Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes
Date: April 14, 2020

Held via ZOOM videoconferencing

Present: Chair: Christie Storniolo (CES),Vice Chair: Christine Miele (CM), Secretary: Alyssa Ross (AR), Michael Gendreau (MG), Bob Hawkes (BH), Debbie Kruzel (DK),
Staff: Chris Smith (CDS), Jessica Wachsman (JW), Aimye Haroutunian (AH), Erin Balfe (EB)

CES called meeting to order at 5:31pm

General

This meeting is taking place during the COVID-19 crisis; we are holding the meeting via videoconferencing software. The public was notified and invited to join.

Approval of minutes from March 10 meeting. BH motions to approve, CM seconds. All approve. None opposed.

Correspondence: none

Next meetings

- May 5: 5:15pm Finance committee
- May 12: 5:30pm Board
- June 2: 5:15pm Finance committee
- June 9: 5:30pm Board

Miscellaneous business

- CDS holding a virtual Tea with Mr. Smith on Friday, April 14 at 6pm, via ZOOM. All welcome.

Dean of School update

Enrollment

- 225
- Kindergarten Fall 2020
    - 24 have accepted their slot
    - Waiting on confirmation for the other slot
    - Have a waitlist of 9
- Surveyed parents about intent to return; so far have 101 yes, 3 maybe, 1 no

Events and Updates

- School is remote until at least May 4th
- Having “Finish Up Fridays” now; no new work is being given for Friday’s
- Recommendation to modify the school calendar so that we work through April break
    - Polled parents and they overwhelmingly were in favor of working through the break and ending the year early.
    - Would have Monday and Friday of vacation week be planning days for the teachers with no work for the students; students would report for work from Tuesday through Thursday.
    - Would then end the year on June 9
    - Motion made to change the 2019-2020 school calendar to eliminate April vacation; allow Monday and Friday for teacher planning days and Tuesday-Thursday and instruction days. CM motions to approve, DK seconds. All approve. None opposed.
- Remote learning update
    - Remote learning is going really well; teachers and parents alike are being supportive. Instruction is continuing at a high level.
    - Teachers continue to try new things. For example, Ms. Baldanado is using an app called Flipgrid to encourage engagement, and she has had great success so far.
    - Adding some clubs back in. Held Dungeons and Dragons on Friday and got feedback from one of the parents that it helped their students to re-engage.
    - Socially and class-wise some students seem to be pulling back somewhat; we will continue to address engagement as we know how we are moving forward per order of the state.
    - EB added that teachers, parents and students are being really flexible; there was little prep time to move to this new type of learning.
- Personnel/HR
    - Mrs. Kinson on maternity leave; Ms. Polino is stepping in for her.

Foundation update

Canceled Planned Fundraisers due to COVID-19

- Penny Wars: $1500 goal
- Cash Calendar: $5,000 goal
- Pizza Tuesday
- Monthly Bake Sales

Fundraising still going forward this year:

- Looking to launch a Foundation fundraising initiative directly to our parents through The Birches Bulletin: Reflection by The Foundation
    - Virtual Teacher Appreciation Week
        - Trying to find ways to honor and gift our teachers
        - Message will be a reflection on the current situation and the need for The Foundation to continue to fundraise.

        - Message talking points: No teachers have been laid off and they have been working countless hours on instruction, feedback and learning new software and techniques to provide the best remote learning experience
        - School is not saving money but actually losing income through loss of early birds/night owls, enrichment programs and school store
- #GivingTuesday a global action in response to Covid-19
    - https://www.givingtuesday.org/blog/2020/03/givingtuesday-announces-day-global-action-giving-and-unity-response-covid-19
- Brainstormed some other ideas for virtual fundraises; AH is investigating

Committee updates

Finance

- COVID-19 impacts
    - Have tried to save money where we can to offset revenue losses from things like Night Owls, Enrichment, etc. - such as stopping cleaning, trash pickup, lowering heat, etc.
    - Continuing to pay all staff
    - Applied for Payroll Protection Program; have been notified we were approved but we do not yet know amount - this will offset our payroll for the next 8 weeks and as long as we use 75% of for payroll-related expenses it turns into a grant.
        - Motion to accept Payroll Protection Program. AR motions to approve, CM seconds. All approve. None opposed.
- State has just changed reporting so budget actuals no longer need to be submitted to the state but need to be put on the website; AR and JW to discuss website placement.
- Motion to approve month end financials through March 31. CM motions to approve, MG seconds. All approve. None opposed.
- 2019-20 audit has been finalized. Motion to accept. AR motions to approve, CM seconds. All approve. None opposed.

Assessment & Accountability, Curriculum, Governance, Outeach, Personnel, Strategic Planning

- All need to schedule meetings

.

Policy Reviews

April policies to review

- Administration of Federal Grants
    - DK motions to approve, AR seconds. All in favor. None opposed.
- Maternity
    - CM motions to approve, MG seconds. All in favor. None opposed.
- Anti-Bullying
    - AR motions to approve, DK seconds. All in favor. None opposed.

- Entrance Age; was approved in November but recommendation made to remove the option for age exception
    - AR motions to approve, CM seconds. All in favor. None opposed.
- Recruitment and Selection; reviewed in March - M. Cole has made one small change
    - AR motions to approve, CM seconds. All in favor. None opposed.

May policies to review

- Conflict of Interest
- Volunteers

Capital Campaign

- Due to COVID-19, recommendation is to postpone the campaign until Fall 2020 at the earliest. AR motions to approve, CM seconds. All in favor. None opposed.

Public comment: none

No non public session.

AR motions to adjourn. BH seconds. All agree. 7:07pm meeting adjourned.