

CHESTER CHARTER SCHOLARS ACADEMY

BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING

7:00 p.m., December 19, 2023

Date of Approval: Tuesday, February 20, 2024

Call to Order: The Board of Trustees for the Chester Charter Scholars Academy held a public Board Meeting in Chester, PA on December 19, 2023. The meeting convened at 6:42 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, Bill Cumby, Pam Greenblatt (via Zoom), Marilyn Henkelman, Frances Hoover (via Zoom), Zach Oberfield, Judy Owen, Alice Turbiville, Lauren White (via Zoom) and Head of School/CEO Akosua Watts. Absent: Chris Klock

Public Comments: No comment. Members of the public who were present: Carla Ricci, President of the CCSA Foundation Board; Judy Owen's sister, Patricia Hunter.

Approval of Minutes

- The Board reviewed and adopted the minutes of the November 21, 2023, meeting of the Chester Charter Scholars Academy Board of Trustees.
  - Motion – Judy Owen
  - Second – Marilyn Henkelman
    - Ayes: 10      Nays: 0      Absent: 1

President's Report

Don Delson (President)

- CUSD Reimbursement Rate Update
  - Chester Upland School District (CUSD) filed a report which disclosed what they spend per student. This information indicates that when CCSA's settlement agreement expires in eighteen months, we should begin to receive reimbursements of approximately \$3.2 million more than we have been receiving because of our special education population.
  - There was a meeting of the Strategic Planning Committee - consisting of the presidents and vice-presidents of both boards, Akosua Watts, and other members of both boards - on the morning of December 19. The discussion centered around how to make the best use of this money. It was determined that we will hire a consultant to help facilitate conversations and think about how to make this money work for our organization. The committee will bring ideas and recommendations to both boards in the spring.
  - There was a brief discussion where the following points were discussed:
    - Salary increases for staff will be considered.

- It is unlikely that the number CUSD published will change since it has been made public. Therefore, we can adequately plan for the amount we'll be receiving.
- The additional funds do not have to be spent on the special education department exclusively.

### Committee Reports

#### Nominating & Governance Committee (Judy Owen)

- New By-Laws
  - The descriptions of the board committees were updated to correspond correctly with the actual duties performed.
  - The monetary amount that the head of school can spend before asking for approval from the board was updated.
    - There was a call to approve the new by-laws.
      - Motion - Don Delson
      - Second - Bill Cumby
        - Ayes: 10      Nays: 0      Absent: 1

#### Education Committee (Marilyn Henkleman)

- PSSA Results
  - The committee met on December 7, 2024 to have a more thorough discussion about the PSSA results following the board meeting in November.
  - Math continues to be a challenge. Our district is not alone in this but we still need to address the issues.
  - Teachers will perform a mid-year evaluation to get a sense of how students are doing and Akosua Watts will share the results with the committee at their next meeting in January.
  - The school is in talks with Widener University regarding partnering to provide math tutoring.
  - The Jesu School is holding a symposium on AI on January 12. Marilyn Henkelman will forward the information to all board members.

#### Finance Committee ( Alice Turbiville)

- Audit Report
  - The committee reviewed the audit report with the auditors. The auditors finished in a timely manner and with a clean audit opinion. There were no pronouncements or changes to financial statements.
  - There was a call to approve the audited financial statements of June 30, 2023.
    - Motion - Don Delson
    - Second - Marilyn Henkleman
      - Ayes: 10      Nays: 0      Absent: 1
- November Financial Report
  - There has been no major change on the projected surplus for the year. Things are currently in good shape.
  - We received the reimbursement from the district that was owed to us, which was close to a million dollars. There is still approximately \$100,000 outstanding.

- Projections for next year will be tighter because of the expiration of the ESSR funds.
- The committee plans to build next year's budget over the next few meetings.

#### School Report

- Enrollment
  - We're currently at 695 students total. Typically our number is slightly higher but we are holding steady because of our high number of special education students. Additionally, several students are currently being evaluated for special education and that number is likely to grow over the next few weeks.
- Academic Highlights & Upcoming Events
  - Honor Roll Breakfast
    - Celebrated 177 scholars (32.9%)
    - 135 Honor Roll – all As and Bs (25.1%)
    - 42 Distinguished Honor Roll – all As (7.8%)
  - Student Led Conferences
    - These were held the first week of December. Students led the conversation about their learning, gathered a sampling of their work and provided a reflection and review of goals. This format has been particularly successful in Middle School where students take ownership of their own progress.
    - There was a brief discussion regarding the goals and hopes for the student led conferences as well as how the Dean of School Culture is planning to connect with families who are struggling to follow CCSA's rules.
  - iAM Partnership
    - Cohort #3 – 43 new inductees > PHL17 coverage
    - Lincoln Financial L&E; students got a tour, participated in a panel discussion about career opportunities at Lincoln Field.
  - Violin Showcase – Wednesday, December 20 at 10:00am
  - Senior Pinning – Wednesday, December 20 at 5:30pm

Adjournment: The public meeting adjourned at 7:20 p.m.

Date of Next Scheduled Public Board Meeting: February 20, 2024 at 7:00 p.m.