



MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

OCTOBER 13, 2021 | 8 AM

VIA ZOOM VIDEO CONFERENCE CALL

MEETING ID: 837 3500 5927 | PASSWORD: 995483

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

Others Present: Leigh Botwinik, Olivia Burgess, Maurice Canon (FCMS 8th Grade Student), Kelly Davenport, Dawn Eubanks, Dior Fields, Max Matthews, Chris Moore, Tanza Pugliese, Bill Ray, Melanie Reiser, Roselia Velez (TECH Academic Advisor), Charles Ware, Chris Zagacki

Meeting Start, 8:03 AM

- I. Public Comment
 - a. No public comment
- II. Resolutions
 - a. Review & Approve Minutes from Board Meeting on September 15, 2021 (Attachment 1A)*
 - i. The board reviews the minutes from September 15, 2021, Board Meeting.
 - ii. Beth Packel makes a motion to approve. Bruce Lesser seconds.
 - iii. Kiara Allison, Paul Archibald, Bill Brinkman, 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.
 - b. Slate of Staff (Attachment 1B)*
 - i. The board reviews the slate of staff.
 - ii. Bruce Lesser questions how the Freire staff are currently feeling and how staffing/hiring has gone over the past year.
 - iii. Chris Moore responds that the school is currently over staffed, which has been beneficial for the high school, allowing the school to ensure the students have good internal substitute teachers. Recent hiring for the high school includes a new math teacher, reading specialist and an English teacher.
 - iv. Lisa Hoffstein makes a motion to approve. Bill Brinkman seconds.
 - v. Kiara Allison, Paul Archibald, Bill Brinkman, Dave Bryant, Gerald Escovitz, Lisa Hoffstein, Nicole Jenkins, Raquel Leach, Bruce Lesser, Beth Packel, and Lorraine White vote in favor of the motion. There are no votes against and no abstentions.
 - c. 2021-2022 Textbook Review (Attachment 1C)*
 - i. Max Matthews shares that the board is required to review the school's textbooks annually. This year there is more ELA curriculum in the review that was recently approved by the board.
 - ii. Lisa Hoffstein makes a motion to approve. Gerald Escovitz seconds.
 - iii. Kiara Allison, Paul Archibald, Bill Brinkman, Dave Bryant, Gerald Escovitz, Lisa Hoffstein, Nicole Jenkins, Raquel Leach, Bruce Lesser, Beth Packel, and Lorraine White vote in favor of the motion. There are no votes against and no abstentions.
 - d. Freire Charter Admissions Policy (Attachment 1D)*
 - i. The board reviews the Freire Charter Admissions Policy.
 - ii. Bruce Lesser makes a motion to approve. Lisa Hoffstein seconds.
 - iii. Kiara Allison, Paul Archibald, Bill Brinkman, Dave Bryant, Gerald Escovitz, Lisa Hoffstein, Nicole

Jenkins, Raquel Leach, Bruce Lesser, Beth Packel, and Lorraine White vote in favor of the motion. There are no votes against and no abstentions.

- e. English Learners Policy (Attachment 1E)*
 - i. Max Matthews explains that the English Learner Policy has been updated with clarifications around what steps the school should take when a learner exits the program.
 - ii. Gerald Escovitz makes a motion to approve. Bill Brinkman seconds.
 - iii. Kiara Allison, Paul Archibald, Bill Brinkman, Dave Bryant, Gerald Escovitz, Lisa Hoffstein, Nicole Jenkins, Raquel Leach, Bruce Lesser, Beth Packel, and Lorraine White vote in favor of the motion. There are no votes against and no abstentions.
- f. Approval of 3-year PA Comprehensive School Plan (Attachment 1F)*
 - i. Leigh Botwinik states that every 3 years the state requests each school to make a comprehensive plan which focuses on academics, teaching and learning, professional development, and new teacher support. This plan is intended to support the improvement cycle regarding evaluation from the State.
 - ii. Raquel Leach makes a motion to approve. Bill Brinkman seconds.
 - iii. Kiara Allison, Paul Archibald, Bill Brinkman, Dave Bryant, Gerald Escovitz, Lisa Hoffstein, Nicole Jenkins, Raquel Leach, Bruce Lesser, Beth Packel, and Lorraine White vote in favor of the motion. There are no votes against and no abstentions.

III. School Report

- a. Staff Update
 - i. Chris Zagacki introduces Andrea Zepp (Head of Academic Supports at Freire Charter Middle School) to the board. Andrea talks about how afterschool clubs have worked during the COVID era.
 - ii. Andrea Zepp shares that Freire Middle School currently offers yoga, knitting, fashion, Good Day Dragons, American Sign Language, robotics, double Dutch and many more. She also notes that the recent vaccine clinic at the school went very well. Many students received approval from their parents and participated in getting their COVID shot.
- b. Student Update
 - i. Maurice Canon (Limitless Leader Member/8th grade student at Freire Middle School) shares what he and his peers are learning in ELA and notes that his class is currently reading about refugees and the challenges they endure. Currently, his class is reading *Inside and Back Again* a book about a young refugee girl who must go to a new country due to displacement.
 - ii. Chris Zagacki asks Maurice if his ELA class been more challenging this year or relatively easier compared to last year. Maurice shares that the class is a lot more challenging since the staff is prepping the students for high school level readings/work.
- c. COVID Update
 - i. Leigh Botwinik shares that recently there were two successful vaccine clinics at Freire One, with TECH Freire's vaccination clinic taking place this afternoon. Over 100+ participants have already been vaccinated. Medical providers and nurses have recently visited both Freire Charter High School and Freire Charter Middle School to speak with students and answer their questions. Freire Schools is working with Lisa Hoffstein, a member of the Board of Directors for Freire Charter School, to plan a parent-facing event around vaccination.
- d. Heads Report
 - i. Chris Moore shares that there have been no positive cases of COVID at Freire High for a few weeks and many individuals who were vaccine-hesitant before have recently become eager to get vaccinated.
 - ii. The high school staff has been making plans on how to ensure all assignments are being handed in for grading for the school year.
 - iii. Chris Zagacki shares that the middle school is regularly testing students with no positive cases reported over the past few weeks.

IV. Financials

- a. August 2021 Financial Report (Attachment 3)
 - i. Bill Ray states as of August 31, 2021, Freire Charter School has the following cash balances of \$448,000

for Operating and \$1,500,000 for Operating Reserve. Freire Charter School has transferred \$500,000 from the Operating Reserve to the operating account to cover the summer grant spending and other expenses from the start of the school year.

- b. Audit Update
 - i. Bill shares the Freire Charter School audit is almost complete.
- c. Health Insurance Renewal
 - i. Freire Charter School recently received an updated health insurance renewal proposal with a 44% increase. This increase is not related to COVID, but rather caused by prescription claims filed with employees.
 - ii. This renewal packet is due on May 31, 2022.

V. Advancement

- a. Advancement Report (Attachment 4)
 - i. Melanie Reiser shares that Freire school has raised \$80,000 in unrestricted donations and pledges in the first quarter of FY22. This places Freire Schools slightly ahead of funding received this time last year (\$67,587).
 - ii. In September, Freire Schools updated all FY21 donors on the start of the school year and what the schools' goals are for the year.
 - iii. The Back-to-School video gave an in-depth explanation of Freire Schools' continued Commitment to Antiracist Action.
 - iv. Freire Schools has begun scheduling virtual meetings with most major donors. The Advancement Team recently submitted two grant requests to the M&T Foundation.
 - v. This fiscal year, the Advancement Team is reconfiguring the timeline for board giving. We are asking all board members to submit their FY22 pledges by December 31, 2021, and for donations to be made by June 30, 2022.
- b. Political Landscape Report
 - i. Melanie shares that September 28, 2021, PCE held a virtual/in-person advocacy day for school leaders to advocate against charter school funding cuts and in favor of smart reforms to charter school law to make the charter appeal board more stable.
 - ii. The majority of the State Representatives who participated in the advocacy day were Republican. PCE is working to solidify their collaboration with the African American Charter School Coalition to develop a plan for engaging the Philadelphia elected officials on the House Bill 1685.
 - iii. The Governor has proposed charter school regulations which could interfere with the new charter school application process.

VI. Governance

- a. Clearances & Trainings for Board Members
 - i. Olivia Burgess reviews the clearances and trainings needed for each board member.

VII. Board Committee Reports

- 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, 9:51 AM