



GOODWIN UNIVERSITY EDUCATIONAL SERVICES, INC.
Meeting of the Board of Directors
September 18, 2024, at 4:00 p.m.
Meeting Minutes

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 4:03 p.m. by Se-Min Sohn.

Members present: Alvin Thompson, Ethan Foxman, Frank Amodio, James Demorro, Jackie Jacoby, Judy Resnick, John Walters, Larry Goldberg, Lee Housley, Lionel Lessard, Lisa Wisniewski, Merilee DeJohn, Molly Loudon, Megan Mehr, Mark Scheinberg, Ron Buccilli, Richard Shechtman, Se-Min Sohn, Wilfredo Nieves, Kevin Armata

Members absent: Ed Casares, Greg Butler, Jeffrey Hoffman, Mary Ann Hanley, Michele Bush, Ron Angelo, Ray Madorin, Julio Maturana, Donna Galluzzo, Martin D'Eramo

Staff present: Alyse Marion, Lexi Kaider, Bryant Harrell, Dan Noonan, Eddie Meyer, Jean White, Michael Pardales, Missy Quinlan, Sal Menzo, Todd Andrews, Bobby Decrescenzo, Mark McGovern, Danielle Wilken

Guests: Andy DiFatta, Michael Scott of TSKP Studio, Tom Romagnoli of Downes Construction,

2. Public Comment

No public comment.

3. Consent Agenda

Minutes of May 15, 2024, were reviewed by the Board as a group. Se-Min Sohn motioned to approve. Motion passed unanimously.

4. New Business

Update from Superintendent, Dr. Sal Menzo

a. Introduction of Lexi Kaider, the new Executive Assistant to the Superintendent.

b. **Enrollment and Staffing:** We are approximately flat compared to last year's numbers with around 1,240 students – on par with where we were this time last year. We presently have only one staff opening, which is significant. Over the summer, we only had nine staff members leave our community, including non-certified and certified staff. This is a great tribute to our administration throughout the district and the support that we offer to our staff, as well as a tribute to the great work of our scholars.

- c. ***Support Services, including Technology:*** The number of students seeking support services is increasing, with 68 students at the elementary level, 40 students at the middle school level, and 92 students at the high school level. Our combined services approach takes on an entrepreneurial model, as we are hiring coordinators (teachers) that can offer our students technological support while also extending their services to other districts. Our main competition in this regard is the Neat Warehouse, which, while providing support to districts, is not always accessible. In response, we are looking to provide both physical support (locations) as well as technological support by way of loaning out equipment at a cost to districts, meaning we would generate revenue.
- d. ***Food Services:*** This fall, we launched our food services program. Because we are a CEP school district, all students receive free breakfast and free lunch automatically due to the rate at those who would qualify. We are working on putting in place an electronic program that would offer an à la carte service to allow students to purchase a second lunch should they get hungry.
- e. ***Curriculum and Instruction:*** We have continued to focus on our curriculum and instruction, which was a significant area that we needed to improve on. In the last year and a half, we have articulated curriculum Prek-12.
- f. ***Chronic Absenteeism and Family Support:*** We are doubling down on our efforts to address chronic absenteeism (chronic meaning being absent more than three days per month). We reallocated resources so that we now have a District Attendance Coordinator getting out there to shake hands with families and provide them with what they might need. One need that we identified is among our multilingual families, in which students are absent from school due to attending their parents' appointments to serve as a translator. In response, we are actively trying to offer ESL classes for our multilingual families to afford more opportunities for their children to be in school. This is an example of how we look at root causes when we face challenges, which is essential when leading a district. Furthermore, we were fortunate to receive a grant of \$280,000 from the State of Connecticut to establish a "parent mobile." This year we are developing the programs to be provided through this vehicle, including ESL classes and other programming centered around the whole child. We will bring in social services from all 47 districts that we support to show how we will support the whole family – we must concentrate on the whole ecosystem around a scholar and mitigate any concerns so that they can come to school better prepared to learn on any given day.
- g. ***Upcoming Technical High School:*** – We are actively involved in pulling together a curriculum for the new technical high school. It will not be built by the fall, but it will be open in the fall. We are looking at 72 freshmen scholars. We have a student day schedule already prepared, and we have preceded on staffing who are writing curriculum. We have a meeting with Hartford Public Schools so that they are aware of our updates, as we want to inform them to the greatest extent possible. There will be four key areas within the high school: Smart Factory, Automation,

Production/Fabrication, and Systems Integration. Electric Boat would like to be one of our cornerstone partners, and we are still looking for others. We have a two-story business center in the building, and we are filling out a sponsorship request with Microsoft to have their partnership alongside that of Electric Boat. We want scholars and staff to have daily access to professionals.

Presentation from Michael Scott of TSKP Studio and Tom Romagnoli of Downes Construction

- a. Michael shared the traffic improvements associated with Phase I of the Sitework & Building Construction for Goodwin Industry 5.0 Magnet High School (State Project Number: 542-0007 MAG/N). Buses will be rerouted, additional parking will be provided for faculty/staff in the current grassy area, and asphalt will be stripped from the rear part of the parking lot to engage in ground improvements (i.e., vibrating the soil and making it suitable to support the four-story high school). Everything put out to bid needs to be reviewed and approved by the State, and the State does not want to review and approve anything that the Board does not approve.
 - i. Michael asks if all have reviewed and approved of the plans, specs, and the budget (at or below \$1.9 million) provided in the meeting packet, to which the Board reviewed, acknowledged, and approved the plans and its contingencies (see Resolution 24-09).
- b. Tom shared that they are looking to go out to bid after the State gives approval for Phase I, the total package for which is about \$1.9 million. Documentation from the meeting packet breaks down the budget into four different phases. The budget is also divided into hard costs (i.e., construction costs, roughly \$1,123,279) and soft costs (i.e., owners' costs, financing, contingencies, furniture, fixtures, equipment, and so on, roughly \$796,161).
 - i. Keep in mind that the budget is fluid, and the values outlined in each phase can be moved as circumstances arise and are reacted to.
 - ii. The schedule for Phase I is pending State approval, with anticipated mobilization in November. The good news is that the vibratory movement that Michael explained can be done over the winter months. The team hopes to be back to the State by the end of November for Phase II, out to bid in December, and bringing back GMP for approval over the winter to start in spring. This is a 20-month schedule that culminates to open school in January of 2027.
 - iii. The total project budget is \$85 million, and this is 100% reimbursable by the State - the first reimbursement has already been received.
- c. Sal shared that the Technical High School is organized on a rotating schedule so that scholars will spend two weeks on academics and then two weeks off academics fulfilling the technical portion of their learning. With 72 scholars, that leaves two rotating groups of 36 scholars. The State graduation requirement of one year of physical education and health will be delayed until the scholars' sophomore year, given that the gymnasium will not be built. Accordingly, the State's additional

language requirement, the school's business class, and one of the two full credits in art will be frontloaded in the scholars' freshmen year. The credits required by the State have already been mapped out and considered in conjunction with CTRA requirements and technical school requirements. This is not just an old-fashioned technical school. This is an early-college technical high school. Marketing begins in October.

5. Business Requiring Action

a. GUES Resolution 24-07 - Election of Officers of Goodwin University Educational Services, Inc.

Jackie Jacoby motioned to approve Resolution 24-07. Ethan Foxman seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

b. GUES Resolution 24-08 - Election of Directors of Goodwin University Magnet Schools, Inc.

Ethan Foxman motioned to approve Resolution 24-08. Richard Shechtman seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

c. GUES Resolution 24-09 - Approving Final Plans, Project Manuals and Professional Cost Estimate for the Phase I – Site Enabling Bid Package for the Magnet Technical High School

The Board reviewed, acknowledged, and approved the plans and its contingencies, as expressed in Michael and Tom's presentation. Ron Buccilli motioned to approve Resolution 24-09. Lionel Lessard seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

6. Adjournment

Jackie Jacoby commended Dr. Sal Menzo for his presentation and work. Richard Shechtman motioned to adjourn the meeting at 4:38 p.m. Ethan Foxman seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

- Meeting minutes recorded by Lexi Kaider.