

CHESTER CHARTER SCHOLARS ACADEMY

BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING

7:00 p.m., August 29, 2023

Date of Approval: Tuesday, September 19, 2023

Call to Order: The Board of Trustees for the Chester Charter Scholars Academy held a public Board Meeting in Chester, PA on August 29, 2023. 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 Donald Delson, Ben Berger, Pam Greenblatt (via zoom), Marilyn Henkelman, Frances Hoover, Mandy Kennedy (via zoom), Chris Klock (via zoom), Zach Oberfield (via zoom), Judy Owen, Alice Turbiville, Lauren White, and Head of School/CEO Akosua Watts. Absent: Bill Cumby

Public Comments: No comment, no members of the public present.

Approval of Minutes

- The Board reviewed and adopted the minutes of the June 20, 2023, meeting of the Chester Charter Scholars Academy Board of Trustees.
 - Motion – Alice Turbiville
 - Second – Ben Berger
 - Ayes: 11 Nays: 0 Absent: 1

President's Report

Don Delson (President)

- Swearing in of new board member, Chris Klock
 - Mr. Klock recited the oath of office and was officially inducted onto the board.
- Review of committee assignments
 - Facilities Committee: Linton Stables will remain as a non-board participant. New co-chairs, Bill Cumby and Scott Carroll (of CCSA Foundation board).
 - Finance Committee: Tom Parker will remain as a non board member; Alice Turbiville will continue as Chair.
 - Governance Committee: Judy Wertheimer will join as a non board member; Judy Owen will remain as Chair; Ian Wilcox will step down.
 - Education Committee: Judy Owen will step down from this committee.
- New Committees
 - Chester City Liaison: Ben Berger and Lauren White will head this committee and report on matters of the city that pertain to CCSA.
 - Charter Renewal Committee: Akosua Watts will be joined by Don Delson, Marilyn Henkelman and Alice Turbiville, with Judy Owen acting as Chair. This committee will drive the charter renewal process.

CCSA Foundation

- The Foundation has contracted with The Foundation for Delaware County to provide back office and marketing support for charitable annuities.
- Mr. Delson requested members consult their calendars and provide potential dates for a joint October board meeting in order to discuss, in depth, the results from last spring's PSSA tests. The mutually agreed upon dates were determined to be October 24 or October 26. Mr. Delson will communicate this information to Carla Ricci, president of the CCSA Foundation board, and together they will settle upon the final date for the meeting.
- CCSA Foundation will have their bylaws reviewed by an outside attorney for a fee of \$75. Judy Owen will be contacting the same attorney to review the CCSA board bylaws.
- Chester Upland School District
 - Mr. Delson attended a hearing whose purpose was to mediate a dispute between Chester Community Charter School, Chester Upland School District, and the Pennsylvania Department of Education over their settlement agreement.
 - CCSA does not need such a deal but may get pressured by the receiver to extend the time we continue to receive the same rate of reimbursement. Mr. Delson will update the group as soon as there is more information.

Committee Reports

Finance, Alice Turbiville (Chair, Finance Committee)

- Committee Structure for the 23-24 school year
 - The committee met on August 14 and welcomed new members Chris Klock and Bill Liva, from the board of CCSA Foundation.
 - The committee approved a work plan for this year: long range planning will occur in the fall and results of those plans will be presented to the board for review in December; in March of 2024 the committee will propose compensation changes and will share a draft of the budget in May for review; in June the 2025 final budget will be presented to the board for a vote.
- Annual S&P Review Process
 - Each year S & P reviews ratings for bonds. On August 17 members of the CCSA and Foundation boards - Don Delson, Akosua Watts, Alice Turbiville, Corliss Boggs - as well as Jesse Bean from Charter Choices, met with new reviewers.
 - We haven't received an affirmed rating yet but all signs point to keeping the same rating. The reviewers were informed of the possibility of a deficit due to the discontinuation of ESSR funds but they seemed fine with the potential of a one year deficit.
 - When the final rating comes out, Ms. Turbiville will circulate the information to the board.
- Highlights from final June Budget
 - Increased percentage of SPED students increased local revenue. Revenue was also higher because of a one time payment of \$543,000, which was a catch up payment of district funding that was owed to the school.
 - There was \$443,000 revenue due to shifting some ESSR funds from 2023 to 2024.
 - A lot of other expense items got incorporated into the 2024 budget, including funding from strategic planning.
 - In general it was a good year in terms of surplus, which is \$1.59M, \$1.5M more than budgeted.

Facilities, Mandy Kennedy (Co-Chair, Facilities Committee)

- Phase 2 Addition Update
 - Construction is complete; classrooms are open and filled.
 - There are a total of nine new classrooms.
 - The project came in approximately \$30,000 under budget.
 - The modular units have been fully removed and there is some work left to be done to restore the ground, which BSI will handle.
 - Chris Hanlon is organizing a ribbon cutting for November 9. All board members are invited.

Education, Marilyn Henkelman (Chair, Education Committee)

- Ian Wilcox's connection from Microsoft Education, Michael Jabbour, has reserved Friday, September 22 to meet with representatives from CCSA. A meeting is currently being scheduled to determine how best to use Mr. Jabbour's time.

School Report, Akosua Watts (Head of School & CEO)

- Start of the School Year
 - School started Monday, August 28 with new start and end times: 8:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. respectively..
 - Staff are required to arrive by 7:30 am.
 - Enrollment is slightly over, which provides a cushion for any changes that occur in the first few months of school.
 - Transportation is currently the biggest challenge to the new school year. CUSD replaced their old transportation company with smaller, independent companies who are patching together routes. The last bus on the first day of school arrived two hours late for pick up.
 - The transportation issue has been tough on families but leadership is communicating regularly and actively working to solve the problem.
 - The inefficient procedures at Chester Community Charter are contributing to the transportation delays. Their Aston campus uses six buses that CCSA relies on. CCSA leadership has been in touch with the CEO and COO of Chester Community Charter, requesting their help with those six buses.
- Summer Highlights
 - Summer programming was busy with 21st Century, ESY and credit recovery.
 - Partnership with the Philadelphia Union expanded with the new program Career Assist, which is part of the iAM program. Two six-day sessions were held at the Philadelphia Union offices. CCSA students were matched with a host working at the Union (marketing, accounting, events, etc.). Students spent the morning with their assigned adult learning about their job, and then received career training in the afternoon.
 - At the end of the program the students presented to a room of peers and professionals - approximately 30 people.
 - Each student received a Macbook Air and \$750 upon successful completion.
 - CCSA students also participated in the second annual iAM Residential Program at Neumann College.
- PSSA results
 - Provided an overview of Spring 2023 results.

- Math is still the subject area that needs the most attention. It was agreed that the October joint board gathering would be the appropriate time to discuss this issue further.
- The October gathering will also be the appropriate time to compare CCSA data with state data.
- Staff initiatives for this year include training with regard to analysis of data in order to understand and identify areas of improvement.
- There was a brief discussion regarding targeting the lowest scoring students and how to best serve them as well as measure growth.

Adjournment: The public meeting adjourned at 8:07 p.m. followed by a board-only Executive Session.

Date of Next Scheduled Public Board Meeting: September 19, 2023, at 7:00 p.m.