

SYLVAN HEIGHTS SCIENCE CHARTER SCHOOL

Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes

Monday, July 20, 2020

**Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order by Dr. Kurtz at 5:33 pm and it was noted the meeting was being recorded. Attendance of the board members was taken.

**Attendance (all members were attending virtually):**

Dr. Laura Kurtz, Ed Jaroch, Elizabeth DuVall, Andre Johnston, Margaret Burton Conners, Merita Merick, and Nancy Neusbaum, and Lyndsay Bryce (present until 5:55 pm) were present. Amechie Walker was absent. Susan Roth (Principal/ CAO), Lori Lauver (STEM Coordinator), and Melena Overdorf (Music, Health, Physical Education teacher/ administrative intern), Jessica Nordai (Pupil Services Coordinator) were present from the staff; Dr. Leigh Dalton was present from Stock and Leader.

**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 Conners

Second: Merita Merick

Discussion: There being none, the meeting continued.

Vote: 8-0

Result: Motion passed

**Recognition of Guests and Scheduled Speakers:** there being no comments, the meeting continued.

**Comment Period**

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

## Reports

- Finance and Facilities
  - The Finance and Facilities Committee did not meet in July. Committee and Board of Trustee members are encouraged to continue forwarding research-based articles to inform the school's Phased School Reopening Health and Safety Plan.
  
- Principal
  1. Phased School Reopening Health and Safety Plan for the 2020-2021 school year  
Note: the order of the items differs from the agenda due to the unavailability of Mrs. Nordai to present results of the parent and staff surveys at this time; these items will be discussed later within the Principal's report.
    - Revisions to the School's draft plan presented last month are based on recent guidance from PDE.
    - Proposed plan to improve current air quality
      - This section was not previously included in last month's draft of the School's Plan and has been added in response to newly released guidance.
      - Current HVAC system includes 8 rooftop constant volume natural gas and heating and electric cooling units and were in compliance with code requirements pre-COVID-19 pandemic as per HB McClure.
      - Based on recent recommendations in "Schools for Health: Risk Reduction Strategies for Reopening Schools" by Harvard T.H. Chan, we propose to upgrade the School's air filtration system.
      - Current filters are insufficient to remove COVID-19 from air. System recommended by our HVAC Service Provider, H.B. McClure, uses Needle Point Bi-Polar Ionization. This technique treats air moving through the HVAC system and sends out charged ions which interact with air and surfaces within the spaces serviced by the HVAC system. Proposal #6074611 was submitted; proposed cost of upgrade to air quality system is \$7,569.00. This upgrade recommendation is based on addressing needs resulting from COVID-19; we would not have otherwise needed to perform this upgrade. We propose the use of ESSER funds to support the costs of this upgrade.
      - During a routine inspection of the School's HVAC system on July 2<sup>nd</sup>, H.B. McClure identified three cracked heat exchanger units. It is their recommendation that we replace all three heat exchangers at this time. We propose the use of General Budget to cover the costs of the repairs to each unit (proposal # 607469 for Carrier RTU02R at a cost of \$4,458.00; proposal # 607134 for Carrier RTU05R at a cost of \$3,211.00; proposal # 607128 for Carrier RTU07R at a cost of \$3,211.00). There are a total of 8 units on our rooftop; they have replaced one in the past year and another within the past few weeks. Recent high temperatures have added extra strain to our HVAC systems. The life expectancy of the units is approximately 10 years per unit. Parts can be ordered upon Board approval and work can be scheduled for completion prior to the start of the school year. The start date for teachers remains the same and student start date has been updated to August 31.
      - It was noted that upgrades to the School's air filtration system does not substitute for following COVID-19 recommendations.
  2. Emergency Instructional Time Template Section 520.1

Sylvan Heights affirms that they will provide students with 180 days of instruction and 900 hours of instruction.

- Proposed Blended Learning Schedule
  - students will be designated as either Group A or Group B
  - Group A will attend in-person on Monday and Wednesday; on remaining days students will be engaged in “learning at home” activities. Note: if school is closed on a Monday due to a holiday; students will attend on Friday of the same week.
  - Group B will attend in-person on Tuesday and Thursday; on remaining days students will be engaged in “learning at home” activities.
  - Siblings and students living within the same household will be grouped together.
  - Mrs. Roth went through a “typical” day for a given group of 11 students within a classroom pod (arrival at school, traveling as a “pod,” students having own space next to desk for movement breaks, eating breakfast/ lunch, dismissal procedure, use of individual water bottles for hydration).
  - Currently not permitting volunteers and community members to enter building; only vendors performing necessary repairs or upgrades will be permitted to enter building following recommended guidelines.
  - Clarification on use of masks/ face coverings: masks are to be worn by everyone; face shields and masks with clear portion may also be permitted. When eating, plastic partitions will serve as physical barrier. Families may choose to provide masks for their child; the school will supply masks to any child who needs them and will have additional masks on hand. Anyone who enters the building must also wear a face mask while on the premises. The school will provide the staff with face shields.
  - If a child becomes ill during the day or upon arrival at school, he/ she will be quarantined as per the School’s Phased Reopening Health and Safety Plan.
  - As per the School’s Phased Reopening Health and Safety Plan, individual supplies/ materials will be provided each student for school use. Each student will be issued a bin to organize his/ her school materials to be kept in; bins will replace chair pockets and other organization systems made from textiles which cannot be sanitized to reduce the spread of COVID-19. General budget funds will be used to cover costs that we would have incurred during a typical school year; costs associated with the school’s COVID-19 pandemic health and safety response that would not have otherwise been necessary will be covered through grant funding (i.e. ESSER funds, CARES Act funding, etc.).
  - We will recommend that any child running a fever should be tested for COVID-19. In order to return to school, students must be fever free, without the use of medication; current guidance for return to school at the time of the Board meeting is 3 days.
  - Fridays will be used by staff to replace planning time that would have normally resulted from students having “specials” classes delivered by a different teacher outside of the classroom, teachers will deliver remote instruction in the morning and provide students with assigned work for the balance of the day. Teachers will use the remainder of the day for planning purposes (i.e. data review, lesson planning, team meetings, etc.).
- Staff Survey Results (Mrs. Nordai)

- At the current time, 80% of our staff feel at least somewhat comfortable coming back to school and 100% plan on returning to the school. The survey had responses from 23 out of 28 staff members.
  - Staff concerns were enforcement of face mask requirement and being exposed to COVID-19. Staff feel that the most important the following are in place upon our return: having temperature checks, limiting visitors, and nightly cleaning. Staff have expressed concern about wearing face coverings during day; most are at least comfortable in areas throughout the school.
  - Overall, are supportive of an idea of scheduling students to attend in-person on Monday/ Wednesday and Tuesday/ Thursdays with instruction on Fridays to be delivered remotely.
  - Staff concerns center around unpredictability, time for recess, planning time.
- Parent Survey Results
    - 54 parents have completed the survey
    - Main concerns: child being exposed to/ exposing family members to COVID-19 and falling behind academically. Building cleanliness, frequent hand washing by students/ staff and availability of hand sanitizer in classrooms, and monitoring temperatures are
    - Level of comfort with child wearing of face masks at school: parent data shows 50-50 split with those who are supportive and those who are not. Note: due to Governor Wolf’s orders, all individuals must wear a mask or face covering when leaving his/ her home.
    - Over 50% of responding parents are not comfortable with their child returning full time to “brick and mortar” school at this point. 60% of responding parents are interested in a “hybrid” model of instruction (remote and in-person on a schedule).
    - Most important supports needed of remote instruction: live instruction at least once per day; consistent communication and protocols, access to hands-on materials and supplies at home.
    - Of the 54 parents who responded, 52 indicated that they have internet access available to the student.
    - There is a 60/ 40 split in terms of concerns with daycare.
    - Most families are not in favor/ interested in having their students transported to school using school bus transportation; 80% have indicated that they will plan to transport their child to school/ make other transportation arrangements.
    - Main concerns are safety, students wearing masks, concerns with families who are not following guidelines and impacts on the health/ safety of their child, and the use of a single platform for students to use.
    - In regards to the Governor’s order for mandatory face coverings, for those individuals (students and staff), one must go through the ADA interactive process to determine eligibility for accommodations.
    - If hybrid model goes into effect on August 31<sup>st</sup> as planned, we will continue to examine options.
    - Schools who have announced plans are available on Penn Live and are being updated on a regular basis. Sylvan Heights staff are continuing to gather data and take information into consideration as our plan moves forward.

- Additionally, we are planning to make modifications to our existing structure to accommodate the purchase and installation of a washer and dryer and janitorial sink in response to COVID-19 health guidance.
- Technology Update (this information will not be voted on at this meeting)
  - Plans are still being finalized, but current recommendations for the coming school year include the use of the following:
    - Securely Anywhere Filter to replace Forcepoint Websense to filter onsite and offsite accessible web content and notifications of specific keyword searches performed on student device; total cost of \$4,332.50 over 3 year contract.
    - ClassLink as our Single Sign-on (SSO) solution for our students and staff and will interface with our most-used learning applications (i.e. DreamBox, Savaas/Pearson, FOSSweb, Imagine Learning, PowerSchool; total cost of \$3,990 (annual fee, rostering, one-time set up)
    - Class Dojo Class Dojo will continue to be used as an immediate communication tool between staff, families, and students; there is no cost associated with this application.
    - Google for Education (Enterprise): Within this platform we are considering the use of several applications: GSuite for staff to provide access to repository of information and opportunities for collaboration accessible regardless of physical location; Google Meet to be used as our videoconferencing solution for instruction, meetings, and professional development during times of remote operation; Google Classroom to be used by teachers to generate and track assignments; total costs estimated at \$624 for one year. This would provide students, families, and staff with a single platform for educational instruction and tools to address challenges experienced during the COVID-19 mandatory school closure.
    - Microsoft 365 school wide license purchase is being examined; this cloud-based system would replace individual Microsoft Office licenses which would automatically update and cloud-based email hosting (cost savings of replacing current email server). Microsoft 365 would be available for staff to use on up to 5 devices and allow staff continuity of versions.
    - We will continue to get pricing and contract information and will forward all information to the Board as it is available.
- Title IX has also had many revisions and we have attended training. Jessica Nordai will serve as our Title IX Coordinator.
- Revised 2020-2021 School Calendar, postponed by 1 week, pushing the first student day to August 31, 2020 (aligns with Harrisburg City School District).
- By Laws and Policies Committee

There was a Joint By-Laws and Policies/ and Personnel Committee Meeting held on July 9, 2020.

The following attended: Laura Kurtz, Elizabeth DuVall, Margaret Burton Conners, Merita Marek, Susan Roth, Jessica Nordai, Lori Lauver and Melena Overdorf.

The committees review the current Personnel Policies/Handbook and made the following recommendations:

- To remove “At Will” from the handbook/policies.
- Non-exempt employees are prohibited from earning overtime without approval
- Remove “temporary employees”
- Recommendation to keep the probationary period- 90 days for new hires.
- Yes to follow Board Approved school calendar regarding days off (there are no paid holidays- only days worked. 10 month full-time school staff work 190; part-time staff work the hours they are scheduled; full-time 12 month staff (admin assistant, Stem Coordinator and Pupil Services Coordinator) work 235 school days.
- Yes to tuition reimbursement for online courses. No to reimbursement for textbooks and other fees.
- Teachers evaluation: Utilize standard Danielson Rubric and 82-1.
- Things to do by the end of the 2020-2021 school year- create a more comprehensive evaluation form for Instructional Assistants, Receptionist, Cafeteria Workers, and Administrative Assistant.
- PTO will remain 10 days (75 hours for 10 month staff). 12 days for 12 month staff (90 hours). PTO time starts at the beginning of the school year for 10 month staff and on July 1 for 12 month staff.
- No limit to how much PTO time can be carried over.
- Future discussion- creation of a sick bank, paying staff for unused PTO time

The following policies were developed to support the newly proposed Personnel Handbook.

- Policy Number 104: Nondiscrimination in Employment Practices and reporting form
- Policy Number 323: Tobacco/Nicotine
- Policy Number 351: Drug and Substance Abuse

Additional supporting policies are in the process of being developed or revised. These will be presented at the next board meeting.

- Family Advisory Committee: This committee has not been meeting since January. We will need to explore when/ how this committee can resume. There being no report, the meeting continued.
- Personnel Committee: Covered under by laws and Policies discussion. There being no report, the meeting continued.
- President
  1. There being no report, the meeting continued.

## BOARD ACTION ITEMS

Approval of Consent Calendar:

### A. CONSENT CALENDAR

#### 1. APPROVAL OF BOARD MINUTES

- Approve the minutes from the June 2020 meeting minutes

#### 2. FISCAL ITEMS:

- Approval of check numbers 1590, 1592, 1594- 1608; 1612; 1616-1617 and the listed ACH transactions for the month of June 2020
- Approval of installing Needle Point Bi-Polar Ionization. Proposal Number 610411: proposed cost: \$7,569.00
- Approve the replacement of Carrier RTU02R- proposed cost of repair: \$4,458.00
- Approve the replacement of Carrier RTU05R- proposed cost of repair: \$ 3,211.00
- Approve the replacement of Carrier RTU07R- proposed cost of repair: \$ 3,211.00

#### 3. PERSONNEL:

- Approval of Jessica Nordai as the Title IX Coordinator

#### 4. AGREEMENTS/CONTRACTS/POLICIES

- 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading of Behavior Support Policy 113.2
- 1<sup>st</sup> Reading of the following policies:
  - Policy Number 104: Nondiscrimination in Employment Practices and reporting form
  - Policy Number 323: Tobacco/Nicotine
  - Policy Number 351: Drug and Substance Abuse
- 1<sup>st</sup> Reading of the Personnel Handbook
- Approval of the Phased School Reopening Health and Safety Plan for the 2020-2021 school year.
- Approval of the School's Emergency Instructional Time Template Section 520.1
- Approval of the revised 2020-2021 School Calendar with the start date of in-person teacher/student instruction to start on August 31, 2020.

Ed Jaroch made the motion to approve the consent calendar; the motion was seconded by Margaret Burton Connors.

Vote: 7-0; motion was passed.

### Old Business:

- There being none, the meeting continued.

### New Business:

- There being none, the meeting continued.

Dr. Laura Kurtz thanked the staff on the Phased Reopening Health and Safety Planning Committee for their hard work and dedication in the development and refining of the plan.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:39 pm.