



# news

OFFICE OF PUBLIC RELATIONS & MEDIA CONTENT

341 S. Bellefield Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15213

**For Immediate Release**

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## **Three New Board Members Take Oath of Office** ***Board Elects Gene Walker President***

PITTSBURGH, December 4, 2023 – Following this evening’s Swearing-In Ceremony, three newly elected District representatives joined the Pittsburgh Public Schools Board of Directors. Dwayne Barker (District 8), Yael Silk (District 4), Emma Yourd (District 2), each took the Oath of Office. Devon Taliaferro was also sworn in for an additional term of service.

After the Oath of Office was administered, Board Members elected officers for the 2024 fiscal year. Gene Walker was elected President, Devon Taliaferro was elected First-Vice President, and Dr. Tracey Reed was elected Second Vice President. The Board also elected Superintendent Wayne N. Walters as Secretary of the Board, along with four Assistant Secretaries and a School Treasurer.

### ***Three New Board Members Take Oath of Office***

#### **Mr. Dwayne Barker - District 8**

Dwayne Barker is a graduate of Pittsburgh Public Schools, and a parent of three children. An advocate for young people, he has been a leader in the educational field for over 15 years. Mr. Barker has been a powerful community organizer, an advocate in our schools, and an effective mentor to students. His dedicated work has bridged the home-school connection, helped to improve students’ performance and supported teacher practice.

Mr. Barker was recently appointed to the PA Title 1 State Parent Advisory Council where he serves as a parent advisor to the PA Department of Education. He has received awards from the PA State After-School Youth Development Network, Youth Works of Western PA, United Way of Southwestern PA, and more.

As a member of the School Board, Mr. Barker will prioritize improving family/community engagement, increasing access to mental health services, and expanding and funding community schools.

#### **Ms. Yael Silk – District 4**

Yael Silk has called Pittsburgh home since June 2011. Ms. Silk developed a career in arts education with a focus on professional learning, program evaluation, and advocacy. Currently serving as Executive Director at Arts Ed Collaborative, Ms. Silk obtained a bachelor’s degree in Music from Barnard College and a master’s degree in Arts in Education from the Harvard Graduate School of Education.



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#### Ms. Emma Yourd – District 6

A Pittsburgh-area native, Emma Yourd spent six years in Washinton D.C. managing international development programs before moving home in 2018 to focus her skills on making Pittsburgh a more equitable city. Ms. Yourd is the ARM Institute’s Education and Workforce Development (EWD) Partnership Manager, where she facilitates all aspects of EWD regional and community outreach with the goal of building bridges between Pittsburgh’s tech sector and our most under resourced communities.

Ms. Yourd joined the ARM Institute in 2022 from the Forbes Funds, a philanthropic foundation in Pittsburgh, where she co-created capacity building solutions with Allegheny County nonprofits. Her career has always been driven by working in collaboration with under resourced communities to address systemic issues.

Ms. Yourd holds a master’s in Public Administration from the University of Pittsburgh and a BA in Economics from Smith College. She currently resides in Beechview with her husband.

The chart below shares the Pittsburgh Public Schools Board Members and the District each represents.

Board Member	District Representative
Ms. Sylvia Wilson	1
Ms. Devon Taliaferro	2
Mr. Sala Udin	3
Ms. Yael Silk	4
Dr. Tracey Reed	5
Ms. Emma Yourd	6
Ms. Jamie Piotrowski	7
Mr. Dwayne Barker	8
Mr. Gene Walker	9

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