

SYLVAN HEIGHTS SCIENCE CHARTER SCHOOL

Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes

Monday, December 16, 2019

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Jaroch at 5:40 pm and attendance of the board members was taken. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Attendance:

Ed Jaroch, Elizabeth DuVall, Andre Johnson, Lyndsay Bryce (by phone), Margaret Burton Connors, Merita Merick were present. Dr. Laura Kurtz, Amechie Walker and Nancy Neusbaum were absent. Susan Roth (Principal/ CAO), Mrs. Lauver (STEM Coordinator), Jessica Nordai (Special Education teacher), Brooke Say, Esquire were present.

Approval of Agenda:

It should be noted that public notice was given for this meeting in accordance with Act 84 of 1986. The preliminary agenda is submitted for Board approval.

May I have a motion to approve the agenda?

Motion: Margaret Burton Connors

Second: Andre Johnston

Discussion: There being none, the meeting continued.

Vote: 6-0

Result: Motion carried

Recognition of Guests and Scheduled Speakers: None

Comment Period

- A. Public: there being no comments, the meeting continued.
- B. Staff: there being no comments, the meeting continued.

Reports

- A. Finance and Facilities
 - The finance committee did not meet since the last Board meeting. The next meeting is scheduled for January 13, 2020 at 6 PM.

- The architect is scheduled to meet with Mrs. Roth and Mrs. Lauver on January 3, 2020; the staff will provide a brief summary of the meeting to the committee at the January Finance and Facilities Committee meeting.
- Mrs. Roth is planning to meet with the Business Office prior to the January Finance and Facilities Committee meeting and plans to provide a budgetary update to the committee during the meeting.

B. Principal

- ESSA and MTSS Meeting Updates
 - Once the Comprehensive Plan was submitted, Susan received notification to attend a Regional Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI) meeting on December 4, 2020.
 - At the meeting PDE informed SHSCS that we were making positive progress in the area of ELA. We were informed that SHSCS received a Warning designation in the area of Math. By January we need to provide documentation of plan for improvement for the remainder of the school year to support improved student achievement on the PSSAs in April (SHSCS target for math is 28).
 - We have been assigned a consultant for both TSI and MTSS; the same individual will serve as a consultant for both initiatives.
 - MTSS meeting was held December 12, 2019. We have already put additional supports into place for improvement in ELA and attendance rates; schools are expected to continue showing growth until all targets are satisfied. Benchmark tests will be given in January and scores will be reviewed to monitor progress.
 - Improvement plans for math include the following:
 - Hiring of a full-time teacher who will provide additional support to students who are struggling in the area of math. This individual would work together with Mr. Elbert (Instructional Support Teacher for Math) and the classroom teacher to target areas of needed support. Plan is to assign this person to begin supporting students in the 1st and 2nd grade classrooms. Suggestion made to provide support to staff in collaborative efforts for improving math instruction.
 - We will provide an update on the TSI and MTSS plans in January to the consultant.
- Attracting qualified candidates
 - There was discussion on how to inform potential candidates of job vacancies at our school. Last school year we participated in Handshake, a program used by many colleges and universities as a communication tool for potential employers to post career opportunities/ become aware of career fairs with minimal return on the time and effort involved.
 - PA REAP: Mrs. Roth researched the use of PA REAP, an online recruiting tool for advertising vacancies that is heavily used for posting many types of vacancies by

- schools and districts. There is an annual membership fee of \$849 and a one-time start-up fee of \$500.
- Current responses from potential candidates on why they accept an employment offer elsewhere has been compensation. SHSCS does not currently have a “step-based” compensation program. Currently SHSCS reimburses pre-approved college course tuition. In the past, and as the budget permitted, performance-based compensation has been awarded.
 - ***Recommendation for Board Action: suspend hiring of future Instructional Assistants and hire one certified teacher.***
 - Policies and Handbook Updates
 - The Special Education Policies and Discrimination Policies that are ready for Board review.
 - We will continue to review the policies to ensure that the Student and Staff Handbooks accurately reflect Board approved policies.
 - Staff will receive professional development in March on policy updates.
 - Additional Building and Facilities Updates
 - Diamond Sprinkler performed the evaluation of our sprinkler system (SHSCS passed the inspection).
 - There is a faulty water fountain system in the hallway near the bathrooms; recommend removal of the faulty system and providing access to a water cooler from the multipurpose room with refillable water bottles provided to students as needed. There are additional water fountains available near the kindergarten classrooms and in the Health Suite.
 - Holidays Around the World STEM
 - Activities were held on December 20th from 9 am – 3 pm. Students were placed into multiage groups and rotated through stations focusing on holiday celebrations from five different countries and a STEM challenge which highlighted a particular aspect of the traditions for each country.
 - PAsmart Expanding Computer Science (CS) and STEM Education Grant Update
 - Mrs. Lauver provided an update regarding our eligibility to apply for a PAsmart Expanding Computer Science and STEM Education Grant through PDE– we are eligible to apply for up to \$35,000 to expand access to computer science opportunities to students who are traditionally underrepresented with little or no previous access to CS. Funding application is due on December 20, 2019.
 - Our proposal would include support for CS curriculum development, intensive professional development for identified staff (up to 5 staff), and the purchase of supplies, materials, and equipment to deliver the resulting CS curriculum to all SHSCS students.

- C. By Laws and Policies Committee
- D. Family Advisory Committee
 - The next meeting is scheduled for January 6, 2020.
- E. Personnel Committee
 - The next meeting is scheduled for January 15, 2020 at 5:30 pm.
- F. President
 - There being no report, the meeting continued.

BOARD ACTION ITEMS

Consent Calendar

APPROVAL OF BOARD MINUTES

- a) Approve the minutes from the November 2019 Board meeting.

Fiscal Items

- a) Approval of the PA REAP Online recruiting tool with the one-time start up fee of \$500 and annual fee of \$849.
- b) Approval of check numbers 1388 – 1424 and the listed ACH transactions for the month of November.

PERSONNEL

- a) Acceptance of the retirement of Marcia King, Instructional Assistant, effective December 17, 2019.
- b) Acceptance of the resignation of Mary Haley, Instructional Assistant, effective December 6, 2019.

AGREEMENTS/ CONTRACTS/ POLICIES

- Approval of the 2nd reading of the Student Wellness Policy.
- Approval of the first reading of the following policies:
 - Non-discrimination- Qualified Students with Disabilities (103.1 and attachment Report Form for Complaints of Discrimination)
 - Non-discrimination0 in School and Classroom Practices (103)
 - Special Education (113)
 - Screening and Evaluations for Students with Disabilities (113.3)

Approval of Consent Calendar:

Margaret Burton Conners made the motion to approve the consent calendar as recommended; the motion was seconded by Merita Merick.

Discussion: Regarding the search for candidates for the elementary teaching position, Margaret Burton Conners asked how intend to make it clear that we are seeking a teacher with prior experience teaching math. A request from the Finance Committee members was made for a revised organizational chart and forecasted budgetary impacts for the impact of the personnel changes.

A motion was made by Margaret Burton Conners to amend the Consent Calendar, in Section VI, to add the following item under the Personnel category:

- Authorize permission to advertise for a certified elementary teacher.

The motion was seconded by Merita Merrick.

Discussion: Clarification was provided on the requested expense for PA REAP: the fee for this year would be \$1349; the fee for next year will be \$849.

Vote: 6-0; motion was passed.

A motion was made by Margaret Burton Conners and seconded by Merita Merick to approve the amended Consent Calendar items as follows:

1. Approval of Board Minutes from November 2019 meeting
2. Fiscal Items:
 - a) Approval of the PA REAP online recruiting tool at a cost of \$1349 for this year (\$840 annual fee + \$500 start-up fee).
 - b) Approval of check numbers 1388 – 1424 and the listed ACH transactions for the month of November 2019.
3. Personnel
 - a. Acceptance of the retirement of Marcia King, Instructional Assistant, effective December 17, 2019.
 - b. Acceptance of the resignation of Mary Haley, Instructional Assistant, effective December 6, 2019.
 - c. Authorize the advertisement for a certified elementary teacher.
4. AGREEMENTS/ CONTRACTS/ POLICIES
 - a. Approval of the 2nd reading of the Student Wellness Policy.
 - b. Approval of the first reading of the following policies:

- i. Non-discrimination- Qualified Students with Disabilities (103.1 and attachment Report Form for Complaints of Discrimination)
- ii. Non-discrimination in School and Classroom Practices (103)
- iii. Special Education (113)
- iv. Screening and Evaluations for Students with Disabilities (113.3)

Discussion: Request that the position posting for the elementary certified teacher specifies prior experience in teaching math.

Vote: 6-0; motion was passed.

Old Business:

- There being none, the meeting continued.

New Business:

- There being none, the meeting continued.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:34 pm.