

CHESTER CHARTER SCHOLARS ACADEMY

BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING

7:00 p.m., November 17, 2020

Date of Approval: Tuesday, December 15, 2020

Call to Order: The Board of Trustees for the Chester Charter Scholars Academy held a public Board Meeting in Chester, PA on November 17, 2020. The meeting convened at 7:01 pm. An Executive Session took place in advance of the public Board Meeting to discuss personnel and litigation matters. Members of the Board in attendance (at the time of the call to order): President Barbara Klock, Ben Berger, Don Delson, Marilyn Henkelman, Ramona Jones, Dion Lewis, Ellen Milgrim, Judy Owen, Alice Turbiville, Ian Wilcox, Head of School Akosua Watts and Jennifer Camp, acting as secretary. Absent: Joan Richards. All in attendance participated via video call.

Public Comments: Members of the public present: Christopher Hanlon, Executive Director, CCSA Foundation; Brian Holm, CCSA High School Director.

Approval of Minutes

- The Board reviewed and adopted the minutes of the September 15, October 23, and November 9, 2020 meetings of the Chester Charter Scholars Academy Board of Trustees.
 - Motions – Marilyn Henkelman, Ben Berger, Ian Wilcox
 - Seconds – Judy Owen, Don Delson, Ellen Milgrim
 - Ayes: 11 Nays: 0 Absent: 1

President's Report

Barbara Klock (President)

- Moment for Mission:
 - Read a poem, "Teach Me," by a seventh grade CCSA student.
- CCSA Foundation:
 - The Foundation received a notice regarding the potential removal of a real estate tax exemption, which would result in an annual liability of \$1M.
 - Reb Speare dealt with the issue and the real estate tax exemption is still in place.
- Charter School Grant:
 - The US Department of Education awarded a charter school grant to The PA Coalition of Charter Schools.
 - A small group of representatives from CCSA and the Foundation boards met to assess the usefulness of applying for the \$30M grant.
- Settlement Agreement

- Discussion was had about the fact that the settlement agreement will need to be addressed in the near future.
- COVID 19 Update
 - Reviewed the numbers for Delaware County.

CCSA Foundation Update

Chris Hanlon (Executive Director, CCSA Foundation)

- Recapped the online art event the foundation is hosting on Thursday, November 19 and encouraged the board members to attend and bring friends.
- Virtual tour of the school should be complete in the next few weeks.
- Currently conducting internal edits on the website and creating more content.
- On pace in the second quarter to meet goals.

Committee Reports

Academic Excellence, Marilyn Henkelman (Academic Excellence Committee, Chair)

- There is a strong concern about learning loss, particularly for the youngest children.
- Topics for board enrichment: review standardized tests, lab based STEM and arts learning in the virtual world, and concern about juniors.

There was a brief discussion about learning loss for juniors and older students. The board agreed to continue to monitor the situation before taking any action.

Finance Committee, Alice Turbiville (Finance Committee, Chair)

- Long Range Projections
 - It is important to balance the deficit that will occur when bond principal repayment begins next year and to adjust the revenue expense base.
 - Potential for renegotiating the settlement agreement was discussed.
- Rate Analysis
 - Worked with Charter Choices to determine a rate that we can use to renegotiate with the district.
- Operating Cash
 - Currently have a good cushion of cash to cover deficits.
 - Investigated CD rates and it was recommended is to place funds in a CD for twelve months.
- YTD Budget Update
 - Currently have a healthy surplus and on track to maintain that through the end of the year.
 - Very minor variances on salaries and other expenses. We are favorable on enrollment and on additional SPED students.
 - Next committee meeting will be dedicated setting next year's budget.

School Report

Akosua Watts (Head of School/CEO)

- Community Issues

- Outlined involvement in Chester Mentor Initiative, an organization whose goal is to place a mentor with every child in Chester.
- Is part of an ad hoc group of community leaders who are addressing violence in the community.
- High school students completed two trauma informed learning sessions with Dr. Harrell-Levy and middle school students will also receive training.
- Seniors
 - Seniors have come in to the school building twice for town hall meetings where they were measured for caps and gowns; signed up for Naviance; completed college applications and DCCC applications; and all age appropriate students registered to vote.
 - First student received college acceptance.
- Student Assessments
 - Teachers are currently conducting regular assessments as part of their instruction.
 - In-person elementary student assessments were put on hold.
 - Remediation will play a big part in planning for the Spring and Summer. The summer in particular is a time where more comprehensive remediation can be offered.
- Covid Update
 - Based on guidance from the Chester County Health Department and the PA Department of Education, CCSA went fully remote beginning Monday, November 16.
 - There was a brief discussion about a reopening date. It was agreed that the families should receive information about a date and January 19 was tentatively decided as a benchmark date.

Resolution

- Move to pass the resolution discussed in the Executive Session: Don Delson
Second: Ben Berger
- The resolution was approved and passed.
- Barbara Klock read the resolution.

Date of Next Schedule Public Board Meeting: December 15, 2020 at 7:00 p.m.

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 8:31 p.m.

Jennifer Camp, (serving as secretary)