



MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

OCTOBER 13, 2021 | 8 AM

VIA ZOOM VIDEO CONFERENCE CALL

MEETING ID: 837 3500 5927 | PASSWORD: 995483

Board Members Present: Bill Brinkman, Gerald Escovitz, Dawn Eubanks, Dior Fields, Bruce Lesser, Scott Solomon

Others Present: Kiara Allison, Paul Archibald, Leigh Botwinik, Dave Bryant, Olivia Burgess, Maurice Canon (FCMS 8th Grade Student), Kelly Davenport, Lisa Hoffstein, Nicole Jenkins, Raquel Leach, Bruce Lesser, Max Matthews, Chris Moore, Beth Packer, Tanza Pugliese, Melanie Reiser, Roselia Velez (TECH Academic Advisor), Charles Ware, Lorraine White, Chris Zagacki

Meeting Start, 8:01 AM

I. Public Comment

- a. No public comment.

II. Resolutions

a. Review & Approve Minutes

i. Board Meeting on September 9, 2021 (Attachment 1Ai)*

- The board reviews the minutes from September 9, 2021, Board Meeting.
- Dawn Eubanks makes a motion to approve. Bruce Lesser seconds.
- Bill Brinkman, Gerald Escovitz, Dawn Eubanks, Dior Fields, Bruce Lesser, and Scott Solomon vote in favor of the motion. There are no votes against and no abstentions.

ii. Board Meeting on September 15, 2021 (Attachment 1Aii)*

- The board reviews the minutes from September 15, 2021, Board Meeting.
- Dawn Eubanks makes a motion to approve. Bruce Lesser seconds.
- Bill Brinkman, Gerald Escovitz, Dawn Eubanks, Dior Fields, Bruce Lesser, and Scott Solomon vote in favor of the motion. There are no votes against and no abstentions.

b. Slate of Staff (Attachment 1B)*

- The board reviews the slate of staff.
- Bruce Lesser questions how the Freire staff are currently feeling and how staffing/hiring has gone over the past year.
- Charles Ware responds that TECH Freire has recently hired 3 internal building substitutes as well as new special education teachers as co-teachers.
- Dawn Eubanks makes a motion to approve. Bill Brinkman seconds.
- Bill Brinkman, Gerald Escovitz, Dawn Eubanks, Dior Fields, Bruce Lesser, and Scott Solomon vote in favor of the motion. There are no votes against and no abstentions.

c. 2021-2022 Textbook Review (Attachment 1C)*

- Max Matthews shares that the board is required to review the school's textbooks annually. This year there is more ELA curriculum in the review that was recently approved by the board.
- Bill Brinkman makes a motion to approve. Bruce Lesser seconds.
- Bill Brinkman, Gerald Escovitz, Dawn Eubanks, Dior Fields, Bruce Lesser, and Scott Solomon vote in favor of the motion. There are no votes against and no abstentions.

b. Removal of Catchment on TECH Freire Admissions Policy (Attachment 1D)*

- Max Matthews explains the admissions policy has been updated to remove the catchment preference as requested by the Charter Schools Office. Additionally, language throughout the admissions policy

has been updated by request of the CSO to align with current Apply Philly Charter procedures.

- ii. Dawn Eubanks makes a motion to approve. Bruce Lesser seconds.
- iii. Bill Brinkman, Gerald Escovitz, Dawn Eubanks, Dior Fields, Bruce Lesser, and Scott Solomon vote in favor of the motion. There are no votes against and no abstentions.
- c. English Learners Policy (Attachment 1E)*
 - i. Max Matthews explains that the English Learner Policy has been updated with clarifications around what steps the school should take when a learner exits the program.
 - ii. Dawn Eubanks makes a motion to approve. Bruce Lesser seconds.
 - iii. Bill Brinkman, Gerald Escovitz, Dawn Eubanks, Dior Fields, Bruce Lesser, and Scott Solomon vote in favor of the motion. There are no votes against and no abstentions.

II. School Report

- a. Staff Update
 - i. Roselia Velez (TECH Freire Academic Advisor) spoke about her efforts organizing a college fair at TECH Freire. Delaware State and Lincoln University were very popular with the students. TECH Freire will host an instant decision day soon and advisors are working with students to develop lists of where they would like to apply along with planning for some upcoming college visits. Many seniors are very excited about going to college.
- b. COVID Update
 - i. Leigh Botwinik shares that recently there were two successful vaccine clinics at Freire One, with TECH Freire's vaccination clinic taking place this afternoon. Over 100+ participants are already vaccinated, and TECH Freire is hopeful for a good turnout. Medical providers and nurses haven recently visited the school to answer student's questions. Freire Schools is working with Lisa Hoffstein, a current member of the Board of Directors for Freire Charter School, to plan a parent-facing event around vaccination.
- c. Heads Report
 - i. Charles Ware shares that TECH Freire is currently doing the hard work of transitioning to grade level appropriate texts and new curriculum. The school is learning how to support students without watering down the content.
 - ii. Attendance is down slightly due to increased precautions related to COVID-19. The school has updated their phone procedures to first call home to conduct a COVID screener over the phone to confirm if a student should stay home or be encouraged to come to school.

III. Financials

- a. August 2021 Financial Report (Attachment 3)
 - i. As of August 31, 2021, TECH Freire currently has \$300,000 for operations and \$1,100,000 Operating Reserve cash on hand. In August 2021, TECH Freire transferred \$150,000 from its operating reserve to the operating account to cover grant expenditures and other large expenses paid at the start of the school year. These funds will be returned to the operating reserve as grant funds are subsequently collected.
 - ii. TECH Freire has a deficit of \$291,000. This is primarily due to (1) large, one-time expenses that were paid and expensed at the start of the school year and (2) unbudgeted expenses related to the transition back to an in-person environment. TECH Freire has \$1,800,000 of ESSER-II funds and \$3,600,000 of ESSER-III funds available for FY 2022, FY 2023, and FY 2024. These funds will be used to ensure the school ends the year with a balanced budget.
- b. 5-Year Budget
 - i. The proposed 5-year budget uses conservative estimates around capitation rate and removes the extra ESSER FTEs in the future to show a balanced budget. The budget will need to be sent to a bond holder.
- c. Audit Update
 - i. Bill shares the TECH Freire audit is almost finalized.

IV. Advancement

- a. Advancement Report (Attachment 4)
 - i. Melanie Reiser shares that Freire school has raised \$80,000 in unrestricted donations and pledges in

the first quarter of FY22. This places Freire Schools slightly ahead of funding received this time last year (\$67,587).

- ii. In September, Freire Schools updated all FY21 donors on the start of the school year and what the schools' goals are for the year.
- iii. The Back-to-School video gave an in-depth explanation of Freire Schools' continued Commitment to Antiracist Action .
- iv. Freire Schools has begun scheduling virtual meetings with most major donors. The Advancement Team recently submitted two grant requests to the M&T Foundation.
- v. This fiscal year, the Advancement Team is reconfiguring the timeline for board giving. We are asking all board members to submit their FY22 pledges by December 31, 2021, and for donations to be made by June 30, 2022.

b. Political Landscape Report

- i. Melanie shares that on September 28, 2022, PCE held a virtual/in-person advocacy day for school leaders to advocate against charter school cuts and in favor of smart reforms to charter school law to make the charter appeal board more stable.
- ii. The majority of the State Representatives who participated in the advocacy day were Republican. PCE is working to solidify their collaboration with the African American Charter School Coalition to develop a plan for engaging the Philadelphia elected officials on House Bill 1685.
- iii. The Governor has proposed charter school regulations which could interfere with the new charter school application process.

V. Governance

a. Clearances & Trainings for Board Members

- i. Olivia Burgess reviews the clearances and trainings needed for each board member.

VI. Board Committee Reports

a. Education Committee

- i. No update at this time.

b. Audit Committee

- i. No update at this time.

Meeting Adjourned, 9:52 AM