



## MINUTES

September 15, 2021 | 8 AM via Zoom Video Conference Call

Meeting ID: 864 7664 2211 | Password: 775593

**Board Members Present:** Kiara Allison, Paul Archibald, Dave Bryant, Gerald Escovitz, Lisa Hoffstein, Nicole Jenkins, Raquel Leach, Bruce Lesser, Beth Packel, Lorraine White

**Others Present:** Leigh Botwinik, Brian Brecher (Freire High School Staff), Olivia Burgess, Shivana Clark (TECH Freire Student), Kelly Davenport, Dawn Eubanks, Dior Fields, Sanaa Hall (Freire High School Student), Nicole Holmes (TECH Freire Staff), Max Matthews, Johnny Mills, Chris Moore, Tanza Pugliese, Bill Ray, Melanie Reiser, Charles Ware, Chris Zagacki

Meeting Start, 8:05 AM

**I. Public Comment**

- a. No public comment.

**II. Resolutions**

a. Minutes from Board Meeting on June 16, 2021

- i. The board reviews the minutes from the June 16, 2021, Board Meeting.
- ii. Bruce Lesser makes a motion to approve. Lorraine White seconds.
- iii. Kiara Allison, Paul Archibald, Dave Bryant, Gerald Escovitz, Nicole Jenkins, Raquel Leach, Bruce Lesser, Beth Packel, and Lorraine White votes in favor of the motion. There are no votes against and no abstentions.

b. Minutes from Board Meeting on June 29, 2021

- i. The board reviews the minutes from the June 29, 2021, Board Meeting.
- ii. Kiara Allison makes a motion to approve. Gerald Escovitz seconds.
- iii. Kiara Allison, Paul Archibald, Dave Bryant, Gerald Escovitz, Nicole Jenkins, Raquel Leach, Bruce Lesser, Beth Packel, and Lorraine White votes in favor of the motion. There are no votes against and no abstentions.

c. Approve Children's Internet Protection Act Policy

- i. Max Matthews explains that the Children's Internet Protection Act Policy (CIPA) requires schools to have the appropriate software installed on all computers to prohibit students from accessing inappropriate or pornographic material. The board is required to annually approve this policy.
- ii. Beth Packel makes a motion to approve. Raquel Leach seconds.
- iii. Kiara Allison, Paul Archibald, Dave Bryant, Gerald Escovitz, Lisa Hoffstein, Nicole Jenkins, Raquel Leach, Bruce Lesser, Beth Packel, and Lorraine White votes in favor of the motion. There are no votes against and no abstentions.

d. Emergency Instructional Time

- i. Max Matthews shares that the Department of Education requires that, if the school needs to shift to virtual learning mid-year, the school should have a board-approved plan for emergency instructional time. The board approved a similar policy for the 2020-2021 school year.
- ii. Paul Archibald makes a motion to approve. Lisa Hoffstein seconds.

- iii. Kiara Allison, Paul Archibald, Dave Bryant, Gerald Escovitz, Lisa Hoffstein, Nicole Jenkins, Raquel Leach, Bruce Lesser, Beth Packel, and Lorraine White votes in favor of the motion. There are no votes against and no abstentions.
- e. Adopting a Transportation Policy
  - i. Max Matthews notes that the schools have never had school-specific transportation policies. Due to the pandemic, there is a significant shortage of transportation drivers. The school district is unable to meet the transportation needs of Freire Charter School. The transportation policy would empower the Head of School to make transportation-related decisions and incentives to ensure students arrive-to and depart-from school on time.
  - ii. One example of how this policy could be used would be to allow Chris Zagacki, Head of Freire Middle School, to offer a reimbursement program for parents that choose to pick-up and drop-off their students daily, ensuring the students arrive and depart from school on time.
  - iii. Currently, the School District of Philadelphia is not reimbursing Freire Charter School for transportation expenses.
  - iv. Beth Packel makes a motion to approve. Raquel Leach seconds.
  - v. Kiara Allison, Paul Archibald, Dave Bryant, Gerald Escovitz, Lisa Hoffstein, Nicole Jenkins, Raquel Leach, Bruce Lesser, Beth Packel, and Lorraine White votes in favor of the motion. There are no votes against and no abstentions.

### **III. School Updates**

- a. Staff Update
  - i. Brian Breacher introduces himself and notes that he has been with Freire Charter School for 15 years. Brian is the Team 10 Lead and Director of Social Studies. Brian notes that he, and all of Team 10, feel supported by the school leadership including Chris Moore, Adam Antonioli, and Jason Falconio.
- b. Student Update
  - i. Sanaa Hall, a current Senior at Freire Charter School, has been with Freire Schools since her 7<sup>th</sup> grade year. Sanaa shares that she appreciates having been able to participate in numerous summer activities over the past few months. Sanaa currently takes an AP History course this year with Mr. Brian. She finds the course challenging and engaging.
- c. COVID Update
  - i. Leigh Botwinik shares that COVID has been “ever-present”. The schools have several precautions in place to ensure that they are safe environments for all the staff and students within the building, including weekly testing (for asymptomatic individuals), twice-weekly testing for unvaccinated students and staff, mask mandates within the building, and hiring a full-time testing coordinator.
  - ii. There have been a handful of cases within both Freire Middle School and Freire High School, however, all cases seem to have originated outside of the school building and there is no indication of community spread.
- d. Heads Report
  - i. Chris Moore shares that there has been a strong start of the year with strong teachers and passionate students. Chris notes that he has seen more student writing and an integration of chrome books within the curriculum.
  - ii. Chris Zagacki shares that the impact of being home for 18-months is being felt more for the middle school students than for the high school students. Some of the students in 5th grade were last in school in 3rd grade. The only grade in the building that has had a full year with Freire are the 8th grade students, who were last in school during 5th grade.

### **IV. Executive Session**

- a. Bruce Lesser makes a motion to enter executive session. Gerald Escovitz seconds.
- b. Kiara Allison, Paul Archibald, Dave Bryant, Gerald Escovitz, Lisa Hoffstein, Nicole Jenkins, Raquel Leach, Bruce Lesser, Beth Packel, Lorraine White.
- c. The board enters Executive Session at 9:22 AM.

- d. The board exits Executive Session at 9:34 AM.

## **V. Financials**

- a. June 2021 Financial Report
  - i. Bill Ray shares the final financial statement for June. The first financial statement for the current year will be presented during the October board meeting.
  - ii. Freire One ended the fiscal year with \$2.4M cash on hand (49 days), which is unchanged from June 30, 2020. Approximately \$1.5M is needed to meet the 30 days cash on hand loan covenant. Cash on hand remained flat despite a \$340k annual surplus due to the timing of collecting receivables (ESSER & Consolidated grants increased and were collected in July) and paying liabilities.
  - iii. Freire One ended the year with an annual surplus of \$340k, which exceeded the budgeted annual surplus of \$64k by \$276k. Total revenues exceeded the budget by \$980k, total operating expenses exceeded the budget by \$510k, and total capital purchases exceeded the budget by \$192k.
- b. Audit Update
  - i. The audit is currently underway with a draft audit report available in the coming weeks.

## **VI. Advancement**

- a. Advancement Report
  - i. Melanie Reiser shares that Freire Schools exceeded their fundraising goal of \$400,000 by \$37,000, raising a total of \$437,336. The Advancement team is looking to host a cultivation event at the start of the new calendar year.
  - ii. The advancement team informs the board that, moving forward, the timeline for board pledging will ask board members to submit their pledges before December 31st each year. This will allow the advancement team to focus on external donors for the second half of the fiscal year.
- b. Political Landscape Report
  - i. Melanie provides the board with an update on the local political landscape, including current proposed legislation in the State House.
- c. Anti-Racism Update
  - i. Melanie shares the *Commitment to Anti Racism: Year Two Update* document with the board, noting that the entire Freire Schools network is participating in year-long anti racism training with RETHINC and a small group of staff from across the network are completing a facilitators of affinity space training.

## **VII. Governance**

- a. Resignation of Joseph Hargrave
  - i. Olivia Burgess shares that Joseph Hargrave, a parent representative on the Freire Charter School Board of Directors, has resigned. Freire Schools is currently looking for a new parent representative for the board.
- b. Clearances & Trainings for Board Members
  - i. Olivia Burgess reviews the clearances and trainings needed for each board member.

## **VIII. Board Committees**

- a. Education Committee
  - i. No update at this time.
- b. Audit Committee
  - i. No update at this time.
- c. 403(b) Committee
  - i. No update at this time.
- d. Safety Committee
  - i. No update at this time.

Meeting Adjourned, 10:02 AM