



MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

SEPTEMBER 13, 2023 | 8 AM

VIA ZOOM VIDEO CONFERENCE CALL INFO | Meeting ID: 839 3842 5918 | PASSWORD: 761468

MEETING LOCATION: FREIRE CHARTER MIDDLE SCHOOL (1026 MARKET ST., PHILADELPHIA PA 19107)

Board Members Present: Kiara Allison, Paul Archibald, Phyllis Bookspan, William Brinkman, Dave Bryant, Steve DeAnglis, Lisa Hoffstein, Nicole Jenkins, Bruce Lesser, Raquel Leach

Others Present: Leigh Botwinik, Olivia Burgess, Kelly Davenport, Nate Durant, Dawn Eubanks, Jisu Jeong (Instructional Coach, TECH Freire) Chris Moore, Tanza Pugliese, Asia Sharpe (8th Grade, Freire Middle School), Tamia Wilson (11th Grade, TECH Freire), Melanie Reiser, Scott Solomon, Nathan Yufer, Andrea Zepp

Meeting Start, 8:09 AM

I. Public Comment

- A. There is no public comment.

II. Resolutions

- A. Review & Approve Minutes from Board Meeting on June 14, 2023 & June 28, 2023 (*Attachment 1A*)*
 - a. The board reviews the minutes.
 - b. Bruce Lesser makes a motion to approve. William Brinkman seconds
 - c. Kiara Allison, Paul Archibald, Phyllis Bookspan, William Brinkman, Dave Bryant, Steve DeAnglis, Lisa Hoffstein, Nicole Jenkins, Bruce Lesser, and Raquel Leach vote in favor of the motion. There are no votes against and no abstentions.
- B. Approve Children's Internet Protection Act Policy (*Attachment 1B*)*
 - a. Leigh Botwinik shares the policy is annually approved and it is to protect students from finding unsafe content and block hacking access into the Freire internet infrastructure and to educate students about Internet safety.
 - b. Paul Archibald makes a motion to approve. William Brinkman seconds.
 - c. Kiara Allison, Paul Archibald, Phyllis Bookspan, William Brinkman, Dave Bryant, Steve DeAnglis, Lisa Hoffstein, Nicole Jenkins, Bruce Lesser, and Raquel Leach vote in favor of the motion. There are no votes against and no abstentions.
- C. Approve Health & Safety Plan 2023-2024 (*Attachment 1C*)*
 - a. Leigh shares the policy is required due to ESSER funds and every six months we are required to review the plan to ensure we are in compliance with guidelines. There are no changes to the plan since the last time it was approved and continues to stay aligned to the CDC recommendations.
 - b. Steve DeAnglis makes a motion to approve. William Brinkman seconds.
 - c. Kiara Allison, Paul Archibald, Phyllis Bookspan, William Brinkman, Dave Bryant, Steve DeAnglis, Lisa Hoffstein, Nicole Jenkins, Bruce Lesser, and Raquel Leach vote in favor of the motion. There are no votes against and no abstentions.
- D. Approve Admissions Policy (*Attachment 1D*)*
 - a. Leigh Botwinik shares this policy is approved annually. It includes the new deadline dates along with proposed language surrounding accommodations for families where English is not the first language and a list of acceptable forms of proof of age and proof of residency. Last year we had a lot of questions about the sibling enrollment preference so we enlisted our attorney's help in defining how and when that preference is applied.
 - b. Board asks if we can remove the clause that applicants must live at the same address to qualify for sibling preference and if sibling preference would apply in other circumstances where two children live at the same address for example if two cousins who live with a grandparent?
 - c. Kelly Davenport says that we need to consult with our attorney on these questions.
 - d. Bruce Lesser makes a motion to approve the policy with a potential change to the sibling preference definition in the first sentence on page 5 to eliminate the need to live at the same address pending

advice from the school's attorney and after Leigh shares attorney's response with Board chairs. .
William Brinkman seconds.

- e. Kiara Allison, Paul Archibald, Phyllis Bookspan, William Brinkman, Dave Bryant, Steve DeAnglis, Lisa Hoffstein, Nicole Jenkins, Bruce Lesser, and Raquel Leachvote in favor of the motion. There are no votes against and no abstentions.

III. School Report

A. Staff Update

- a. Andrea Zepp introduces Ms. Yuan Tang (Student Support Specialist, Freire Middle School) to the board.
- b. Ms. Yuan Tang shares she has 18 years of experience in education and is currently on the student services team at Freire Middle School. Ms. Yuwan chose Freire because of the campus's joyful atmosphere and was not always working in environments like Freire. She appreciates everyone's dedication to the development of the whole child, she is passionate about SEL and is overjoyed to see that it is being taught to entire student body
- c. Student Update
 - i. Azia Sharp (8th grader) is one of FCMS high-performing students.
 - ii. She shares that she is on the fence about attending the High School on Chestnut St. due to her love of basketball.
 - iii. She shares her appreciation for the school, staff members and friends she has at the school.
 - iv. Azia loves math and loves how thorough the teachers help her to understand things.

B. Heads Report

- a. Freire Charter School - School Plan (*Attachment 2A*)
- b. September Data Packet (*Attachment 2B*)
 - i. Andrea Zepp shares the data packet with the board and brings attention to the decrease in PSSA proficiency rates. Assures the board that the school has thoroughly interrogated the data, taken ownership of the results, and identified a path forward. They are building in more structured SEL and other proactive climate measures, have built out even more MTSS supports, and continued focus on teacher coaching and curriculum.
 - ii. Chris Moore shares his joy and happiness with the beginning of the school year. Reflects on the immense challenge of the flood in June and having to spend the whole summer renovating the school. Chris celebrates the increased proficiency rates on Keystones. He shares the success with Dragon Week during which students worked on soft skills/SEL like how to work in groups, respect, and other norms and skills for our school.
 - iii. Chris and Andrea agree that Covid's impact on public education is still real and alive inside the schools and it will take several more years to get back to where we were pre-Covid.
- c. Health Insurance
 - 1. Kelly shares that the boards will need to meet in October to discuss insurance renewal.

IV. Financials

A. June 2023 Financial Report (*Attachment 3*)

- a. Nathan Yufer shares Freire Charter School had enrollment challenges throughout the year. Freire Charter School ended the year with 874 student total versus the budgeted 970. The Middle School had 447 students and the High School had 427. The lower than expected enrollment caused a decrease in revenue compared to budget. However, Freire Charter School was able to bring in more ESSER and fundraising revenue to help offset some of the reduction. We ended the year fairly close to budgeted revenue.
- b. Freire Charter School ended up being over budget in our Professional Services category due to spending more on Special Education providers than anticipated. This ended up not being an issue for the year as a whole and has kept that in mind for the FY24 budget. Freire Charter School ended the year with a \$484,000 surplus.

B. Audit Update

- a. Nathan shares the audit is being finalized and will be presented at the next board meeting.

V. Advancement

A. Advancement Report (*Attachment 4*)

- a. In FY23, we raised \$436,297 in cash and pledges, exceeding the \$400,000 target for unrestricted fundraising and meeting our obligation to all four campuses. Melanie thanks everyone on the board

- and praises everyone who supported fundraising.
 - b. Advancement raised \$119,000 in EITC funds to support career programming in our Philly schools in FY24. Freire Schools also received \$140,000 grants each for Freire Charter School and TECH Freire through the PCCD Mental Health and Physical Security grant program.
 - c. The partnership with World Cafe Life helped to secure a grant from William Penn Foundation to bring music education and experiences to the three Philly Freire campuses. This programming kicked off in January and will continue next year.
 - d. Bridge to Wisdom Awards Reception will be held on Wednesday, November 15, 2023 from 5:30pm to 8pm at the Liberty View at the Independence Visitor Center. Freire Schools will be honoring one of our major donors and supporters Charles Widger as well as paying tribute to one of the original school board members, Gerry Escovtiz.
- B. Political Landscape Report
- a. Freire Schools continues to pay close attention to any proposed charter regulation, budget cuts or proposed changes to the charter school renewal process.

VII. Governance

- A. Kathleen O'Connell - Potential Board Member (*Attachment 5A*)
- a. The board reviews the resume of potential board member Kathleen O'Connell.
 - b. The board agrees to vote her on at the next board meeting.
- B. Antiracism
- a. *Between the World and Me*, by Ta-Nehisi Coates (2015)
 - i. Kelly Davenport shares the new Anti Racism initiative the Freire Schools Network and schools are implementing this year. She welcomes all board members who are interested in the reading to join in.
- C. Board Visitation Day
- a. FCHS – September 29th
 - i. Olivia Burgess reminds the board about the annual Board Visitation Day, which will be held on September 29, 2023.
 - b. FCMS – September 27th
 - i. Olivia Burgess reminds the board about the annual Board Visitation Day, which will be held on September 27, 2023.

Meeting Adjourned, 9:31 AM