

SYLVAN HEIGHTS SCIENCE CHARTER SCHOOL

Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes

Monday, September 20, 2021

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Ed Jaroch at 5:35 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 in-person unless otherwise indicated):

Ed Jaroch, Margaret Burton Conners, Merita Marek, Chad Hotsko (virtual), Lyndsay Bryce (virtual), Amechie Walker (virtual), Debra Simpson-Buchanan, Erica Monroe (virtual), and Dr. Laura Kurtz (virtual) were present. Nicole Marshall was absent. Staff present included Susan Roth (Principal/ CAO), Lori Lauver and Jessica Nordai. 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: Mrs. Margaret Burton Conners

Second: Ms. Debra Simpson-Buchanan

Discussion: There being none, the meeting continued.

Vote: 9-0

Result: The motion passed.

Recognition of Guests and Scheduled Speakers: There being no guests or scheduled speakers, the meeting continued.

Comment Period

A. Public:

- Mr. Finley spoke to the Board of Trustees on behalf of the Family Advisory Committee (FAC). He updated the Board on the group's participation in the Back to School night events at the school – there were approximately 60 responses to the FAC survey received from the evening's event. The next meeting will be on Tuesday, September 28th at 5:30 pm. Welcome packets and an agenda are being prepared and the group will elect officers. Mr. Finley asked for feedback from the Board of Trustees as the group moves forward. The efforts of Mr. Finley to engage parents were praised; the group's past efforts were highlighted. Mr. Finley will continue to keep the Board apprised of FAC meetings and progress.

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

Reports

Finance and Facilities Committee

It was reported that a meeting was held September 13, 2021; attendees included Ed Jaroch, Board President; Susan Roth, Principal/ CAO; Lori Lauver, STEM/Federal Grants Coordinator; and Melena Overdorf, Safe Schools Coordinator/Music Teacher.

The Committee made the following recommendations:

- To move forward to create a contract for the removal of the sign by Nate Smucker. There will be no money exchanged for the removal.
- To research/gather additional information on how to prevent water from coming into the school building during a significant rain fall. School staff will be reaching out to local entities seeking assistance in determining the cause and potential solutions in the coming weeks and months to prevent further occurrences.
- To research/gather information on PDE allowable limits and requirements for charter school rental reimbursement. At the current time, the school is exploring available opportunities in order to inform short and long-term fiscal and program plans.

Principal's Report

- COVID-19 updates
 - Sylvan Heights has one confirmed case of COVID-19 and one suspected case of COVID-19, affecting two different classes. I-Pads were distributed to students or their parents/guardians at the time of dismissal so students would be able to participate in online instruction. The school is being proactive in their approach to prevent a larger outbreak.
 - The two affected classes will return to school after 14 days (10 school days).
 - If there are three (3) cases at our school, our entire school must close for three (3) days; instruction would be provided remotely.
 - During times of remote learning due to COVID-19, the School issues each child technology items including a school i-Pad, charging cord, and charging block. Hot spots are available to be signed out by families during such times to ensure access to the school's educational program. Remote instruction begins each school day at 8:30am with attendance being taken by 8:45; automated phone messages are sent for students who have not logged in or contacted Tech Support by that time.
 - For families who were affected by the most recent closure during the school day, messages were sent out using ClassDojo and automated phone calls alerting them of the need to arrange to retrieve his/ her child due to a possible COVID-19 exposure. If parents did not view their digital message, phone calls are made. All technology items and paperwork providing more information were sent home with the students at the time of pick-up from the school. For families who were unable to pick up their child due to lack of transportation, the school arranged for transportation for the family.

- Procedures, including templates of paperwork for distribution, have been created to allow for a rapid response by staff if/ when additional COVID-19 exposures occur which require partial or full closure of the physical building.
- Back to School Nights
 - Back to school nights were held on Tuesday, September 7th for Kindergarten and Grade 1; and on Thursday, September 9th for grades 2, 3 and 4.
 - All attendees received information from the Family Advisory Committee, their child's teacher(s) and overall all school information. Books were available for families to choose from and take home. Those children whose families were unable to attend the event were provided opportunities to choose books during the normal school day following the event.
 - Strict COVID-19 protocols were in place for the in-person event and included, but were not limited to requiring all attendees to wear masks and have their temperature taken prior to entering the building, hand sanitizer immediately upon entry; family groups sat at tables that were at least 6' apart; circular directional flow to the building to prevent individuals passing in close proximity within the hallways; two events were held (K – 1st and 2nd – 4th grades) each with two start times (6:00 and 6:20 pm) to reduce the total number of people in the building at a given time; all snack items were individually packaged and available only within the classroom space.
 - Information was sent home and is posted to the school's website for parents to view if they were not able to attend Back-to-School Night in-person.
- Review of the 2021-2022 Sylvan Heights Science Charter School TSI Title 1 School Plan
 - The school is in the second year of a three-year plan.
 - Strengths and Challenges- math, reading, and attendance were identified for improvement
 - Goals and action plans were created for each area in need of improvement. For this year only, we included goals and action plans associated with reteaching skills for being a successful student at school (i.e. behavioral and social expectations for the classroom, lunch room, recess) five days per week.
 - This past week was the first time that students had been in school for five consecutive days since March 13, 2020 (i.e. for 2nd grade students, the last time that they would have attended school five full days per week was in kindergarten).
 - Many of the expected daily skills and routines that students would have naturally learned over time about being an elementary school student are now having to be explicitly taught to students who would otherwise have gained those skills in earlier grades.
 - Professional Development has been and will continue to be provided focusing on the unique support systems necessary for our students short and long-term educational success (academic, social-emotional, and behavioral skills).
 - We continue to communicate across our school community (families, staff, service providers) about our initiatives and progress towards our goals. While we cannot

currently conduct reading, math, science, and music/ art nights as we have in the past, we are exploring ways in which we can engage families in each of these areas.

By Laws and Policies Committee

- It was reported that there was no meeting.

Family Advisory Committee

- It was reported that there is a meeting scheduled for Tuesday, September 28, 2021 at 5:30pm.
- The group is reviewing feedback forms received during the Back to School Nights.

Personnel Committee

- Recommended date for August meeting to be rescheduled: Wednesday, September 29th at 5:30pm. It was noted that the Committee is seeking additional members.

President

- Mr. Jaroch reported that he signed paperwork requiring his signature as necessary, including the Annual Report.
- Mr. Jaroch reported that he plans to attend the PA Coalition of Public Charter Schools conference being held in October to become more informed about current initiatives. Mrs. Burton-Conners expressed interest in learning more about the conference; Mr. Jaroch will forward the conference information to Mrs. Burton-Conners for review.

BOARD ACTION ITEMS

A. CONSENT CALENDAR

1. APPROVAL OF BOARD MINUTES

- Approve the minutes from the August 23, 2021 Board of Trustees Meeting

2. FISCAL ITEMS:

- Approval of check numbers 2081-2110 and the listed ACH transactions for the month of August 2021.

3. PERSONNEL

- To approve the hiring of Renai Corson, part-time Federal Grant Document Clerk (20 hours per week for the fiscal year) in the amount of \$15.50 per hour.

4. AGREEMENTS/CONTRACTS/POLICIES

- To approve the Memorandum of Understanding for the 2021-2022 school year between Boyo Transportation and Sylvan Heights Science Charter School to provide van transportation from home/school during school hours for identified students.

- To approve the Capital Area Intermediate Unit IDEA Part B Subgrant Contract for the projected period of July 1, 2021 through September 30, 2022, in the amount of \$25,233.91.
- To approve the Memorandum of Understanding between Sylvan Heights Science Charter School and the City of Harrisburg, Bureau of Police for a total of two consecutive school years beginning August 2, 2021.
- To approve the Sylvan Heights Science Charter School TSI Title I School Plan 1 for the 2021-2022 school year

Approval of Consent Calendar

May I have a motion to approve the consent calendar as recommended?

Motion: Mr. Chad Hotsko

Second: Mrs. Margaret Burton Connors

Discussion:

- Mrs. Roth provided clarification Wilkes University expenditures (reimbursement for college courses enrolled in by teachers to obtain additional credentials relevant to their position)
- The Solicitor provided information regarding the MOU with the Harrisburg Police Department is required under the Safe School Act, Chapter 10; if there is an occasion for police involvement in a situation involving a special education student, the school may provide information about a student's Positive Behavior Intervention Plan if it is required to prevent escalation of a student's behavior while interacting with an officer; this information is only provided on an "as-needed-to-know" basis. Under this agreement, the school may also invite the City of Harrisburg, Bureau of Police to participate in staff professional development offerings regarding our school's Positive Behavior Intervention System. In cases where a situation may occur (i.e. alleged weapon or drugs/look-alike drugs or paraphernalia), the agreement provides the mechanism for the school and police department to be in consultation with one another. It has been rare that the MOU has been utilized at the school, especially due to the young age of our students, but it is important (and required) to have in place. Dr. Dalton further explained the reasoning behind the Memorandum of Understanding via the Safe Schools Act that it provides a manner to ensure a system for schools – particularly those served by multiple jurisdictions – to know the mechanism for requesting assistance and information by all parties.
- Mrs. Roth provided additional information regarding the CAIU contract listed – the IDEA Part B Subgrant Contract is to provide speech and language to identified students and is supported with grant funding.

Vote: 9-0

Result: Motion passed

Old Business

- The Board and school community was reminded that the October Board of Trustees meeting also is the Annual Reorganizational Meeting.
- It was noted that this was the final meeting of Dr. Laura Kurtz, Past-president, as her second three-year term has expired. Dr. Kurtz was thanked for her service for the past six years. Mr. Jaroch suggested that we revive the practice of recognizing the service of Board of Trustees members by including their names on signage in the front lobby.

New Business

- The school is considering a new mascot – the current mascot is an owl. Input for mascot options which reflect the school’s mission will be sought from students, families, and staff.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 6:32 pm.