Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes

Date: November 14, 2023

Held at The Birches Academy

Present: Chair: Christie Storniolo (CES), Secretary: Alyssa Ross (AR); Vice-Chair: Christine Miele (CM); Treasurer: Michael Gendreau (MG); Becca Allan (BA), Alexis Goldsack (AG);
Regrets: Pamela Sarantis (PS)
Staff: Chris Smith (CDS), Jessica Wachsman (JW), Erin Balfe (EB), Aimye Haroutunian (AH), Allison Baldonado (AB)
Public: as listed in notes

CM called meeting to order at 5:35pm

General

Approval of minutes from October 10 meeting. CM motions to approve, AG seconds. All others in favor. None opposed.

Correspondence

- Someone requested info about joining the Board; AR passed to MG

Next meetings:

- Full Board
  - December 12, 5:30pm
  - January 9, 5:30pm
- Finance
  - December 5, 5:30pm
  - January 2, 5:30pm

Events**:**

- Picture Make up - November 16

- Fill Your Cup - November 17: Board will say/show something
- Winter Concerts - December 12 (K-3), December 19 (4-8)

School Highlight
AB: STEAM integration update.

She's met with all the teachers to discuss and document technology integration goals for the year. Example: using the Glowforge in different classes, etc. Will do a reflection in the second half of the year but checks in regularly. AB is doing STEAM Labs with 4-5, middle school electives, etc. AB is also doing teacher workshops (Teach Me Tuesdays) to come and learn more about the tech that we received from the grant and play around with it to feel comfortable putting it into methods.

AB is still 100% focused on this role and supporting classroom teachers. CES asked administration if this role is critical. JW said we need to do a survey on the role (parent, teacher, admin, student) which will help answer this question. Teachers - including those who raised initial concerns, and specials teachers - are feeling more comfortable and confident in technology use, and are being inspired by other teachers' lessons.

AB created an internal site for teachers/STEAM resources. She will send to CM so we can use this for the external site/new page.

AB and Mrs. Madden are presenting at a virtual conference: STEMCON and Beyond. Will use student examples. Focus on STEM career readiness. WIll do PR after this.

Interview of Board candidate, Samantha Moulton

- Board interviewed new potential Board member - have her letter of interest and letters of recommendation for her candidacy, governance committee Q&A
- AG motions to move into non-public session per RSA 91-A:3, II(d) at 6:21pm. BA seconds. All in favor. None opposed.
- CM motions to move out of non-public session and into public at 6:35pm. AG seconds. All in favor. None opposed.
- Vote to seal the minutes of the non-public session because *Matters which, if discussed in public, would likely affect adversely the reputation of any person, other than a member of this board, unless such person requests an open meeting. This exemption shall*

extend to include any application for assistance or tax abatement or waiver of a fee, fine or other levy, if based on inability to pay or poverty of the applicant: per RSA 91-A:3, II(c). CM motions to approve, BA seconds. All others in favor. None opposed.

CES motion to approve Sam Moulton as a new Board member, AR seconds. All in favor. None opposed.

Dean of School update

Enrollment

- 237 enrolled (full)
- Wait list at 257 - 40 on the 2024 K wait list

Personnel

- School nurse hired; starts after Thanksgiving
- Night Owls lead supervisor

Foundation/Friends update

- Started Partners in Education program
- Will get October/November updates in December meeting

Committee updates

Finance

- CSP grant audit November 6-7
    - For the life of the grant
    - Results: need to make some changes (timecard, some policies, etc.) but no financial concerns
    - Every Board member will be a letter from the State with the findings from the CSP Audit
- Regular financial audit
    - In process now; through 6/30
    - They will also audit the CSP grant
    - CES needs to sign a document on financial statements; Board will discuss in the December meeting
- WIll review October 31 financials in December, along with November

Governance

- Voted on Sam Moulton tonight
- We have a few other candidates further along in the process

    - Last week MG, CM, PS did a zoom interview with another potential candidate
    - Still have several more candidates in early stages; will continue to go through them.

Personnel

- CES and AR to meet for Dean of School review prep

Outreach

AR, CM met November 11; next meeting with entire committee November 18

Ongoing Projects

- Possible upgrade of Bloomerang to take donations - “Kindful”
- Going to Salem CTE to look for Outreach Intern 11/29: 8:00 - 9:30
- Update bios and pictures
- Review SEO optimization for website
- Sending out Sponsorship Packages
- Local Marketing: Little Scholars - add question to lottery application
- Specials Pages: Art, STEM, Music, Spanish, Gym

DOG Preparation

- Review takeaways from last year

Long Term Projects

- Create monthly/weekly plan for social media posts
- Review Constant Contact templates for new newsletter
- FOB Logo
- Bi-Monthly Website Review

Strategic Planning

- Need to reconvene as a Strategic Plan is now required to submit to the state
- CES and BA will meet to looking at the last plan

Curriculum

- Science
    - Key question: as a STEAM school, how to we integrate it into everything we do? We are already doing this in many ways; CDS helping to guide discussions to help teachers see the big picture.
    - Asking teachers: What do you wish students knew coming in to your grade and what do you want to teach?
    - BA to join committee for this project

Facilities

- Did meet, will discuss in non-public session

Policy Reviews

November:

- Teacher Performance and Evaluation System Policy. CM motions to approve, AG seconds. All others in favor. None opposed.
- Administration of Federal Grant Funds. CM motions to approve, AG seconds. All others in favor. None opposed.
- Public's Right To Know Policy. CM motions to approve, AG seconds. All others in favor. None opposed.
- Gun-Free School Policy. CM motions to approve, AG seconds. All others in favor. None opposed.

December:

- Data Governance and Security Policy
- Records Retention

Public comment

- Rebecca Nadillo: what is the plan to combine the two K classes into grade 1, and grade 1-2: CES said this is still being determined.

CES motions to move into non-public session per RSA 91-A:3, II(a) at 7:39pm. MG seconds. All in favor.

CM motions to move out of non-public session and into public at 8:25pm. AG seconds. All in favor.

Vote to seal the minutes of the non-public session *under RSA 91-A:3, II(a):The dismissal, promotion, or compensation of any public employee or the disciplining of such employee, or the investigation of any charges against him or her, unless the employee affected (1) has a right to a public meeting, and (2) requests that the meeting be open, in which case the request shall be granted.* CM motions to approve, AG seconds. All others in favor. None opposed.

AR motions to adjourn. AG seconds. All agree. 8:26pm meeting adjourned.