

**Briya Public Charter School**  
**Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes**  
**Wednesday, July 15, 2020, 6:00-7:30 p.m.**  
**Meeting held via video call**  
**APPROVED September 9, 2020**

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

**Board members present**

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

**Staff members present**

Christie McKay, *Executive Director*  
Lorie Preheim, *Outreach & Adult Education  
Strategy Director*  
Geovanna Izurieta, *Director of Finance*  
Lauren Stoltzfus, *Board Liaison*

**Guests present**

Jenny Huang, EdOps

1. Call to Order/Centering

- The meeting was called to order at 6:02 p.m.
- Welcome to new board member Thomas Gerkin!

2. Approval of Minutes

- **Judy Mortrude moved to approve May 13<sup>th</sup> board meeting minutes; Doris Garay seconded. The motion passed unanimously.**

3. Director's Report

- Update on school opening in the fall: Mayor Bowser is going to announce DCPS's plans tomorrow, and then charters will share their plans. Briya will start the year with all virtual classes for adults. Students will pick up packets at first, and then come back a few weeks later and pick up Chromebooks. PreK will have the option of coming in person for half-days two days per week on an A/B schedule. Most PreK activity will be outside and at first parents will stay with their children for the entire time.
- Health and Safety: We've received a lot of resources from OSSE, DoH, DoE, and other experts, and we're implementing them at Briya—including HVAC system improvements, air cleaning machines in classrooms, PPE for staff, and health checks at entrances. All staff who need to be on site will be divided into A and B cohorts. Everyone who's not student-facing will work from home. We are communicating these measures to all staff so they're well informed.
- Legislative Updates:
  - School Reform Act: Right now, the School Reform Act says schools can have a sibling preference. Mendelson and Grosso have introduced

legislation to amend the School Reform Act so it says “sibling/child,” therefore officially including a child preference also. The hearing is July 31. Judy and Cara have agreed to testify at the hearing. Some Briya students will also testify. You will be able to watch virtually.

- Hold Harmless: DC Council will likely be passing legislation that gives adult charters a hold harmless year on enrollment. This means they’ll take our April projections and use those for our funding, rather than using Count numbers. This only applies to adults, not PreK.

#### 4. Development Committee

- Preparing for the September Annual Meeting: Reminder that September is our annual meeting. In September we will ask everyone to fill out your conflict of interest/confidentiality forms again and vote on officers.
- Mary’s Center update: Todd Cox is the new board chair for Mary’s Center. Development Committee will take the lead on developing and strengthening relationships with the new chair and the Mary’s Center board. Briya student leader Zulma is also now on the board of Mary’s Center. She can help strengthen the relationship between the Mary’s Center board and Briya.
- Report on the Bilingual Associate Degree Program: New America came out with a wonderful report about the bilingual AA program in early childhood at UDC, which Briya is strongly involved with. They also did a conference presentation at NAEYC.

#### 5. Finance Committee

- Contracts: Geovanna shared the document about contracts over \$25,000. These contracts were put out for the formal bidding process a few years ago. We’re able to renew them without doing another bidding process.
  - Julia Toro: She no longer has a conflict of interest because she’s no longer a board member, though she was when we first awarded her the contract in 2017. We are funding this through the IJLS grant, so if the grant isn’t renewed—though we hope it will be—we’ll end those services.
  - Amy Houser Consulting: She doesn’t have a current conflict of interest, but she is a former board member. This is funded through the Kresge grant that we have with Mary’s Center.
  - Our current policy says we must send the contracts over \$25,000 to Nick to approve, which we do.
- May 2020 financial reports: Geovanna reviewed the attached documents. Briya had a great year financially. We gave qualified disaster relief payment to employees to help offset the cost of having to work from home on a prolonged basis.
  - Question: Are we also supporting internet/hotspots? Geovanna responded that we’re working one-on-one with students to get low-cost internet through Comcast Internet Essentials provided hotspots for students. We’ve found that internet like this with a router is more reliable than hotspots.
- FY21 Budget presentation: Geovanna reviewed the budget presentation. We have budgeted conservatively, and we’re aiming to continue to be Tier 1 financially. Jenny from EdOps helped with our budget, and she was present to answer questions. The finance committee previously reviewed this line by line before the meeting and approves of it.

- Question from Nick: Have we hired IT consultants due to COVID? Christie responded that we've hired additional IT because we've become a 1:1 school and bought 1,000 laptops that will be distributed to students. There will be a much larger burden on IT due to this. We'd love to have IT help desk for students as they're doing online learning.
- Question from Deb: Is Briya benefiting from the CARES Act funds that the city is receiving, which support distance learning? Geovanna responded that we've heard there would be conversation about how adult ed schools could receive some of those funds, but we don't know yet.
- Question from Nick: How is Mary's Center doing? Christie responded that the first few months of the pandemic were very difficult for Mary's Center, but it's looking much better now. A lot of Mary's Center has moved to telehealth. And now dental has opened in-person again.
- Question from Daniela: Is this budget more conservative than usual? Geovanna replied that we're increasing the contingency because there are a lot of unknowns for everyone this year. With the hold harmless policy, we should be in a very good space, even though we haven't increased enrollment this year.
- **Deborah Spitz moved to approve the budget. Thomas Gerkin seconded. The motion passed unanimously.**
- Recognition of Todd and Jenny: This past school year would not have been as successful without Todd. Your level of commitment is outstanding. And thank you also to Jenny for all your work!

## 6. Academic Committee

- Early Childhood Update (Deb): Lisa Luceno came to the academic committee meeting and talked to us about Briya's early childhood program. For those who don't know, our program is Reggio Emilia-inspired. This is research-based, student-centered, self-directed, experiential learning. Briya also uses and builds on Creative Curriculum. And PreK is a dual-language program. We are also making so much happen through distance learning, even for young children.
- Board Self-Evaluation 2020: We had great participation this year. We have adapted this to make this more user-friendly. For the results, we've taken all the written comments and removed names, and we created charts to show where we're doing well and where there's room for improvement. We also highlighted the accomplishments throughout the year—including increasing the board's collaboration with Mary's Center.
- School Leader Performance Review: The school leader evaluation sub-committee (Daniela, Nick, and Doris) will be meeting in August to work on this. We will share results in the September board meeting.
- Outreach Update (Lorie): We're doing well at working toward our enrollment target thus far, better than usual for July. We are doing mainly remote registrations, with limited in-person registrations.
- CDA: An Inside Look Virtual Visit: Everyone is invited to our webinar about Briya's CDA program, and please invite anyone who you think would be interested in learning more about the program. The webinar will include student panelists sharing their experiences.

## 7. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:38 p.m.