

**Prosperity Denver Fund  
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes**

**May 22, 2024  
12:00-1:00 PM MT  
On Zoom**

**Attendees:**

*Board members:* Theresa Peña, Millie Barsallo, Mark Goodman, Polica Houston, Steve Kurtz, Diana Romero Campbell, and Jason Wardrip

*Staff:* Lauren Sisneros - Interim CEO, Korrine Salas Young - Community Engagement Director, Amy Franklin - Data & Evaluation Director, Rebecca Andruszka - Project Manager

*Advisors:* Trey Rogers - Recht Kornfeld

*Guests:* Thomas Brady - DSF, Nate Cadeña - DSF, Russel Dains - Save Our Youth, Debbie Hodge - Mile High 360 Daniela Meltzer - Horizons CO, Jessica Nunez - LAEF, Scott Nycum - DSF, Lorii Rabinowitz - DSF, Catherine Rolhaus - Horizons, Brian Stamer - CO Uplift

**Call to order:** Theresa Peña, Chair, called the meeting to order at 12:02 PM. A quorum was present.

***Reimbursement for Credentials to Non-Training Provider Organizations***

Trey Rogers, PDF's legal counsel, confirmed that only 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations that directly provide services are eligible for reimbursement from any of our funding programs. This excludes public organizations and pass-through organizations (such as a foundation affiliated with a direct provider). This policy would apply to both pilot and regular reimbursements programs.

Theresa Peña and Lauren Sisneros will contact organizations to whom this applies.

***Pilot Reimbursement for High School Support Services (AY 21/22)***

Trey Rogers reviewed the language issue in the recently approved new ordinance language - it states that PDF can reimburse high school support services for the "prior academic year." No further detail is provided to clarify if this was intended to cover the academic year 2022-23 or earlier. Both the City Attorney and City Auditor declined to give an opinion of the issue, which means that it is a policy decision that the PDF Board will need to make.

Steve Kurtz shared his opinion to reimburse starting academic year 2022-23 and not 2021-22, based on the precedent from our first reimbursement cycle, which did not fund for academic years before the ordinance approval. Additionally, funds were not allocated to the separate fund for the high school support services program until the new ordinance was approved and therefore we do not have available funds for two years of reimbursement. The organization does have a surplus of funds in our scholarships fund, but Steve Kurtz stated that he believed these should be restricted to their original intent.

Lorii Rabinowitz from Denver Scholarship Fund stated that her interpretation of the ordinance language was that the “prior academic year” referred to 2021-22 academic year, which would have also been so when the pilot was launched in June 2023. Supported organizations who were a part of this pilot program made their budget and programmatic plans accordingly. Brian Stamer from Colorado Uplift supported Lorii’s statement, stating that they had projected increased impact due to the pilot program’s funding. The potential loss of this funding would cause an even greater hardship for their staff. Daniela Meltzer from Horizons Colorado shared that this loss in funding makes a significant difference to their high school program and the short notice (funding was expected imminently) impacts their fund development plans. Russel Dains from Save Our Youth stated that without the funds they cannot implement their plans, which has caused significant issues for their internal operations.

Thomas Brady of Denver Scholarship Fund asked for more detail about PDF’s funds. Steve Kurtz clarified that the ordinance approved in May 2023 created the fund for high school supports, but it was not back-funded. The fund currently contains approximately \$3 million, which would cover the expected reimbursement funding for academic year 2022-23.

Lorii Rabinowitz reminded the Board that the original pilot for this program did not include the restriction to “new and expanded services” and therefore SO’s were expecting to receive funding for their existing high school support services. She stated that she believes that the funding for the high school support services in academic year 2021-22 would fulfill the intent of the funds in the scholarship fund. Steve Kurtz disagreed with this interpretation.

Theresa Peña explained that the PDF Board tried multiple ways to “get to yes” on this issue, but have been unable to do so. She clarified that the city attorney and auditor didn’t say that they didn’t have an opinion, just that they declined to offer it. She felt that the Board should have been more involved with previous discussions about the pilot project, but right

now, the decision to move forward only with funding high school support services for academic year 2022-23 (made at the May 8, 2024 board meeting) stands.

Diana Romero Campbell stated that with the new leadership the Board will need to repair relationships and reestablish trust with the Supported Organizations. Although Board members were involved in the committee discussions and reviewed timelines, there was no Board vote until the May 8, 2024 meeting. As Millie Barsallo stated, committee meetings are when members - especially new Board members - have an opportunity to work through issues, but their decisions are not indicative of Board-wide approval. (There will be an offline discussion about whether or not to include pilot outcome figures in our reporting.)

*There was not a motion from the Board to fund academic year 2021-22 high school support services.*

Theresa Peña offered the Board's deepest apologies to the supported organizations and students affected by this decision.

Lorii Rabinowitz from Denver Scholarship Fund asked for more clarity on definitions of "new, improved, and expanded" services prior to the pilot's application deadline. Theresa Peña offered to follow up on this issue at the committee level.

**Motion to adjourn the meeting:** *Mark Goodman moved, Jason Wardrip seconded. Motion was unanimously approved.*

**Meeting was adjourned at 12:46 PM.**