

Briya Public Charter School
Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, January 8th, 2020, 6:00-7:30 p.m.
APPROVED March 7th, 2020

Briya's mission is to strengthen families through culturally responsive two-generation education.

Board members present

Daniela Carozza, *Chair*
Doris Garay, *Vice Chair* (via phone)
Flor Buruca, *Secretary*
Nishit (Nick) Sheth, *Treasurer*
Darryl Clay
Judy Mortrude
Alejandra Sandoval
Todd Shears
Cara Sklar
Deborah Spitz

Staff members present

Christie McKay, *Executive Director*
Lorie Preheim, *Outreach & Adult Education*
Strategy Director
Geovanna Izurieta, *Director of Finance*
Emma Koop Liechty, *Board Liaison*

Members not present

Whytni Kernodle

Welcome to Cara Sklar!

1. Call to Order/Centering

- The meeting was called to order at 6:05 p.m.
- For centering time, Alejandra shared a story from her childhood and about her desire to keep studying.

2. Approval of Minutes

- **Todd Shears motioned to approve the November 13th, 2019 board minutes, Nishit Sheth seconded. The motion passed unanimously.**

3. Director's Report

- Facilities update
 - Briya has continued its search for facilities and has been looking at a building in Northwest DC. Geovanna, Todd, Alejandra have visited the building. Briya has made several offers. Alejandra and Flor sent a letter to the current owners of the building to talk about Briya's story. We have not heard yet and are waiting for them to make a decision. It is a slow process.
- Briya and Mary's Center Board Collaboration – January 24th
 - There will be a meeting with the Mary's Center and Briya boards on Friday, January 24th, from 1:00 to 2:30.
 - It will be a chance for Briya and Mary's Center to each share their strategic plans with the other organization's board.

- Doris has agreed to lead the conversation. Are there others who would like to attend. Todd, Deb, Nick all said that they could also attend.

4. Development Committee

- Bill's Retirement Party
 - The party will be held on January 17th from 3:45-6:00.
 - There will be food and music.
 - Deb wondered if the board will contribute to a gift
 - Christie shared that the event planners are putting together a basket with books and some other gifts. The board could contribute to this.
 - Board members can either contribute an amount or choose an item in the basket to purchase.
- Recommendations for new board members
 - Christie said that if board members have any recommendations for a new board member, they should let the development committee know.
 - We will need to fill Whytne's spot after the March board meeting.
- March Board Retreat – Saturday, March 7th
 - The location for the board retreat is yet to be decided. Emma will update the group on the location soon.
- Updated board directory will be sent out later in January
 - Emma will send out a new board directory soon.
- Student Emergency Fund update
 - The Student Emergency Fund is a way for board members to advocate for Briya in their circles.
 - Some ideas for ways to fundraise are for board members to create a Facebook fundraiser, or reach out to organizations that they think might like to give.
 - We have a process for vetting what the money is used for that was discussed at the last meeting. If potential donors ask how the money is being used and monitored, they can be assured that there is a standard process.

5. Finance Committee

- IRS Form 990 approval (*vote required*)
 - This is an extension of the audit. It is a public document. Briya doesn't have to pay taxes, but still has to file taxes. It is an official way to show how funds are used.
 - The finance committee has reviewed the form and is recommending approval.
 - **Judy Mortrude motioned to approve the 2019 IRS Form 990; Deborah Spitz seconded. The motion passed unanimously.**
- Financials update
 - Nick explained that Briya had a bit more revenue in October because the amount allotted for the per pupil funding went up, plus Briya reached its enrollment goal, and spending was behind because Briya has more volunteers this year.

- Nick explained that financially, everything is on track, and there was nothing out of ordinary on this report.
- Deb asked for some clarification about what the volunteers do at Briya. Christie explained that Briya generally budgets to hire one or two extra teaching assistants, but because of our partnership with several volunteer corps Briya was able to fill those designated positions with full-time volunteers. The volunteers receive stipends paid to them through their volunteer corp. It is a mutually beneficial relationship, as Briya find new people to come work here and it give the volunteers the chance to learn and expand on work skills.
- Daniela asked why the board sees the finance reports are a few months afterward. Nick explained that the finance committee doesn't share the monthly reports with the board until after they are reviewed by the finance committee. The woman who we usually work with at EdOps, Jenny Huang, is also on maternity leave, making it a bit of a slower process right now. The finance department can usually close the month's finances by the third week of the next month, after which the finance committee reviews it. Darryl said that Briya's process is pretty standard compared to the school he works with.

6. Academic Committee

- Enrollment update
 - Briya had a very successful count week and ended up having 739 people enrolled, up from our goal of 718.
 - Lorie explained that the registration team had to over-enroll because not all students will end up being retained. Briya is up to 86.1% retention, which is better than last year.
 - The CDA and MA classes have one-time enrollment, and we have had 9 people drop. A lot of students have had to drop out of classes because employment. If they aren't currently working, almost all students says that they are looking for work. A little over half of the people who have dropped have left because of employment or health reasons.
 - Nick wondered if this is happening on a national level, and Judy says that Briya is doing a little bit better than the national level. Most adult programs probably don't have this kind of detail or follow up information.
 - Drop out could be because of the health of the child or the health of the adult.
 - Christie said that Briya's connection with Mary's Center has really enabled us to help students with health issues.
 - Judy shared that adult education program attendance almost always corresponds to the national employment rate. If people can work, they will almost always choose to work over being in class.
 - Deb shared that when she looked at Briya's retention rate a couple of years ago, she found that our adult retention rates are vastly higher than many other adult programs. Briya is a program where adults come and stay for years, which is rare. Judy shared that the average participation

time for students in adult programs is about 100 hours (about 2.5 months of Briya's classes).

- Cara asked if there would be a second count day. Lorie shared that the idea had been in the works, but that it hasn't been brought back up recently.
- Right now, Briya has 114 people on the waitlist. Of those families, 20 are parents with children at other schools, which means they could start right away. This means that our classes are topped out right now.
- Judy asked how we decide caps for classes (if we decide, or if the DC PCSB decides). Christie said that we choose our caps.
- We have 2,382 leads of people interested in enrolling in Briya's system, and of those 617 of those came to register.
- There are many people who have shown interest to Briya's workforce classes, but don't test high enough in the CASAS testing to enroll in the class.

7. Announcements/New Business

- Daniela received another call today about charter schools advocacy. Charter Board Partners is trying to organize advocacy around the charter school concept. They asked for every board to have one point-person, and Todd has said that he would be that person. In the future when cases arise, he will plan to ask board members if they want to sign on to letters or have someone testify. Charter Board Partners is leading this action. There was a dinner at Scott Pearson's house that Daniela attended.
 - Enrollment in DC is pretty much split evenly between traditional public schools and charter schools. Charters started out of necessity. Scott's idea is that charters improved the climate because they were providing competition to the public schools and charter schools do well at special education. There are things that we could learn from DCPS and that they could learn from charter schools.
 - Deb shared that DC is in a unique place because OSSE was created because of charters. It has seeded innovation and creating new models.
 - Deb said that she will send the board information about a book written about charter schools, as much of it is about charter schools in DC. She will send the name and her review once she's read it.

8. Adjournment

- Meeting was adjourned at 7:13 p.m.