Freire Charter School

MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
February 13, 2019

Minutes

Location: 1026 Market Street, Philadelphia, PA 19107

Board Members Present: Paul Archibald, William Brinkman, David Bryant, Gerald Escovitz, Lisa Hoffstein (via phone), Nicole Jenkins, Raquel Leach, Bruce Lesser, Bruce Levine (via phone), Michael Maholick (via phone), Beth Packel, Lorraine White

Other: Leigh Botwinik, Kelly Davenport, Devan Diaz, Paul Holt, Max Matthews, Johnny Mills, Chris Moore, Bill Ray, Maurice Roberts, Dave Shahriari, Scott Solomon, Hillary Sorin, John Vargas, Chris Zagacki

The meeting is called to order at 8:07 AM

I. Public Comment

a. There was no public comment

II. Resolutions

a. Minutes from December 12, 2018
   i. The Board of Directors review the minutes from December 12, 2018.
   ii. William Brinkman makes a motion to approve the minutes. Lorraine White seconds.
   iii. Paul Archibald, William Brinkman, David Bryant, Gerald Escovitz, Lisa Hoffstein, Nicole Jenkins, Raquel Leach, Bruce Lesser, Bruce Levine, Michael Maholick, Beth Packel, Lorraine White vote in favor of the motion. There are no votes against and no abstentions. The motion passes.

b. Authorization of Insurance Broker
   i. Max Matthews asks the Board to authorize Build the Future to select a new insurance broker better versed in Charter School Law.
   ii. Michael Maholick makes a motion to approve. Lorraine White seconds.
   iii. Paul Archibald, William Brinkman, David Bryant, Gerald Escovitz, Lisa Hoffstein, Nicole Jenkins, Raquel Leach, Bruce Lesser, Bruce Levine, Michael Maholick, Beth Packel, Lorraine White vote in favor of the motion. There are no votes against and no abstentions. The motion passes.

c. Policy 105 – Closure Procedure
   i. Max Matthews explains that the closure policy is a requirement of the CSP Grant and restates the statutory requirements in the event that Freire Charter School permanently closed. In addition to the policy, there is a multi-page procedure that outlines the required steps of a closure.
   ii. Paul Archibald makes a motion to approve. David Bryant seconds.
   iii. Paul Archibald, William Brinkman, David Bryant, Gerald Escovitz, Lisa Hoffstein, Nicole Jenkins, Raquel Leach, Bruce Lesser, Bruce Levine, Michael Maholick, Beth Packel, Lorraine White vote in favor of the motion. There are no votes against and no abstentions. The motion passes.

d. Policy 225 – Married, Pregnant, and Parenting Students

i. Max Matthews explains the Married, pregnant, and Parenting Students policy which is best practice to stay in compliance with Title IX legislation. Max offers deeper clarification on tutoring and at-home requirements for pregnant students on maternal leave.
ii. Paul Archibald makes a motion to approve. David Bryant seconds.
iii. Paul Archibald, William Brinkman, David Bryant, Gerald Escovitz, Lisa Hoffstein, Nicole Jenkins, Raquel Leach, Bruce Lesser, Bruce Levine, Michael Maholick, Beth Packel, Lorraine White vote in favor of the motion. There are no votes against and no abstentions. The motion passes.

e. FCMS Play Space Total Budget
i. Kelly Davenport reviews the Freire Middle School Play Space budget proposed by Bittenbender. The budget includes a total potential cost of $370k to create a new place space in the basement of Freire Middle. The budget has a $105k contingency. Construction is slated from March 2019 through April 2019.
ii. Chris Zagacki shares that this project has been a dream since the school's inception.
iii. Lisa Hoffstein acknowledges the hard work the school has done to reach this goal.
iv. Bill Brinkman makes a motion to approve the play space budget and authorize Build the Future to sign any pertinent documents that arise throughout the process. Bruce Lesser seconds.
v. Paul Archibald, William Brinkman, David Bryant, Gerald Escovitz, Lisa Hoffstein, Nicole Jenkins, Raquel Leach, Bruce Lesser, Bruce Levine, Michael Maholick, Beth Packel, Lorraine White vote in favor of the motion. There are no votes against and no abstentions. The motion passes.

III. School Report

a. School Council Update
i. Mikaya Piercy, a current 10th grade student at Freire Charter High School, shares that the high school is currently participating in 25 Days of Kindness. Mikaya formerly attended Math Civics and Science Charter School but chose to attend Freire because the coursework was more challenging. Mikaya is involved in the Entrrepernuriship club, Studio Arts Club, and is on the Kindness Krew.

b. Staff Member Update
i. Paul Holt, current 12th grade Chemistry Teacher at Freire Charter High School, introduces himself to the Board. Paul is currently leading a mentorship program at Freire where 9th grade students are mentored by 12th grade students. Paul also runs the after-school Science Center where students can receive one-on-one tutoring in science.
ii. Last week, Paul took a group of students to visit the Philadelphia Navy Yard and tour their science lab. Paul also shares that students recently conducted an acid-base painting that used acid-base paper to pain with different pH level mediums.
iii. Gerald Escovitz asks Paul why such a talented teacher chooses to stay at Freire. Paul shares that Freire allows him to teach and experiment freely. The school, "allows me to be me."

c. Alumni Update
i. Maurice Roberts gives an update about the alumni association. Freire High School recently held an Alumni Day where past alumni spent the day with current students talking about their careers and higher education.
ii. Maurice shares that TECH Freire and Freire Wilmington are both scheduling alumni days for the spring.

d. Heads Report
i. January 2019 Data Packet

1. Freire Charter High School
    a. Chris Moore shares that enrollment is slightly down compared to last year. Admissions applications are up compared to this time last year. The admissions lottery will take place later today. Chris explains the lottery process to the Board and gives a breakdown of lottery-eligible applications. The Board discusses ways to encourage current Freire Middle Schoolers to attend Freire High School.
    b. Chris shares that suspension numbers have plateaued since the beginning of the school year. Chris notes that, of the students who have left Freire this year, only 6 were due to a violation of the school's code of conduct.
    c. Chris shares that new padding, bathroom partitions, and other cosmetic improvements are being installed over the coming weeks.
    d. Chris notes that Freire High School's SPR score has dropped slightly in comparison to previous years – this drop is due to slower growth scores in all grades. The school is combating this issue through increasing the celebration around student's academic growth.
2. Freire Charter Middle School
    a. Chris Zagacki shares that the STAR Benchmarks have increased in some content areas. The school has held 3 benchmark tests to date, with a final benchmark test scheduled during Quarter 3 before the students take the PSSA.
    b. Chris shares that the school recently held a Black Lives Matter Week of Action to kick off Black History Month. Students learned about implicit biased and Black History in America. 7th Grade students recently started a partnership with The Clay Studio and are incorporating clay are into multiple subject areas.
    c. Instructionally, Freire Middle school is pushing deeper into the Deeper Learning Rubric and the administration is seeing exciting changes to teacher instruction, helping student content retention.
    d. Chris reviews Freire Middle's SPR analysis, noting no change from the previous year. Chris shares that Freire Middle is ranked in the top four of its peer schools and is the highest performing charter middle school on the SPR this year.

ii. CSP Grant Update
1. Lisa Hoffstein – Letter of Support
    a. Gerald Escovitz shares Lisa Hoffstein's CSP Grant Support Letter with the Board. The letter was wonderfully written and is a beautiful reflection of the Freire Network.
2. CMO CSP Abstract & Grant Summary
    a. Max explains that the CMO CSP Grant offers $1.5 Million per grant as seed funding for new charter schools within a highly performing charter network, as well as $750k for the charter support organization, Build the Future. The grant would allow Freire Philadelphia and Freire Wilmington to expand into more grades.

IV. Financials

a. December 2018 Financial Packet
    i. Bill Ray reviews the revised financial dashboard which has been streamlined to make the financials easier to read. Bill shares that Freire Charter School has enough cash on hand to meet their 30-day ratio. Bill does not believe there will be any major changes to

the capitation rate next year. Bill notes that the 6-month actual to date shows an inflated surplus with a donation from the refinance. This surplus, although high, is not immediate cash available.

V. Advancement

a. Advancement Update
   i. Fundraising Report
      1. Hillary Sorin updates the Board on current fundraising efforts throughout the network. The network still needs an additional $360k still needed in unrestricted funds. Hillary shares that she has recently met with the head of the Comcast Foundation to discuss a potential grant opportunity.
      2. Hillary has been working closely with Bruce Lesser on a Brinker Capital multi-year ask.
   ii. Brigitte and William Daniel have agreed to be the 2019 Bridge to Wisdom Honorees. The Daniels owned the only African American cable company in the region until a recent merge with Comcast.
   iii. Hillary shares that the Advancement Committee has a very active grant calendar and has multiple grant applications out for both Philadelphia and Wilmington.

VI. Board Committees

   i. Education Committee
      1. Leigh Botwinik shares that the Education Committee has been tasked with tracking special education enrollment and retention across the network.
   ii. Audit Committee
      1. David Bryant compliments Bill Ray for his work throughout the audit processes for all network entities this year.
   iii. 403(b) Committee
      1. No update at this time.
   iv. Safety/Property Committee
      1. Workers Compensation Claim
         a. Max Matthews shares that Freire One received one workers compensation claim last year. Max is reviewing if the Safety Committee should be doing more to educate the staff on safe practices.
      2. Lead Testing
         a. Freire Charter School conducted water testing in 2016 and confirmed there was no lead in the water. The Charter School Office is requesting the school have a certificate on file that shows the test results and retests for lead every 5 years. Build the Future is working on securing that certificate.

VII. Governance

   i. Statement of Financial Interests
      1. The Board is asked to complete a statement of financial interest for the 2018 calendar year before May 1, 2019.
   ii. Act 55 Board Training Requirements
      1. A new law was passed requiring Board Members to take an Act 55 training before the 2021-2022 school year. All Board Members are required to participate in a 2-hour training session.

The meeting is adjourned at 10:19 AM