Directors for Board Approval

Upon motion by J. Buckheit, seconded by A. Mahone, the listing of new Education Directors was approved by unanimous voice vote.

Board Policy on Montessori Certification

Board provided a written statement on certification.

Public representatives from Pennsylvania Montessori organizations provided a different recommend and asked that the Board consider the materials they presented.

No motion was made, the Board will delay bringing a policy forward until the Board receives additional information from schools and Montessori representatives.

Board Policy on Virtual Instructional Days

The policy is to further define flexible instructional days in the school code #1506.

Upon motion by J. Buckheit, seconded by D. Carlquist the policy on virtual instructional days was approved by unanimous voice vote.

2025 Board Meeting Dates for Board Approval

Upon motion by J. Buckheit, seconded by D. Carlquist, the 2025 Board Meetings Dates were approved by unanimous voice vote.

DISCUSSION/INFORMATION

The Private Academic School staff confirmed that the 2025 Board Meeting Dates will be available for review in one week on the Department’s website.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further items of business and upon a motion by D. Carlquist, seconded by A. Mahone, the meeting was adjourned at 10:39 a.m. by unanimous voice vote.



Renee Shade
Secretary to the Board