

**APPROVED MINUTES**  
**FOR THE**  
**MAYA ANGELOU PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL**  
**BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**  
**DECEMBER 9, 2021**

The Board of the Maya Angelou Public Charter School (“MAPCS”) held a meeting on December 9, 2021 pursuant to notice duly given. The members present were Peter Leone - Board Chair, Michael Vu - Vice Board Chair, David Domenici, James Forman, Jr., Thomas White, Julie Johnson, Cheryl Chun, Lewis Goss II, Alise Marshall, Shemeka Pugh, Denise Jackson-Kelly, Darren Cambridge, and Andrew Dana. Also present were Clarisse Mendoza Davis, Leah Lamb, Azalia Hunt Speight, Solveiga Jaskunas, Marvin Harden, Joseph Marren, Felecia Hayward, Dean Weeks, Sean Yisrael, Maurice Milline, Darrlyn Harrington, Patricia Richardson, Russell Waller, and Jahleezah Eskew.

Dr. Leone called the meeting to order at 10:10 am and began by thanking all staff at all schools for managing the challenges of the COVID pandemic. He also welcoming new Board Member Andrew Dana. He is Co-Owner and Founder of *Call Your Mother Deli*, *Timber Pizza*, and *Mercy Me* here in DC. As a restaurateur and entrepreneur, Andrew brings a wealth of experience in the domain of culinary hospitality and a passion for Maya’s young people to our board!

Dr. Mendoza Davis gave an overview of the accomplishments that the Maya Team has had, including the launching of two new school sites, commencing renovations at the Maya Angelou Learning Campus (MALC), while preparing for the organization’s 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary year of service to the DC community. All of these activities took place while welcoming back our scholars and families for full-time, in-person instruction and programming.

She continued her report out by stating that we are establishing relationships with new allies and rekindling connections with old friends, from the Deputy Mayor for Education’s Office to the chambers of the City Council from funders and donors to community-based organizations and city agencies whose mission also seeks success for opportunity and justice-involved youth. She welcomed school leaders, Dr. Wright-Cunningham, Dr. Harrison, Dr. Hayward, and others and showed a brief film where staff and students were able to reflect on what the new schools mean to them at the YSC and DC Jail. Dr. Harrison summed it up by saying “we are giving students a voice in their education” and that there is a “push to be excellent in everything we do!”

Dr. Mendoza Davis reiterated that she and leadership are doing everything to keep our learning communities safe and healthy while keeping school open five days per week. This includes weekly testing for all staff and students across the organization; mandated vaccination for all staff. This effort also includes using technology to continue remote learning/services for all students and staff in case of quarantine; in-house contact tracing and testing; and real-time adjustments on the part of Maya’s COVID Response Team to communicate and implement rapid evolving guidance for schools from the DC Department of Health.

She ended her remarks by thanking the Board for their partnership and their generosity and support with the Holiday Food Baskets, Giving Tuesday, and the Holiday Campaign.

Ms. Lamb, Chair of Institutional Development, gave an overview of fundraising activities to date including funding from grants and corporate partners. The DevComm team is beginning to discuss details for the celebration of our 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in 2022. Planning is underway for a year-long celebration at the school level as well as for public events.

Ms. Hunt Speight, Chief of Schools, gave an update on the schools and their performance, stating The Maya Angelou Learning Center (MALC) has improved its attendance. Although the school community is feeling the impact of the pandemic, we are addressing losses emotionally. Dr. Wright-Cunningham and his team are serving students at St. Elizabeth and the students are grateful for the attention. He stated, “the staff there are superior and very encouraging of our students.”

She went on to provide some statistical information on the enrollment at the two new sites: MAA@DC Jail has 34 male scholars currently enrolled in our program and there are 53 students enrolled at MAA@YSC (50 males and 3 females). Students have brought in restorative practices and are holding themselves and fellow scholars accountable for positive behavior at the DC Jail site. All IEPs are up-to-date and all students are receiving related services at the YSC site. She also reported that GED progress is “on fire” at the YALC this semester with 18 scholars with three subject test passes; the testing target was met at the High School with 90% of scholars completing the BOY assessments; and scholars have been engaging in a daily intervention block to improve literacy at MAA@New Beginnings.

The meeting continued with Mr. Marren, Accounting Contractor, giving an overview of the organization’s finances. He stated the organization is in a good place financially. Mr. Harden, Chief Operating Officer, gave the Board an update on the renovations that are currently in process at the MALC.

Two resolutions were motioned to the Board for approval:

- the approval of the organization’s new *Financial Policies Handbook*. The motion was seconded and put forward for a vote. It was unanimously passed by the Board members.
- the final motion presented was for approving the final audit from the accounting firm KENDALL, PREBOLA AND JONES, LLC. The motion was seconded and unanimously passed by the Board.

The meeting continued with the newly formed Maya Board of Directors Committees giving a report-out on their various activities:

- **Board Development and Engagement Committee:** Mr. Forman asked the Board to think about possible new members and to provide comments about the meetings. This committee asked for prospects.

- **Finance Committee:** Mr. Harden stated the Finance Department is searching for a new Finance Director. He also thanked Mr. Marren for facilitating a successful Maya audit; the audit for SFF will be starting soon.
- **Fundraising Committee:** One of the priorities is to develop a compelling Case Statement that can drive fundraising and board engagement around fundraising. Another priority is to revisit funding needs in order to fully renovate the auditorium. Mr. Domenici said that there should be a more aggressive approach to get the auditorium completed. Ms. Marshall also asked if any of the Board members know any consultants who are affiliated with the Capitol Campaign to please let the committee know to help push this project along.
- **Maya Angelou Academy Support Committee:** Dr. Johnson previously shared some of the activities her committee is working on and they continue their efforts:
  - The MAA sub-committee, in learning about the great efforts underway at new MAA sites, YSC and DC jail, but also the challenges that have been inherited from these programs and the issues with external stakeholders, decided to focus efforts on advocacy.
  - A plan has been made to reach out to local leaders, the justice policy and advocacy community, and other key stakeholders. A meeting with Council Member Allen is happening this week and plans are underway for additional Council meetings.
  - External advocates have been identified, such as Eduardo Ferrer of Georgetown's Juvenile Justice Initiative and the Thrive Under 25 coalition.
  - Communication efforts are ramping up via presentations by Maya leadership to groups such as the Youth Justice Policy group and a first blog about the MAA at New Beginnings.
  - They will continue to discuss how to fund a position to support increased advocacy and community engagement.
- **Strategic Planning Committee:** Dr. Mendoza Davis shared this group is working to streamline the strategic planning document with priority areas and measurable goals. It will be presented during the next meeting for a vote to approve it. The committee supports the plan's overall objective to continue improving the organization's performance and to expand to meet the educational needs of justice-involved youth here in D.C.  
As a refresher, the proposed priority areas are:
  - Priority 1: Relevant and flexible academic offerings
  - Priority 2: Robust social-emotional supports
  - Priority 3: Comprehensive college and career programming
  - Priority 4: Recruitment, retention, and development of high-quality employees
  - Priority 5: Effective advocacy efforts on behalf of opportunity and justice-involved youth

Dr. Leone opened the meeting up for Public Comment; there were no questions or responses from the public in attendance. He convened an Executive Session and the meeting officially adjourned at 1:00 pm.