



Educating the next generation of lawyers and leaders

Board of Director Meeting Minutes

A meeting of the Board of Directors (the “Board”) of Legal Prep Charter Academies (“Legal Prep”) was held at 12:00pm on August 20, 2021 at Legal Prep.

The following members of the Board were present:

Rather Stanton (ex officio), Sam Finkelstein, (ex officio), Jason Brown, Mark DeMonte, Heather Fine, Wendy Friedman, Tom LaFrance, Laura Miller, Oscar Romero, David Susler, Greg Wu and Elie Zenner.

Chaka Patterson, Latonia Foster, Julie Mehta, Jose Isasi, Paul Chadha, Walter Pryor and Bryan Westhoff were noticed absences.

Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The Board

VOTED:

To approve the draft minutes of the Board meeting from May 27, 2021 in the form previously circulated. The motion was approved unanimously.

Public Comment

No public comments were offered.

Executive Committee Report

Sam Finkelstein provided an update and welcomed Elie Zenner, a representative from the Associate’s Board, will be joining the full Board as a liaison between the two.

COVID: There was a strong turnout for freshman and sophomore orientation night. Parents, families and students want to be in person and learning together. The protocols are as follows:

- Mask mandate in place – everyone in the building must wear masks
- Classrooms will be distanced – desks are 3 feet apart and all facing the same way
- There are several COVID testing protocols in place including rapid testing in the building. If someone tests positive, they will need to stay home, but otherwise can be in school even if exposed, as long as they continue to test negative on the 1st, 3rd, 5th and 7th days.
- 95% of the staff is vaccinated. Two people are not vaccinated, and they will be testing weekly.

Enrollment: Enrolled remains in flux, but the school is seeing some walk-ins. This is positive. The negative part is that many students have moved to different places, so Legal Prep is seeing lots of transfer requests. Sam and Rather still hope to see an uptick of another 20 or so students. The hope is that the school will reach 260 or 270 students, but it is still ok budgetarily if it doesn’t.

Charter Renewal: Sam provided an update on the Legal Prep charter renewal process. The Board of Education recently came out for a facility site visit. The school was given a list of things to fix during the last charter renewal process five years ago. Legal Prep addressed those issues and has made substantial investments in the building over the last five years. With that said, we anticipate the site visit will yield a “to do list” but don’t anticipate any major issues with our facility. Sam highlighted again that Legal Prep’s exclusionary data from before COVID will be an area of focus of the Chicago Board of Education



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as renewal is considered. Sam and Rather have been working closely with CPS to address this issue, changing policies to substantially matter, and recently adopted the CPS students code of conduct as a major change. Legal Prep's benchmarks for this school year are well below the CPS average. Sam and Rather plan to have first semester data to help Legal Prep on this issue. The Board will make a decision during the December or January meeting. Legal Prep is requesting a five-year term like last time, but the renewal term that will be granted is unclear.

Board Retreat: November 13th from 9am to 2pm hosted at MLA.

PPP Investigation: Submitted all the requested document and went through interview process with OIG. Sam and Rather think it is complete. Sam, Rather, and our attorneys are confident there is not any legal exposure and everything was done properly, but there could be public relations fall-out for a charter school taking PPP funds depending on the report reads and is framed.

Litigation: Legal Prep recently filed its Reply in Support of our Motion to Dismiss and expects a ruling in the next several months. The scope of claims has been narrowed during motion practice over the last year, and we continue to work through the discovery process. The criminal proceeding, of which we are not a party, is moving slowly and does not have a trial date set yet.

Board Governance Committee Report

The Board Governance Committee is getting together in the next month or so. Hopeful we can do an all-board Happy Hour.

Finance Committee Report

Rather provided an updated. The financials for FY20 are good and saw positive change of net assets of \$1M. Some of this included the PPP forgiveness, but also had a ~\$400K surplus in the operating budget. CPS has four major metrics and Legal Prep is meeting two of the four and close on the third. After this year, Legal Prep should be meeting three of the four metrics, which will get LP off the financial remediation plan we are on. The school's cash position and financials are strong. The Audit is going really well. The Audit will come out at the October meeting. For FY21, LP has about a \$50K surplus budgeted. The Finance Committee will be meeting monthly or every other month and keep a tight eye on the FY21 financials, so we can have another year of positive change of net assets.

Academic Excellence Committee Report

Sam provided an update. The Committee is going to get CPS data back in the next few weeks and the Committee will meet again and data will be reported out at the October meeting. And, the Committee will be reporting out start of the school year data. Exclusionary disciplinary data will be front and center.

Development Committee Report

Rather provided an update. He will meet with Board members to discuss their individual plans. The big part will be how Rather can help us with our network and get funds, resources and partnerships to give the students and the school opportunities.



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The Law Program are going to get started. They will not start until November and will start remotely. The students will be here in person at the school for the law programs which will make a difference. Two new partners – Faegre Drinker Biddle and BMO.

The golf outing will be held on Monday, September 27th at 8am at Harborside.

Other Matters

Before the meeting, Legal Prep Board members met and mingled with staff members so there was a short discussion from earlier part of the day. The interactions were very positive, and the Board members enjoyed getting staff's perspective on the school year.

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 12:56pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Heather Fine