Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes OPEN

Date: January 15, 2019

Held at: The Birches Academy
419 South Broadway, Salem NH

Present: Christie Storniolo: acting Chair (CES), Christine Miele (CM), Alyssa Ross (AR), Bob Hawkes (BH), Michael Gendreau (MG), Emily Haswell (EH)

Admin: Chris Smith (CDS), Jessica Wachsman (JW), Erin Balfe (EB)

Consultant: WIlliam Nevious (WN)

Regrets: Kara Christesen (KC), Dianne Wright (DW)

Public: none

CES called meeting to order at 5:35pm

General

- Approval of minutes from December 17 meeting. CM motions to approve, MG seconds. All approve. None opposed.
- Correspondence: none
- Next meetings:
    - February 5: 5:15pm Finance committee
    - February 12: 5:30pm Board
    - March 5: 5:15pm Finance committee
    - March 12: 5:30pm Board
- Due to KC hiatus, CES is acting chair until KC returns or a new permanent chair is selected. CM motions to approve, BH seconds. All approve. None opposed.
    - Charter School Association dues. JW to get information about the need for legislative lobbying as part of dues.

Foundation update

- Annual Appeal Letters
    - Went out early December
    - Not seeing much traction yet
- Upcoming Foundation Activities
    - Adult Only Night Out: researching Comedy Night/Trivia Night
    - Special Friends Day and Scholastic Book: Spring
    - Spring Fundraiser: Cash Calendar Fundraiser entire month of May
- Friends of The Birches
    - Working on a plan to recruit new volunteers to help with smaller events & fundraisers
    - Planned activities:
        - Penny Wars: March
        - Candy Bar Bingo
        - Valentines Day candy grams
        - Manchester Monarchs games February 10th ($5 dollars from every ticket sold through this link will be donated to The Birches)

Dean of School update

- Enrollment
    - 218: added 4 students in grades 3, 5, 5, 7
    - 111 on wait list
    - 37 applications in for K lottery (scheduled for January 31)
        - JW sent promotional content to parents in local communities to promote on Facebook
- Events and Updates
    - Held first “Principal for the Day” December 20
    - Held Middle School dance January 11
    - Kicking off Employee of the Month program. CDS will substitute for one teacher each month, drawn at random during staff meetings. We will highlight the selected employee in the next bulletin in a student-written article.
    - JW attended the Charter School Leaders meeting on January 15
- Middle School
    - Mrs. Kinson and CDS will be meeting later in the year to brainstorm ways to connect the different science materials.
- Policies
    - Simple Assault policy. CDS did not find a standalone policy from Salem, but it does mention it.
- Staff Training

    - January 15: team went to Concord for Universal Design for Learning (UDL) (restructuring classroom approach to remove barriers to learning)
    - January 22: teacher in-service day - Social Pragmatics, Identity and ADD training (for the latter, Windham police will run but Salem may participate)
- Staff Review
    - CDS has completed several informal observations on multiple teachers, continues to gather data to help with an end of year review.
    - CDS will conduct formal observations starting in February.
- Technology
    - 3D printer up and running. Middle school students created game pieces to be utilized in Mrs. Cox's classroom. They will paint them together with the younger students. Outreach committee pitching this to Union Leader.

Committee Updates

- Finance
    - Reviewed budget to actual through December 31. BH motions to approve. MG seconds. All in favor. None opposed.
- Governance
    - Committee met January 8.
    - DW reached out to CoC to ask for recommendations for someone who can join
    - Reached out to recent Board members to discuss their experience with onboarding process; will discuss changes once all input is received.
    - WN reviewing onboarding documentation and process.
    - Have asked each full Board member to nominate 3-5 people for consideration to join Board by January 31; specific needs include 2 academic, 1 HR, 1 legal, 1 financial, 1 technology.
    - Next meeting February 5.
- Outreach
    - AR, CM, AH met December 21 to review Outreach plan; assigned timelines to all activities - AR and CM held follow up meeting January 9.
    - CM creating donor database.
    - Polled Board to adopt an official shortened name for the school so we have consistency. Decision: The Birches Academy. CDS to share with all staff, especially those posting on social media.
    - Created calendar for Birches Academy Facebook page; CDS will share process with staff to alert them for days they are responsible for.
    - AR working with Kelly Hawkes to promote Syria art program with 6th graders.
    - AR to reach out to Deb Stolar and Kelly Hawkes regarding arts-integrated music program.

    - CES asked us to create Birches ‘talking points’; committee will discuss and create plan and content.
    - Website
        - AR provided visual and written input to CDS
        - CDS is in the process of making changes
        - AR, CDS to meet January 18 to continue edits
    - CDS to meet with Rockingham Mall re signage options
    - CM and MG attended Business and Industry Association “Meet the Legislators” event in Concord January 10
- Personnel - first meeting scheduled for January 23
- Strategic Planning - have not met since last Board meeting, next meeting January 16
- Curriculum, Assessment & Accountability
    - Not yet established.
    - WN expressed his opinion that this is critical to form. WN is willing to join with CDS and RT until an academic Board member is identified.

Policies

- Staff Grievance
    - Policy was shared with attorney who made modifications, that version was shared with the entire Board for review
    - CM motions to approve Staff Grievance Policy. BH seconds. All agree.
- Simple Assault - entire Board will review in February
- Conflict Resolution - to be discussed by CES, CM and MG, entire Board to review in March.

Consultant Review

- Feasibility Review
    - All staff and Leadership team have been interviewed.
    - Board interviews nearly complete.
    - Next stage to interview parents.
- Case Study - WM and CDS to start draft
- Board Recruitment and Development
    - Has asked entire Board to nominate 3-5 candidates by January 31.
    - Goal to have minimum of 3 new Board members by the end of the school year.
    - Have asked Board to think about options for a permanent chair in the event that KC cannot return to that role.
- Policies
    - WN to review all policies.
    - Recommend every policy every three years; CM to develop a calendar/plan.
- CES thanked WN for helping to push us forward.

Public comment: none

Non-Public Session.
Return from Non-Public Session. Minutes are sealed.

CES approves to adjourn. CM seconds. All agree.
7:53pm meeting adjourned