



# MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**DECEMBER 11, 2019 | 8 AM**

TECH Freire Charter School  
2221 N. Broad Street, Philadelphia, PA 19132

**Board Members Preset:** Kiara Allison, Paul Archibald (phone), William Brinkman, Gerald Escovitz, Lisa Hoffstein, Raquel Leach (phone), Brue Lesser, Bruce Levine (phone), Beth Packel, Lorraine White (phone)

**Others Present:** Leigh Botwinik, Darrell Collins, Kelly Davenport, Dawn Eubanks (phone), Johnny Mills, Chris Moore, Bill Ray, Melanie Reiser, Scott Solomon, Teryn Thomas, Charles Ware, Chris Zagacki

8:05 AM, Meeting start

## **I. Public Comment**

- a. There is no public comment.

## **II. Resolutions**

- a. Review & Approve Minutes from Board Meeting on October 16, 2019
  - i. Bruce Lesser makes a motion to approve the minutes from the October 16, 2019 Board Meeting. William Brinkman seconds.
  - ii. Paul Archibald, William Brinkman, Gerald Escovitz, Lisa Hoffstein, Raquel Leach, Bruce Lesser, Bruce Levine, Beth Packel, and Lorraine White vote in favor of the motion. There are no votes against and no abstentions. The motion passes.
- b. 2019-20 Title I Schoolwide Plan
  - i. Leigh Botwinik reviews the Schoolwide Plan noting that Board review and approval of the plan is a requirement to receive Title I funds. The plan outlines the school's goals for the current year.
  - ii. Beth Packel makes a motion to approve. William Brinkman seconds.
  - iii. Paul Archibald, William Brinkman, Gerald Escovitz, Lisa Hoffstein, Raquel Leach, Bruce Lesser, Bruce Levine, Beth Packel, and Lorraine White vote in favor of the motion. There are no votes against and no abstentions. The motion passes.
- c. 2019-20 Title I Teacher Equity Plan
  - i. Leigh Botwinik reviews the Teacher Equity Plan which examines the school's percentage of certified teachers. Board review and approval is a requirement to receive Title I funds.
  - ii. William Brinkman makes a motion to approve. Beth Packel seconds.
  - iii. Paul Archibald, William Brinkman, Gerald Escovitz, Lisa Hoffstein, Raquel Leach, Bruce Lesser, Bruce Levine, Beth Packel, and Lorraine White vote in favor of the motion. There are no votes against and no abstentions. The motion passes.

## **III. School Reports**

- a. Heads Report
  - i. November Data Packet
    1. Chris Zagacki reviews STAR Benchmarking and notes it is tracking similar to last year. Math scores are slightly down compared to last year but Chris is confident the January testing will help balance out the scores.

2. Chris notes suspension numbers are low and the middle school is focusing on more restorative discipline practices.
  3. Chris shares that one main focus this year is teaching and learning. Almost all teachers have had 3 observations and will begin to have formal observations in 2020. A goal for this year is for each teacher to have 10 classroom observations total.
  4. Finally, Chris shares that attendance numbers are lower than last year which is mainly due to transportation issues with school buses. School leadership and parents are working on ways to address this issue with the school's bus service.
  5. Chris Moore shares that suspensions are down, enrollment is up, and attendance is tracking similar to this time last year.
  6. Chris notes that the high school has completed two benchmarking assessments with growth in both Math and ELA (Reading). Chris shares that there is still room for growth in ELA.
  7. The Board takes a moment to discuss some recent high-profile incidents of student violence in the city. Chris Moore shares that no Freire students have been involved in these incidents and the school is focused on ensuring student safety.
- b. Staff Member Update
    - i. There is no update at this time.
  - c. Student Council Update
    - i. There is no update at this time
  - d. Alumni Update
    - i. There is no update at this time
  - e. Charter Renewal Update
    - i. Kelly Davenport shares that two years ago, Freire Charter School was recommended for a 5-year charter renewal. However, due to unfavorable terms, Freire has not yet signed the charter renewal agreement. This September, Freire received an updated charter renewal agreement from the Charter School's Office with numerous changes Freire had requested.
    - ii. With the help of Gerald Escovitz, Freire has drafted a letter outlining additional issues within the charter renewal agreement. Freire is currently waiting on a response from the Charter School's Office.

#### **IV. Financials**

- a. October 2019 Financial Report
  - i. Bill Ray shares that Freire Charter School has not incurred any significant expenses to date that were not budgeted. There are some capital repairs on the horizon but Freire has sufficient funds set aside for these expenses.
  - ii. Enrollment is currently strong at both Freire Middle and High Schools which is helping to keep the budget on track.
- b. FY 2019 Audit Report
  - i. Bill reviews the audit report for Freire Charter School. The audit is clean with no findings.

#### **V. Advancement**

- a. Advancement Update
  - i. Melanie Reiser shares that the annual appeal to previous donors should hit mailboxes within the next few weeks which includes personalized letters sent to all \$1,000+ donors.
  - ii. Melanie shares that Freire Schools recently hired Amy Smith to support the Advancement Office.
- b. Bruce Lesser shares that he intends to ask Charles Widger, founder and Executive Chairman of Brinker Capital, to be the Bridge to Wisdom Honoree this year. Mr. Widger is one of Freire School's largest donors.

## **VI. Board Committee Reports**

- a. Education Committee
  - i. There is no update at this time.
- b. Audit Committee
  - i. As noted, the audit report came back clean with no findings for Freire Charter School.
- c. 403(b) Committee
  - i. There is no update at this time.
- d. Safety Committee
  - i. There is no update at this time.

## **VII. Governance**

- a. FCMS Immersion Day
  - i. Gerald Escovitz invites Bruce Lesser and William Brinkman to share their recent experience at Freire Middle School's Board Immersion Day.
    - 1. Bruce Lesser shares that the teachers were focused and excited about teaching.
    - 2. William Brinkman notes that the teachers had excellent control over the classroom and that the students were engaged.
    - 3. Gerald Escovitz shares that the teaching in the classroom was, "truly outstanding and the enthusiasm of the teachers was overwhelming." Gerald also encourages all Board Members to schedule a visit to Freire to see the school in action.
- b. Kiara Allison Resume, Freire Alumni
  - i. Kiara Allison introduces herself to the Board of Directors. Kiara is a 2007 Freire High School Alumni and is looking to join the Freire Charter School Board. Currently, Kiara is working at West Chester University and will be moving to Drexel in the coming weeks. Kiara is working on her dissertation with a focus on student discipline.
  - ii. William Brinkman makes a motion to elect Kiara Allison to the Board of Directors. Beth Packel seconds.
  - iii. Paul Archibald, William Brinkman, Gerald Escovitz, Lisa Hoffstein, Raquel Leach, Bruce Lesser, Bruce Levine, Beth Packel, and Lorraine White vote in favor of the motion. There are no votes against and no abstentions. The motion passes.

10:10 AM, Meeting Adjourned