

Elsie Whitlow Stokes Community Freedom Public Charter School

BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING MINUTES

March 13, 2021

Trustees Attending: Carlos Bonner, Crystal Goliday, Heather Harding, Robyn Lingo, Erica McGrady, Hoyt King, Rodney Rice, Tracey Friedlander, Jenice View

Staff Attending: Erika Bryant, Bobby Caballero, Karim Ewing-Boyd, Bill Moczydowski, Linda Moore

The meeting was called to order at 9:33 am by Board Chair, Heather Harding.

The minutes of the January board meeting were approved unanimously with the correction of the spelling of Ms. Goliday's name.

Financial Report

Bill Moczydowski presented the financial report for the period ending January 30, 2021. Year to date net income was \$2,880,572, 143% of budget and the school was tracking ahead of budget. Current assets and total assets are favorable.

Forecast for current fiscal year: Despite the vagaries of the current year, Stokes' financial experience has been good. The approved 2020-2021 budget is a break-even budget. The school anticipates total forgiveness of the PPP loan in the future. In the absence of loan forgiveness, an \$81,000 deficit is projected.

Status Report of the SY 2021-22 budget: The 2021-22 budget is still under development. The school has several optional instructional and operational scenarios for next school year. The school will also be eligible for approximately \$400K from the COVID Relief Act.

Discussion: Hoyt King, Finance Committee Chair, commended Bill Moczydowski and Erika Bryant for effectively managing all the financial vagaries of the school year.

Erica McGrady asked about possible additional sources of funding for the next school year. Erika Bryant identified these funds: ESSR II (approximately \$450K), ESSR III, DC funds to assist charter schools with costs associated with reopening and CARES II funding

Executive Director's Report (The complete report is attached.)

Rationale for Re-opening Plan: Stokes will re-open in a manner that minimizes risk to students, parents and staff while following CDC and local health guidelines and recommendations.

Current Climate: As of March 5, 2021, among DC Charter Schools, there were the following instructional configurations: four hybrids, five hybrid adult schools, sixty-one virtual and limited in-person schools, fifteen virtual and learning hubs and forty-three schools that were fully virtual.

Current re-entry schedule: In March, educationally at-risk students return to the building for supervised virtual instruction. In April, Pre-K and Kindergarten students and teachers will return to the buildings for in-person instruction.

Ms. Bryant presented sample schedules for hybrid instruction for both campuses.

Currently, all school staff are eligible for vaccinations. About 30% of teachers have received one or more vaccinations.

It is expected that it will take 2-5 years for the school to recover completely from the effects of the pandemic. School administration anticipates starting the 2021-22 school year in August, an incremental increase of students in the building; instructional and operational adjustments throughout the new school year, including curricula, events, assessments, and schedules. The school will emphasize student and staff social emotional wellness for the first six weeks of the 2021-22 school year and throughout the year. The recovery plan for January through August, 2021 includes summer school programming for all grade levels.

Discussion: Heather Harding asked Erika Bryant to speak to the need for hiring additional staff for the 2021-22 school year. Ms. Bryant replied that social distancing requirements are driving the need for additional staff because students cannot return to classrooms in the numbers that they previously did and the school is seeking additional space to accommodate students. In these additional spaces, additional staff will be required.

Take-aways from the town meeting on re-opening: Some parents are advocating for a return to full-time instruction in the school buildings while some others prefer to continue virtual instruction. The school has established a Parent Re-opening Advisory Team. To enhance communication with parents, campus directors will begin participating in PTA meetings. Some parents have requested that all school personnel be completely vaccinated against COVID.

Jenice View asked whether there was consistency among parents who strongly advocated for return to in-person instruction. Ms. Bryant responded that most of the parents who advocated for full-time instruction most were parents of early learning students.

Hoyt King asked whether the school anticipates challenges in acquiring additional staff given social distancing requirements. Ms. Bryant responded in the affirmative, especially for target language teachers.

Erica McGrady asked whether the school has increased liability insurance coverage for staff. Ms. Bryant responded that the school has increased liability coverage and currently all staff are returning to the buildings voluntarily. She stated that the school will request that employees sign a document acknowledging their voluntary return status. Erica McGrady volunteered to research personnel liability issues associated with the pandemic. Erika Bryant will identify the app that the school is planning to use a COVID screener. Heather Harding asked trustees to forward information about COVID screening applications to Ms. Bryant.

Campus Director Updates:

Karim Ewing-Boyd presented the East End update. This year, using technology, the school's arts program has done an outstanding job integrating cultural content. The school has begun preparing for the five-year International Baccalaureate review and is preparing to apply for designation as a school of distinction in arts and early childhood education through the Middle States Association. Initially, 24 scholars in four cohorts will return to the East End campus. Forty-three invitations were sent to the

parents of students with the greatest educational need. The Parent Re-Opening Advisory Team is beginning to elicit feedback from parents about the re-opening plans.

Bobby Caballero presented the Brookland campus update. Mr. Caballero highlighted the work of the operations team, e.g., creating procedures for re-entry into the building, social distancing procedures and food preparation and distribution procedures. He also noted the impressive, detailed work of the instructional leadership and student support teams and the enhanced communication systems.

Discussion: Hoyt King asked how attendance is taken currently. Mr. Ewing Boyd replied that students attending virtual classes are counted as present if they participate in live, taped or small group sessions. Carlos Bonner suggested that the school should seek media attention that notes its strong campus leadership of two men of color and the executive leadership of a woman of color.

Closed Session

Trustees adjourned to a closed session with Shereen Williams, a consultant from Education Board Partners about the recent board self-assessment assessment activities.

Carlos Bonner made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Robyn Lingo and the meeting was adjourned at 12:37pm.