



Providing Instruments for the Next Generation
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January 15, 2018

Members of D97 Board of Education:

The PING! Board would like to update you on the progress regarding our request to Dr. Kelley in our letter of December 4 (on which the Board was copied). To reiterate, we asked that

Given PING!'s role in providing services that support D97's vision of creating "a positive learning environment for all District 97 students that is equitable, inclusive and focused on the whole child," we ask that you and the D97 Board enter into a formal agreement with PING! that establishes PING!'s relationship with D97 as a "District 97 Partner Organization" and thus covered under its CLIC umbrella.

In response, Dr. Kelley asked for clarification as to what PING! was requesting; Dr. Evans also asked us to resubmit a list of activities we host in D97 buildings; and Dr. Kelley informed us that the Pillar 4 committee would be examining our request and would meet sometime in January. We queried Dr. Kelley about why this was a Pillar 4 issue (Data-Informed Continuous Improvement) rather than a Pillar 1 issue (Equitable Access to Rigorous, Responsive Instruction), as we want to be sure that our request is being addressed not only from a standpoint of "organizational procedures" (per Pillar 4 goal statement) but from that of "equitable access," since it is in that arena where PING!'s value is felt. Dr. Kelley responded,

We have discussed the proposed changes to the agreement between D97 and PING! during our Pillar 4 meetings per my direction and based upon where I have deemed its best fit with our strategic direction (management of the whole). Again, we will be in touch following our meeting in January.

We also asked Dr. Kelley earlier this week when the Pillar 4 committee would have a decision regarding PING!'s relationship with the district because PING! is in the process of making decisions about various insurance policies for the new year and possibly bundling some to save on costs. Dr. Kelley responded, "My response will be provided as appropriate."

We've been left in the dark, therefore, as to when and how this process will play out, which is frustrating as we have been addressing this issue of liability coverage since August when we were first informed that D97 required a certificate of insurance for our programming in District buildings. Since then Dr. Evans's office has changed its response several times as to whether we are covered or not covered, with the latest response being in November when PING! representatives met with Dr. Evans and were told we needed to provide our own insurance. It was at that point that PING! made the direct appeal to Dr. Kelley in our December 4 letter, since we do not understand why PING! is being treated differently from other partner

organizations in the district such as OPEF, BRAVO, CAST, and PTOs, (with whom we are listed as “partner organizations” in the D97 Facility Usage Agreement).

For PING!, this is an issue of great urgency, since not knowing whether we are covered under the District’s CLIC policy leaves PING! unsure whether our volunteers, board members, mentors, and students are exposed to liability every time we host mentoring or any other activity in a D97 building. If we are not covered either by the District’s policy or our own, one claim would imperil PING!’s mission. We think it reasonable, therefore, to ask the District when this issue will be resolved.

For 20 years, PING! has partnered with D97 staff and students, giving countless hours of volunteer time and raising thousands through our own fundraising efforts, to bring instrumental music to a significant portion of D97 children who otherwise would not have the opportunities commensurate with their peers. In those 20 years, PING! has enjoyed good relationships with D97 staff and strong support from its administrations. We would like to continue that spirit of shared mission and mutual support. Asking the District to support us by officially recognizing us as a partner organization and including us under their CLIC seems like a reasonable request in exchange for the services PING! provides. The additional cost of insurance coverage to the District would be nominal, if anything, yet the price tag of such insurance for PING! would be a sizable percentage of our annual budget with no added value to the D97 students we serve.

Therefore, we ask that you, as members of the Board of Education, move forward on our request to enter into agreement with PING! that establishes PING!’s relationship as a “District 97 Partner Organization” and thus covered under its CLIC umbrella.

We look forward to hearing from you in the near future regarding progress on this issue.

Sincerely,

PING! Providing Instruments for the Next Generation

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