



Board Meeting (held via video conference)
DRAFT Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes
December 1, 2021

Members Present:

Patricia Sosa, Chair
Brahim Rawi, Vice-Chair
Margaret Yao, Secretary
James Moore, Treasurer
Yeshimebeth Belay (Mama Tutu), Member
Allison R. Kokkoros, Member
Bo Pham, Member
Wilma Rosario, Member
Hector Torres, Member
Johan Uvin, Member
Teresita Retana Piedra, Member

Staff in Attendance:

Kristine Dunne, General Counsel
Jerry Luna, Chief Financial Officer
Libby Miller, Interim Chief of Staff
Karla Vasconez, Executive Assistant to the CEO

Quorum: Yes

Board Chair Patricia Sosa provided opening comments and welcomed everyone to the meeting. Next, Board members and staff assisting with the meeting were introduced.

The meeting was called to order at 6:04 PM on December 1, 2021.

Review of Agenda

Patricia referred Board members to the meeting's planned agenda. Board members proposed no changes to the agenda.

Public Comment Period

Patricia noted as a reminder that the Board has added a public comment period to its regular quarterly meetings. This is a one-year pilot for this year until December. We want to hear from the School community and there is opportunity for up to 5 people per meeting to speak. There were no School community members who signed up to provide comments at this meeting. She encouraged School community members to sign up to share at future meetings.

Consent Agenda Approval (ROLL CALL VOTE):

The following items were brought forward for approval as part of the Consent Agenda:

- Minutes of the Board's annual meeting held on September 29-30, 2021; and
- School Recordkeeping Policy.

General Counsel Kristine Dunne explained that at the last meeting, the Board approved other school policies covered in the School's Form 990. The recordkeeping policy is also part of those policies. There have been no changes to the policy since the last time the Board approved it.

Hector Torres moved to approve the Consent Agenda, and Margaret Yao seconded. Margaret conducted the roll call vote. The Consent Agenda was unanimously approved.

CEO Report

CEO Allison Kokkoros noted that she shared her report in advance and in addition she has presentation slides to share. She shared pictures and stories of School community members navigating the pandemic while they continue to pursue their educational goals. Our school continues to be a key player and contributor in supporting community members as they gain skills that they need as parents, members of the workforce, and to navigate this pandemic and access District resources.

Allison shared the School's progress in its three priority areas identified for this year: centering our mission, building our future, and to build a more equitable, inclusive community at our school.

- Centering our Mission

Allison invited teacher Jackie Phillips to share. Jackie teaches Computer Basics I at the Harvard Street Campus in the morning and afternoon. Jackie shared that it has been rewarding to work with her students developing their technology skills because it is important in everything we do especially now with the pandemic and everything online, it is vital for the community to have access and learn how to use available resources. She shared that a lot of her students start with no technology skills, they begin by learning how to use the mouse and type, and by the end of the semester they are creating documents, presentations, and working with Excel. It is rewarding to see students progress as they gain those skills. Their dedication and hard work pays off for them in now being able to put their new learned skills to work, for example being able to register for parking online or for health insurance.

Jackie responded to Board member questions including about class demographics. She noted that it was helpful this year to have laptops to take home for practice. She has also seen the hybrid model working well this year with her students.

Next Allison provided an update on enrollment. She provided an overview of enrollment year over year starting pre-pandemic. The enrollment audit this year is still underway but almost done and should land around 1,825. She shared next steps that are planned for improving enrollment systems and processes. She noted that the new SIS in the process of being implemented has impacted current enrollment. Another factor impacting enrollment is space

limitations with the school still maintaining 6-ft distancing for our adult students and staff. As a reminder, the great majority of students are currently attending in hybrid status. Fourteen percent of students are fully in-person, such as culinary arts. Twenty-six percent are fully virtual. She also shared enrollment expectations for next year, with incremental increases year after year.

Allison responded to Board member questions about enrollment, including impact on revenue. Allison shared that to date, it has had zero revenue impact due to the hold harmless year for adult schools with funding based on SY19-20 level. For SY21-22, we expect that the final audit will result in less funding due to the lower enrollment. That is in part being made up by reduced expenses and some increase in grants.

Allison shared that this is a year of intentional, intensive learning for the school. We have a series of strategic planning questions we are asking to determine what is our optimal design. This includes, for example, data on attendance, learning, and retention. She looks forward to having the School's new Chief Academic Officer Dr. HollyAnn Fresno-Moore share in the future about this.

We continue to fundraise to address needs and fund innovations such as the small business marketplace and the parent support program Altruismo in partnership with K-12 schools. We have received additional funding to continue these innovative projects.

- Build a more Equitable, Inclusive community

The School's DEIB work is advancing. We now have our DEIB Steering Committee fully formed. You will hear more about this from the DEIB Task Force. In goal-setting for this school year, all employees will have a DEI goal.

- COVID Update

Allison also provided a COVID update: We have strong safety protocols in place. We have had zero virus spread thanks to these protocols and implementation. The School is fully in compliance with the Mayor's COVID-19 vaccination mandate for DC public and charter school staff. This month we have engaged in a student vaccination campaign, including reminders, education, and a vaccine clinic. As an example, Student Board member Teresita Retana Piedra participated in a video message to students encouraging them to get vaccinated. We are also conducting onsite COVID testing of students, in line with DC requirements to test 20% of our students on a weekly basis. We have had challenges with our testing vendor coming through with staffing for student testing, so our COVID Leads Kristine Dunne and Alice-Ann Beachy have been doing that along with their regular duties. We applaud them for their dedication.

Board members asked about the student rate of vaccination for COVID-19. Allison shared that the School has been gathering student vaccination status based on self-reporting so far, and we are currently reviewing the data and expect to have numbers later this month. Board members asked about the possibility of requiring students to provide proof of vaccination while recognizing qualified medical and religious exemptions. Allison suggested a subcommittee or

task force of the Board look into this. Patricia acknowledged that this is a complex issue involving some analysis and legal considerations. Kristine noted that the City Council has legislation before it to mandate student vaccination for COVID-19, and that the school is considering options about student COVID-19 vaccinations. She also shared that already anyone who regularly visits the School – defined as anyone who visits more than once a month – are also required to comply with the Mayor’s vaccination mandate for schools.

- Building our Future

Allison also shared that we are strategically building our staff capacity as detailed in my report. We have human resources, finance and development teams in place. We have key searches planned for the spring.

Allison responded to a question about the composition of the executive leadership team. The team includes the Chief Academic Officer, COO, Chief of Staff, and General Counsel. Finance, HR, and IT report to the COO.

Allison lastly shared that in her report there are a variety of ways that Board members have been engaged in the School. As an example, she invited all Board members to come for a site visit to the Harvard Street Campus in November. The next Board site visits will be at the SG Campus on February 8 9:30-10:30am, and the on March 29 to visit virtual evening classes.

Committee Updates:

- Finance and Development Committee

Committee Chair Brahim Rawi thanked Allison for sharing the SY19-20 data and projected enrollment for this year. He recognized the recent grants and Board contributions every year through the campaigns, Achieving the Dream, and scholarship funds. He encouraged Board members to submit their pledges by December 31st. Pledge forms will be distributed to Board members and please contact John Campbell or Allison if you have questions.

Brahim thanked CFO Jerry Luna for his service and dedication to the School. As Jerry leaves his position, the School has contracted with the firm Marcum for finance support. Jerry has been working with the Marcum team for the last weeks as part of the transition.

Financial Update

Jerry thanked everyone for the well wishes and presented his final report. This year is looking much better than anticipated, so this year he does not foresee any major challenges. He encouraged planning for next year when federal funding will end and there will be increases in areas such as salaries. He thinks having enrollment director would be impactful in the future. He also noted in response to questions that the School’s position is strong with assets and investments, and there is time to plan for the future to match costs to revenue. Jerry also shared that the audit this year is again being handled by the auditing firm RSM.

Board members reiterated their appreciation for Jerry and wished him well.

- DEIB Task Force

Task Force Chair Jim Moore shared two primary developments: formation of steering committee and engaging a consultant. There was an application process for the steering committee, and a selection group that Board member Margaret Yao participated in. The resulting DEIB Steering Committee reflects the diversity and demographics of the School community with multiple factors taken into consideration. The Steering Committee's first meeting is in December and in a few months they will bring their recommendations. We have also engaged a consultant who will facilitate the first session with the Steering Committee.

As far as the Board's DEI journey, our Task Force has a couple of goals for next quarter: first is to engage with the DEIB Steering Committee, and then continue to develop a plan with the full Board on how we continue to help the School.

- Strategic Planning & Oversight Committee

Committee Chair Johan Uvin shared that the Committee met with Principals HollyAnn Fresno-Moore and Alice-Ann Beachy and Learning & Evaluation Director Lynold McGhee in November. They discussed school accountability performance, how to think differently about engaging students, going beyond attendance in classes and how do we capture the different ways the students actually engage with the school.

The second part of the conversation was about the strategic questions they are working on as an academic leadership team from an academic perspective, focused on six critical questions. For example, one key question is the use of different modalities to deliver our services. This was a very deep discussion. One key thing that Johan wanted to call out is that the conversation be around digital literacy proficiency and the importance of not only having assessment capabilities but also opportunities to build skills that are important in the labor market.

Johan also mentioned that the staff presented to the committee on the School's long-term strategic data collection plan. Lastly, the committee talked about the key performance indicators of attendance and attendance rates, and interest in thinking more about engagement and all the different dimensions of that and how that can be measured. Johan applauded the team working on these issues.

Allison noted that the School has been proactive in offering hybrid instruction and communicating with DC PCSB about doing so. This important work will support our future program planning.

Closed Session (ROLL CALL VOTE)

Patricia Sosa noted the next item on the agenda is slated for closed session, citing the DC Code provisions for doing so:

- Discussion of personnel matter in closed session due to personnel matters pursuant to DC Code § 2-575(b)(10).
 - Board Member & Officer Candidates for expiring terms

- Updated Committee slate
- Updated Emergency & Nonemergency Succession Plans

Margaret Yao took a roll vote to approve entering closed session as proposed. The Board voted unanimously to enter closed session. Following the vote, the Board entered closed session.

The Board returned from closed session and continued the meeting.

Patricia shared that Board member and Secretary Margaret Yao is retiring from her Board service, so we want to acknowledge her immense contribution. She will be serving until the end of the December when her term ends.

- Governance & Nomination Committee

Committee Chair Vilma Rosario first thanked Margaret for her service to the Board (including on the Governance & Nominating Committee).

- Resolutions [**ROLL CALL VOTE**]

Next Vilma turned to the proposed resolutions. She noted that at the last meeting the Board elected student Board member Teresita Retana Piedra. Vilma next presented resolutions for the Board's consideration:

- (1) Resolution listing updated committee membership (with removal of former Board member Francisco Ferrufino's name), and
- (2) Resolution to elect Board members and officers for expiring terms.

The resolutions are in the Board meeting packet. Bo Pham presented the motion to approve both proposed resolutions, and Hector Torres seconded.

There were also the following resolutions for Board consideration:

- (3) Resolution to approve updated Emergency Succession Plan, and
- (4) Resolution to approve updated Non-Emergency Succession Plan.

It was noted that there were no changes to the non-emergency plan, and the emergency plan was updated only to update staff listed. Hector presented the motion to approve these succession plan resolutions, and Brahim Rawi seconded the motion.

Secretary Margaret Yao called a roll call vote for both sets of resolutions. All four resolutions passed unanimously.

Margaret shared that it has been a privilege to serve our adult learner students, and that she remains available to volunteer in different ways for the School. She also noted that the School's DEIB work is especially important and that she has appreciated the commitment, dedication and leadership that has come forward.

New Business

No new business was raised by Board members.

Adjourn

Patricia Sosa adjourned the meeting at 8:11 PM.

Minutes prepared by Karla Vasquez, Executive Assistant to the CEO.

Respectfully submitted by James Moore, Board Treasurer/Interim Secretary

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