Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes
Date: December 15, 2020

Held via Zoom videoconferencing

Present: Chair: Christie Storniolo (CES), Vice Chair: Christine Miele (CM), Secretary: Alyssa Ross (AR), Michael Gendreau (MG), Debbie Kruzel (DK), Bob Hawkes (BH), Pamela Sarantis (PS)
Staff: Chris Smith (CDS), Jessica Wachsman (JW), Aimye Haroutunian (AH), Erin Balfe (EB)
Regrets: none

CM called meeting to order at 5:32pm

General

This meeting is taking place during the COVID-19 pandemic; we are holding the meeting via videoconferencing software. The public was notified and invited to join. Please note even when school reopens the Board may continue to meet via Zoom in order to limit activity at school.

Approval of minutes from November 24 regular meeting. MG motions to approve, BH seconds. CM abstains. CES not yet on call. All others in favor. None opposed.

Correspondence

- none

Next meetings

- January 5: 5:30pm Finance committee
- January 12: 5:30pm Board
- February 9: 5:30pm Finance committee
- February 16: 5:30pm Board

Dean of School update

Enrollment

- 2020-21 enrollment at 221, wait list at 111
- Need to bulk up K and 1 wait list numbers, outreach options are currently limited due to COVID restrictions
    - Outreach committee to look at local media
        - AR to look into Salem Life - both an article and an ad
    - Need to determine when the lottery will be (decided to move it from late January in the hopes we could advertise more based on COVID)

Status related to COVID

- More COVID cases among staff and students especially around Thanksgiving break
- Completed two full weeks remote before and after Thanksgiving to protect from spread
    - appears as though the buffer week after the holiday was effective in preventing more transmission within the school
- Looking at the numbers, decision made to move to a remote learning model from December 15 to January 11
- Leadership team is seeing a marked increase in stress of both students and parents.
    - Parents are reaching out
    - Teachers are working with parents to either forgive missing work for struggling students or generating plans to help them catch up.
    - Some students may come in on an individual basis during the remote period to get help

Overall Status

- Report cards issued on December 11

Foundation update

- Annual Appeal
    - Under discussion about when to launch; AH to send draft letter to outreach team this week
    - Giving Tuesday: through alma mater email campaign and Facebook post we raised $6,675
    - Bloomerang: all Annual Appeal information has been entered up until October 30. Jennifer Griffin will finish year end once December closes
- Focus on community
    - Continuing monthly teacher support (pies for Thanksgiving, monthly snacks, etc.)
    - Friends Helping Friends
        - Goal to help Birches families in need during the holidays, identified by CDS and JW
        - Raised $600 on Giving Tuesday and $2125 total
        - Purchased Market Basket and Walmart gift cards to mail week of December 14
- Recent Fundraisers:
    - Cash calendar November: $7794 (some winners donated the money back)
    - Scholastic Book Fair: did not work nearly as well in a remote model, but did earn a credit of $187.19 to purchase books or classroom supplies
    - Meadow Farm Catalog: $842.70
- Current/Upcoming Fundraisers:

    - Scrips gift cards: currently at $297.23
    - Tuft & Needle 25% of all mattress sales will go to the school
        - We earned a free mattress to raffle off
        - No set goal; at $2,275 as of December 8
        - Should see some funds mid January
    - Fill Your Cup - still holding April 1 but under discussion; Casteton is also holding a November 2021 date

Committee updates

Finance

- Reviewed November financials budget. BH motions to approve, DK seconds. All approve. None opposed.
- COVID related grants
    - GOFERR funds. Learned we received 19.2K (68%)
        - All money must be spent and items in hand by December 30
        - JW is finalizing the spend now.
        - PS motions to approve, MG seconds. All approved. None opposed.
    - Received notice that our PPE loan was forgiven - so that spending is off the books
- Federal charter funding for NH has been accepted; state will initially get $10M of the $46M; criteria being determined but we look to be eligible for up to $600K

Governance

- Have a few potential new members, MG continuing to investigate
- Will advertise for new members in January

Assessment & Accountability, Capital Campaign, Curriculum, Outreach, Personnel, Strategic Planning

- All need to schedule meetings
- AR to document Dean of School review process by February

Policy Reviews

Held off on reviewing policies in December and January - Board to be notified which to review for February

Facilities Planning

- PS, BH and CES have met; will interview realtors and determine if we need to sign a contract to move forward with our choice; will report in January meeting
- Need to make a connection in January with Enterprise Bank

No public comment.

AR motions to adjourn. MG seconds. All agree. 6:40pm meeting adjourned.