

CHESTER CHARTER SCHOLARS ACADEMY

BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING

7:00 p.m., December 15, 2020

Date of Approval: Tuesday, February 16, 2020

Call to Order: The Board of Trustees for the Chester Charter Scholars Academy held a public Board Meeting in Chester, PA on December 15, 2020. The meeting convened at 6:55 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, Ellen Milgrim, Judy Owen, Alice Turbiville, Ian Wilcox, Head of School Akosua Watts and Jennifer Camp, acting as secretary. Absent: Ramona Jones, Dion Lewis, Joan Richards. All in attendance participated via video call.

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

Approval of Minutes

- The Board reviewed and adopted the minutes of the November 17, 2020 meeting of the Chester Charter Scholars Academy Board of Trustees.
 - Motion – Don Delson
 - Second – Alice Turbiville
 - Ayes: 9 Nays: 0 Absent: 3

President's Report

Barbara Klock (President)

- Moment for Mission: Chris Hanlon shared his background and the path that led him to CCSA.
- CSP Grant
 - This is still in the early stages. A small group of board members are currently working to vet and think about how to move forward.
- Regional Covid Update
 - Updated the group on the latest quarantine recommendations.

CCSA Foundation Update

Chris Hanlon (Executive Director, CCSA Foundation)

- Outlined the recent appeal letter from the foundation – encouraged board members to forward on to anyone who might be interested in CCSA.
- February 4 will be the second part of the “Step into Our Studio” series featuring Frank Hosking, CCSA’s music teacher. This is an excellent way to introduce friends to CCSA.
- Volunteer efforts are going well. Encouraged the board to send volunteers to the foundation: some of the school’s biggest donors started as volunteers.
- The website is currently going through edits. Looking towards a January launch date.

Committee Reports

Nominating and Governance, Ben Berger (co-chair)

- Policies/Bylaws
 - Currently researching best practices regarding creating policy around non-active members.
 - Will potentially enhance conflict of interest policies. Researching how other boards handle similar issues.
- Board candidates
 - Need to think about the following when filling out the board: skill sets, social capital, diversity.
 - Received two recommendations: Thomas J. Parker and Zach Oberfield.
- Board Retreat with CCSA Foundation
 - Plans are in the works for a mini-retreat on Zoom in mid-February, and an in-person retreat for October 2021, pending COVID restrictions.
 - Meeting is set for January 6 with Drew Schmidt to discuss logistics and content.

Finance Committee, Alice Turbiville (Finance Committee, Chair)

- Budget
 - No YTD changes since the last board meeting.
 - Will provide a rough sketch of budget assumptions in February 2021. There may need to be two budget scenarios – one for virtual and one for in-person.

School Report

Akosua Watts (Head of School/CEO)

- Social Emotional Learning efforts
 - Monday morning check-in survey to all middle and high school students. Counselors on staff review data and follow up with students as needed.
 - Friday lunch check-in time where middle or high school students can self-select to speak with a staff member.
 - Life Class series is underway for middle school and ninth grade students.
- Report Card Conferences
 - Held first ever fully virtual report card conference cycle on Wednesday, December 9.
 - Staff rose to the occasion and did very well.

- Still compiling the information but honor roll data points to numbers being better than this time last year.
- Athletic Update
 - The basketball team is continuing to plan for when the athletic suspension is lifted, and they can resume practice and play.
- Staff Survey & Response
 - Reviewed the responses of the recent staff survey.
 - Shared a few individual written responses from the survey.
 - Working to respond to the feedback and address issues where needed.
- In person learning
 - Looking at January 21 or 25 as target date for SPED students to return, followed by the next group of students two weeks from that date, and so on.
 - Return to school would be optional for all families.
 - Health and Safety Plan will be in place.
 - There is concern among the wider community about returning to in-person instruction.

There was a brief discussion about the possibility of testing students on a rotating basis in order to provide peace of mind to concerned families. There was further discussion over whether or not the school can mandate vaccinations.

Motion to adjourn – Marilyn Henkelman

- Ellen Milgrim – second
 - Ayes: 9 Nays: 0 Absent: 3

Date of Next Schedule Public Board Meeting: February 16, 2021 at 7:00 p.m.

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

Jennifer Camp, (serving as secretary)