



MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

FEBRUARY 5, 2025 | 8 AM

Meeting ID: 818 1761 8302

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

Board Members: Kiara Allison, Paul Archibald, David Bryant, Lisa Hoffstein, Nicole Jenkins, Linda Kilpatrick, Raquel Leach, Kathleen O'Connell

Others Present: Leigh Botwinik, Olivia Burgess, Pam Dougherty, Promis Evans (11th grade, FCHS), Dawn Eubanks, Brian Galetto, Chris Moore, Tanza Pugliese, Paul Ramirez, Melanie Reiser, Anthony Royster, Scott Solomon, Ben Wainwright, Nathan Yufer, Andrea Zepp

Meeting Start, 8:00 AM

I. Public Comment

- A. No public comment.

II. Executive Session

A. Personnel Matter

1. David Bryant makes a motion to move into Executive Session at 8 AM "To discuss any matter involving the ... evaluation of performance ...of any specific ... current ... employee... employed ... by the agency." Paul Archibald seconds.
2. Kiara Allison, Paul Archibald, David Bryant, Lisa Hoffstein, Nicole Jenkins, Linda Kilpatrick, Raquel Leach, and Kathleen O'Connell vote in favor. There are no votes against and no abstentions.
3. Nicole Jenkins makes a motion to exit Executive Session at 8:11 AM. Paul Archibald seconds.
4. Kiara Allison, Paul Archibald, David Bryant, Lisa Hoffstein, Nicole Jenkins, Linda Kilpatrick, Raquel Leach, and Kathleen O'Connell vote in favor. There are no votes against and no abstentions.

III. Executive & Network Updates

A. CEO Transition Updates & Listening Tour

1. Paul Ramirez shares updates on the CEO transition for Freire Schools
2. Paul will be assigned as the new CEO of Freire Schools on July 1st, 2025
3. Paul is looking forward to building relationships with all those in the Freire community internally and externally.
4. A Freire Schools Board retreat will be held on May 16, 2025. This will bring together Board members from across the Network to build connections and ground everyone in a common mission and vision.

IV. Resolutions

A. Review & Approve Minutes from December 11, 2024 (Attachment 1A)*

1. The board reviews the minutes from December 11, 2024 board meeting.
2. Lisa Hoffstein makes a motion to approve. Linda Kilpatrick seconds.
3. Kiara Allison, Paul Archibald, David Bryant, Lisa Hoffstein, Nicole Jenkins, Linda Kilpatrick, Raquel Leach, and Kathleen O'Connell vote in favor. There are no votes against and no abstentions.

B. Review & Adopt Purchase Order Policy #412 (Attachment 1C)*

1. Nathan Yufer reviews the Purchase Order Policy #412 with the board.
2. The purpose of this policy is to establish purchasing, receiving, storing and distributing of necessary supplies, equipment and services for use in the organization represents a significant budget expenditure.
3. Purchase orders are required for all purchases over \$10,000. All purchase orders should include: clearly described instructions, exact description of material requested, estimated costs, budget code, suggested vendors, name of requestor, and signature of administrator
4. Lisa Hoffstein makes a motion to approve. Linda Kilpatrick seconds.
5. Kiara Allison, Paul Archibald, David Bryant, Lisa Hoffstein, Nicole Jenkins, Linda Kilpatrick, Raquel Leach, and Kathleen O'Connell vote in favor. There are no votes against and no abstentions.

C. Review & Adopt Procurement Cards #413 (Attachment 1D)*

1. Nathan Yufer reviews the Procurement Cards Policy #413 with the board.

2. The Freire Charter School Board shall implement a program to use procurement cards, also referred to as credit cards, for purchasing of goods and services in those instances when it is efficient, economical, and operationally feasible to do so.
 3. The Controller or designee shall be responsible for development and implementation of administrative procedures for the procurement card program.
 4. Lisa Hoffstein makes a motion to approve with a change from the word "District" to "The School" .. Linda Kilpatrick seconds.
 5. Kiara Allison, Paul Archibald, David Bryant, Lisa Hoffstein, Nicole Jenkins, Linda Kilpatrick, Raquel Leach, and Kathleen O'Connell vote in favor. There are no votes against and no abstentions.
- D. Review & Approve Amended Payroll Policy #423 (*Attachment 1E*)***
1. Nathan Yufer reviews the Payroll Policy #423 with the board.
 2. The purpose of this policy is to define the School's fiscal policies and internal control procedures over processing and recording payroll. This section will not address human resources or other personnel policies. These policies are addressed in the School's employee handbook.
 3. This policy will include:
 - a) New Employees
 - b) Salary Adjustments
 - c) Terminations
 - d) Processing Payroll
 - e) General Ledger Entry
 - f) Allocating Payroll to Federal Grants
 4. Kathleen asks for clarification about whether the CEO contract is issued for one year. Andrea confirms they are annual. Leigh notes that she will double check with the People team and then update the language in the policy.
 5. Lisa Hoffstein makes a motion to approve pending the change to provision A.5 regarding the term length of the CEO contract. . Linda Kilpatrick seconds.
 6. Kiara Allison, Paul Archibald, David Bryant, Lisa Hoffstein, Nicole Jenkins, Linda Kilpatrick, Raquel Leach, and Kathleen O'Connell vote in favor. There are no votes against and no abstentions.
- E. Review & Adopt Fund Balance Policy #426 (*Attachment 1F*)***
1. Nathan Yufer reviews the Fund Balance Policy #426 with the board.
 2. The policy is adopted in consideration of unanticipated events that could adversely affect the financial condition of the school and jeopardize the continuation of necessary programs and services.
 3. This policy shall ensure that the school maintains adequate fund balances and reserves in order to:
 - a) Provide sufficient cash flow for daily financial needs.
 - b) Secure and maintain investment grade bond ratings.
 - c) Offset significant economic downturns or revenue shortfalls.
 - d) Provide funds for unforeseen expenditures related to emergencies.
 4. Lisa Hoffstein makes a motion to approve. Linda Kilpatrick seconds.
 5. Kiara Allison, Paul Archibald, David Bryant, Lisa Hoffstein, Nicole Jenkins, Linda Kilpatrick, Raquel Leach, and Kathleen O'Connell vote in favor. There are no votes against and no abstentions.
- F. Review & Approve Amended Cash Management (Federal Grants) #453 (*Attachment 1G*)***
1. Nathan Yufer reviews the Cash Management (Federal Grants Policy #453 with the board.
 2. The objective of this policy is to define Freire Charter School's (the School) internal control policy for allocating allowable costs to Federal grants. The policy is necessary to ensure Federal expenditures comply with the requirements of 2 CFR Part 200, Subpart E - Cost Principles.
 3. Lisa Hoffstein makes a motion to approve. Linda Kilpatrick seconds.
 4. Kiara Allison, Paul Archibald, David Bryant, Lisa Hoffstein, Nicole Jenkins, Linda Kilpatrick, Raquel Leach, and Kathleen O'Connell vote in favor. There are no votes against and no abstentions.
- G. Review & Approve Draft FY24 Form 990 (*Attachment 1I*)***
1. Nathan Yufer reviews the Draft FY24 Form 990 with the board.
 2. Linda Kilpatrick makes a motion to approve. Lisa Hoffstein seconds.
 3. Kiara Allison, Paul Archibald, David Bryant, Lisa Hoffstein, Nicole Jenkins, Linda Kilpatrick, Raquel Leach, and Kathleen O'Connell vote in favor. There are no votes against and no abstentions.
- H. Review & Approve Amended Anti-Bullying Policy #204 (*Attachment 1J*)***
1. Leigh Botwinik reviews the Amended Anti-Bullying Policy #204 with the board
 2. The proposed changes were suggested during an audit at the Freire Wilmington campus. The changes being proposed at Freire Wilmington would be beneficial for Freire Charter School and TECH Freire as well.
 3. There are added subheaders in the policy for clarification and a link to the reporting form.
 4. Lisa Hoffstein makes a motion to approve. Raquel Leach seconds.

5. Kiara Allison, Paul Archibald, David Bryant, Lisa Hoffstein, Nicole Jenkins, Linda Kilpatrick, Raquel Leach, and Kathleen O'Connell vote in favor. There are no votes against and no abstentions.
- I. Review & Approve Amended Conflict of Interest Policy #112 (*Attachment 1K*)*
 1. Leigh Botwinik reviews the Amended Conflict of Interest Policy #112 with the board.
 2. The Federal Programs office is requiring Freire Charter School to notify the Department of Education in writing if there are conflicts of interest relating to expenditure of federal funds.
 3. Linda Kilpatrick makes a motion to approve. Paul Archibald seconds.
 4. Kiara Allison, Paul Archibald, David Bryant, Lisa Hoffstein, Nicole Jenkins, Linda Kilpatrick, Raquel Leach, and Kathleen O'Connell vote in favor. There are no votes against and no abstentions.
- J. Freire Middle School Bus Transportation Analysis (*Attachment 1L*)*
 1. Paul Ramirez reviews the Freire Middle School Bus Transportation Analysis with the board.
 2. Pre-Pandemic, Freire Charter Middle School has buses for the students but in 2021-2022 the School District discontinued bus transportation for stand alone middle schools.
 3. This change contributed to a decline in enrollment, which affects the budget.
 4. To address this trend, FCMS issued a request for proposals (RFP) for the 2025-2026 school year to restore bus service for at least Grades 5-6.
 5. The objective is to: offer a safer transportation option for families unwilling or unable to rely on SEPTA, (2) bolster enrollment by improving accessibility, and (3) protect and grow the school culture by increasing the number of students who start at Freire in Grade 5.
 6. Paul Archibald makes a motion to approve. Lisa Hoffstein seconds.
 7. Kiara Allison, Paul Archibald, David Bryant, Lisa Hoffstein, Nicole Jenkins, Linda Kilpatrick, Raquel Leach, and Kathleen O'Connell vote in favor. There are no votes against and no abstentions.

V. School Report

A. Staff & Student Report

1. Promise Evans (11th grade) gives her thanks for being able to present to the board.
2. Career Day was fun and very encouraging for her and her classmates.
3. Promise shares she was able to speak with a neuroscientist and share ideas.
4. The CREW Project is doing a door decorating competition and they are pitching to redesign CREW as a whole.

B. Heads Report

1. January Freire Dashboard (*Attachment 2A*)
 - a) Chris Moore shares Semester one is officially over.
 - b) Attendance has been trending slightly lower than last year's numbers but Chris shares his staff are diligently working to contact families.
 - c) Keystone data has been received and Chris shares that the staff are reviewing the numbers and are looking forward to prepping the students for the next round.
 - d) Last Friday, Paul Holt organized a Career Day for the students as Promise Evans mentioned; it was a great turn out for the students.
 - e) Freire High School has been fully staffed this year with no turnovers.
 - f) Andrea Zepp shares staffing has been a challenge for her campus but with the recent mid-year hire she is hopeful for the remainder of the year.
 - g) Attendance is not where she and the staff would hope for but currently things could turn around soon.
 - h) Suspensions are down currently, Andrea thanks her staff for being ahead of the disciplinary situations that arise.

C. Admissions Update

1. Leigh Botwinik shares today, February 5, 2025 the Philadelphia School lottery is open for next year and all results should be given to families by Friday, February 7th.
2. Freire Schools last year made the decision to partner back up with Apply Philly Charter which should increase applications at all schools and be especially helpful for Freire Charter Middle School.

D. Sixers Arena Follow Up

1. Paul Ramirez shares that when the Sixers Arena was being voted on a small group met to discuss potential implications for Freire Middle School, given the proximity to our campus.
2. The lease expires in 2031 for the Freire Middle School and while the Arena project is not moving forward at the Market St location, the School will continue to explore next steps for 2032 and beyond.

E. Special Education Report (*Attachment 2B*)

1. Leigh Botwinik shares the report summarizes the accountability measures surrounding SPED.

VI. Financials

A. December 2024 Financial Report (*Attachment 3*)

1. Ben Wainwright shares that Freire Charter School has a current surplus of \$283,000.

2. As of December 31, 2024, the MS had 463 students and the HS had 483 students for a total of 946 students. This is close to the budgeted average yearly enrollment of 945.
3. Freire Charter School revenue has begun to draw down their 21st Century grant. The awarded amount is \$400,000 which was in the original budget.
4. Significant expenses currently for Freire Charter School include: .
 - a) Budgeting Approve Private School (APS) costs for three students which will drive the forecast to \$300,000 for the year.
 - b) Special Education Transportation - the School hired a new transportation company for the remainder of the year. This was done to save on special education costs. This program is budgeted at \$900,000 for FY25 and will be monitored

VII. Advancement

A. Advancement Report (*Attachment 4*)

1. Melanie Reiser shares that the FY25 unrestricted fundraising target is set to \$775,000 which is \$150,000 per Friere campus.
2. Currently the Advancement Team has raised \$311,152 in donations and pledges toward that goal.
3. FY25 Fundraising progress surrounds the following:
 - a) Bridge to Wisdom honoring Kelly Davenport will be held on Tuesday, May 13th at the Independence Visitor Center at 5:30pm.
 - b) Preparations for the annual Valentine "thank you" cards to donors to go out this week.

B. Political Landscape

1. Freire Schools continues to pay close attention to any proposed charter regulation, budget cuts or proposed changes to the charter school renewal process.

VIII. Governance

A. Statement of Financial Interest 2024

1. Olivia Burgess shares the Statement of Financial Interest forms are due by March 21, 2025.

Meeting Adjourned, 10:15 AM