

SYLVAN HEIGHTS SCIENCE CHARTER SCHOOL

Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes

Monday, January 25, 2021

**Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order by Ed Jaroch at 5:30 pm. Following the Pledge of Allegiance, attendance of the board members was taken and it was noted the meeting was being recorded.

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

Ed Jaroch, Margaret Burton Conners, Merita Merick, Andre Johnston (joined at 5:35 pm), Lindsay Bryce, Amecihe Walker, Debra Simpson-Buchanan, Dr. Laura Kurtz were present. Staff present included Susan Roth (Principal/ CAO), Melena Overdorf, Jessica Noardai, Lori Lauver, Rebecca Doty, Kelly Cropper, Marty Stevens. Dr. Leigh Dalton was present from Stock and Leader.

It was noted that an Executive Session of the Board was held at 5:00 pm to discuss real estate matters.

**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: Dr. Laura Kurtz

Discussion: There being none, the meeting continued.

Vote: 8-0

Result: Motion passed

**Recognition of Guests and Scheduled Speakers:** Mr. Jaroch welcomed the multiple parents who attended the meeting and the meeting continued. Ms. Nicole Marshall, Parent Representative will address the Board under "New Business."

**Comment Period**

- A. Public: there being no comments from the public in attendance, the meeting continued.
- B. Staff: there being no comments from the staff in attendance, the meeting continued.

## Reports

- Finance and Facilities Committee
  - A meeting was held on January 11, 2021 to review the proposed adjustments to the current 2020-2021 school year budget. Attendees included Ed Jaroch, Andre Johnston, Susan Roth, Lori Lauver, Jessica Nordai, Melena Overdorf, Kelley Lorenzetti, CPA from Diana M. Reed & Associates.
  - A recommendation was made to add Susan Roth, Ed Jaroch, and Merita Marek as signers to the M&T bank account.
  - Proposed adjustments were sent out to all Board members prior to the meeting. The budget adjustment is necessary to account for realignment of unplanned expenditures in some areas and unplanned savings in other areas due to the COVID-19 response.
  - The next regularly scheduled meeting is scheduled for February 7, 2021.
  
- Principal
  - Updates/revisions due to COVID-19:
    - On January 7, 2020, the Pennsylvania Department of Health and the Pennsylvania Department of Education revised their previous recommendation for school's within counties experiencing substantial level of COVID-19 positivity rates to provide for a full remote learning model. These Departments now recommend public schools in counties with substantial transmission consider returning elementary school students to in-person instruction via the blended learning model.
    - As of Friday, January 22nd, Dauphin County reported a weekly average of 11.8% positivity and 252.6 cases per 100,000. While the percentage of cases is still more than 10%, the number of cases has dropped significantly in recent weeks.
    - The most recent parent survey, conducted January 2020, revealed that 75% of parents would like to have their children attend in-person instruction.
    - Given the reduction of positive COVID-19 cases, the current recommendation of from PDE and the DOH for elementary schools to return to the blended learning model, and parental requests, it is recommended that Sylvan Heights resume blending learning on March 1<sup>st</sup>.
      - Beginning March 1, 2020, **all** students are eligible to attend at least 2 days per week (either Monday/Thursday or Tuesday/Friday). Additional in-person instructional days will be provided for at-risk students as social distancing space allows. Therefore, the Emergency Instructional Template will be revised to allow for 50% student capacity.
      - Families may still choose to have their children participate in online only instruction for the remainder of the 2020-2021 school year.
      - The online instructional model is not currently guaranteed for the 2021-2022 school year.
      - The Health and Safety Plan will remain in force.
  
  - Mid-year benchmarking: All students are in the process of being tested either online or in-person for Reading and Math via the Acadience Benchmark Assessment. We currently have

approximately 60% of our families who have agreed to allow their child to be scheduled to come in for mid-year benchmark testing.

- Sylvan Heights' will staff continue to hand out Grab and Go breakfast and lunch items on Tuesday and Thursday. All Sylvan Heights families are eligible. Hats, gloves and scarfs are also available.
- School Supplies: School supplies are being distributed during in-person benchmark testing sessions or they are being mailed home for at home learning. , Hats, gloves, mittens, and books are also available for students.
- Report Cards: The 2<sup>nd</sup> Marking period ended on January 22<sup>nd</sup>. Teachers are in the process of scheduling conferences. Conferences will take place via phone or GoogleMeets.
- Facilities: Sylvan Heights has partnered with IU13 in providing the school with Office 365 via an agreement with Microsoft for Enrollment for Educational Solutions. Services for the remainder of the school year will be prorated.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter Parent Engagement Night: Thursday, January 28<sup>th</sup> at 6:00pm. We are seeking parental input on the direction of the school in the future to determine the funding sources and resources that we persue. Also examining additional supports to engage students post-pandemic.
- In addition to updates by phone, the Mr. Jaroch and Mrs. Roth met on Friday, January 22, 2021 to provide insight on COVID-19 mitigation practices in current use during remote instruction and discussion of additional protocols which are to be fully implemented upon the planned return of students for the hybrid learning model. They went on a room-by-room tour which highlighted the current mitigation efforts.
- Attendance has been fair, but teachers and parents are communicating that the students are expressing their desire to be in school. Maintaining focus can be a challenge with loss of structure and social aspects that in-person learning provides.
- Following the mid-year benchmark testing, staff have expressed a desire to have students return to the building and currently working on reorganizing their classrooms to welcome their students back for in-person learning following our Phased School Reopening Health and Safety Plan.

- **By Laws and Policies Committee**

The meeting originally scheduled for January 14, 2020 had to be cancelled; the meeting will be rescheduled to a date in February and will be posted. The Parent/Student Handbook and Code of Student Conduct will be reviewed at this meeting.

- **Family Advisory Committee**

– It was reported that no meeting was held and the meeting continued.

- **Personnel Committee**

– It was reported that no meeting was held and the meeting continued.

- **President**
  - In addition to updates provided during the Principal’s report, Mr. Jaroch had the opportunity to observe active instruction and teachers’ efforts to engage students during their lessons.

## **BOARD ACTION ITEMS**

### **A. CONSENT CALENDAR**

#### **1. APPROVAL OF BOARD MINUTES**

- Approve the minutes from the December 21, 2020 Board of Trustees Meeting

#### **2. FISCAL ITEMS:**

- Approval of check numbers 1799, 1802, 1809-1816, 1818, 1820, 1822-1831, 1833-1841, 1843, 1845-1847 and the listed ACH transactions for the month of December 2020
- Approve the Microsoft Participation Agreement for Enrollment for Education Solutions prorated for the remainder of the 2020-2021 school year in the amount of \$707.50, and \$1,407.00 for the 2021-2022 school year.
- Approve the recommended budget adjustments to the current 2020-2021 school year budget.
- To remove Samuel Giannelli, Timothy Hess, Chad Hotsko and Torrie Winder from the M&T Bank account, and to add Susan Roth, Principal/CAO, Ed Jaroch, Board of Trustee President, and Merita Marek, Board of Trustee Secretary as signers of the M&T account.

#### **3. PERSONNEL:**

- None

#### **4. AGREEMENTS/CONTRACTS/POLICIES**

- To approve the revised PDE Emergency Instructional Time Template allowing for 50% student capacity of in-person learning to begin on March 1, 2021.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading of the following policies that support the Personnel Handbook
  - Policy 215 Promotion and Retention
  - Policy 220 Student Expression/Distribution and Posting Materials
  - Policy 235.1 Surveys

## **Approval of Consent Calendar**

May I have a motion to approve the consent calendar as recommended, excluding bullet 4, item #3?

Motion: Margaret Burton Connors

Second: Debra Simpson-Buchannan

Discussion: There being none, the meeting continued.

Vote: 8-0

Result: Motion passed

## **Old Business:**

- Board Training: a training will be scheduled which provides an overview of charter school law and the responsibilities of Board members , by-laws, etc. This training is not to replace Act 55 training. The Board selected Monday, March 1, 2021 at 5:30 pm for the training to occur.

## **New Business:**

- Nicole A. Marshall, parent representative, spoke to the Board and expressed her desire for consideration to serve a three year term as Board Director.
- The Board recognized Andre Johnson's end of term as Board of Trustee Treasurer and appointment to the position of non-voting Treasurer.

May I have a motion to approve agenda item 7C – New Business – as recommended?

Motion: Merita Marek

Second: Margaret Burton- Connors

Discussion: The Board thanked Andre Johnston for his service as a voting member and treasurer to the Board a.

Vote: 8-0

Result: Motion passed

Ideas for future consideration that are brought forth during Board meetings will be kept as a list that will be reviewed and taken under consideration when during budgetary planning processes each year. The format of this process will be developed and presented at an upcoming meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:04 pm.