

MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

OCTOBER 11, 2023 | 8 AM

ZOOM MEETING ID: 826 5335 3334 | PASSWORD: 314477

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

Board Members Present: William Brinkman, Dawn Eubanks, Bruce Lesser, Scott Solomon

Others Present: Kiara Allison, Paul Archibald, Imaira Blackwell (TECH Freire Student), Phyllis Bookman, Leigh Botwinik, Olivia Burgess, Dave Bryant, Kelly Davenport, Steve DeAnglis, Nate Durant, Malcolm Eleby (TECH Freire Staff), Lisa Hoffstein, Nicole Jenkins, Raquel Leach, Kimberly Fox (Exude), Jamilah Gibbs (TECH Freire Staff), Chris Moore, Tanza Pugliese, Melanie Rieser, Angely Roman (TECH Freire Student), Nathan Yufer, Andrea Zepp

Meeting Start, 8:03 AM

I. Public Comment

A. There is no public comment.

II. Executive Session

A. School Safety

1. William Brinkman makes a motion to enter Executive Session to discuss Safety Matter involving a plan to discuss, plan or review matters and records that are deemed necessary for emergency preparedness, protection of public safety and security of all property in a manner that if disclosed would be reasonably likely to jeopardize or threaten public safety or preparedness or public protection, by the agency, which, if conducted in public, would violate a lawful privilege or lead to the disclosure of information or confidentiality protected by law II.a.i.: 65 Pa. C.S. § 708 (a)(7).
Bruce Lesser seconds.
2. The Board enters Executive Session at 8:04 AM.
3. The Board exits the Executive Session at 8:38 AM.
4. William Brinkman, Dawn Eubanks, Bruce Lesser, and Scott Solomon vote in favor of the motion.
There are no votes against and no abstentions.

III. Resolutions

A. Review & Approve Minutes from Board Meeting on September 13, 2023 (*Attachment 3A*)*

1. The board reviews the minutes from the September 13, 2023 board meeting.
2. William Brinkman makes a motion to approve. Dawn Eubanks seconds.
3. William Brinkman, Dawn Eubanks, Bruce Lesser, and Scott Solomon vote in favor of the motion.
There are no votes against and no abstentions.

B. Slate of Staff (*Attachment 3B*)*

1. Leigh Botwinik reviews the Slate of Staff with recent hires and terminations/separations with the board.
2. William Brinkman makes a motion to approve. Dawn Eubanks seconds.
3. William Brinkman, Dawn Eubanks, Bruce Lesser, and Scott Solomon vote in favor of the motion.
There are no votes against and no abstentions.

C. 2023-2024 Textbook Review (*Attachment 3C*)*

1. Leigh Botwinik shares the updated curriculum for both TECH Freire and Freire Charter School. The board is required to view the school's textbooks annually.
2. Bruce Lesser makes a motion to approve. William Brinkman seconds.
3. William Brinkman, Dawn Eubanks, Bruce Lesser, and Scott Solomon vote in favor of the motion.
There are no votes against and no abstentions.

D. Approve Contract with Philadelphia Police Department (*Attachment 3D*)*

1. Nate Durant shares that TECH Freire would like to engage the PPD to station a police officer outside the school for two hours a day at dismissal to ensure the safety of the TECH Freire community at a rate of \$88.06 per hour with an added \$6.34 per hour for a police vehicle.
2. Bruce Lesser makes a motion to approve. William Brinkman seconds.

3. William Brinkman, Dawn Eubanks, Bruce Lesser, and Scott Solomon vote in favor of the motion. There are no votes against and no abstentions.
- E. Review & Approve Amended Positive Behavior Support Policy (*Attachment 3E*)*
1. Leigh Botwinik shares that since TECH Freire is currently going through its state audit, the school would like to make some minor edits to the policy.
 2. TECH Freire's Positive Behavior Support Policy has been developed around research supporting the idea that the most effective school environments:
 - a. use explicit teach and direct instruction in order to teach students how to behave appropriately
 - b. acknowledge positive behavior with positive techniques, and
 - c. provide consistent and predictable interactions among students and staff.
 3. The proposed changes to the language include updated references to PA code, updating the description of the evaluation process under level iii strategies, and expanded language on the circumstances under which restraints can and cannot be used. TECH has not actually used restraints so these updates do not indicate any change to our practice but are a matter of ensuring the policy is compliant.
 4. Bruce Lesser makes a motion to approve. William Brinkman seconds.
 5. William Brinkman, Dawn Eubanks, Bruce Lesser, and Scott Solomon vote in favor of the motion. There are no votes against and no abstentions.
- F. Approve Amended Policy : Appointment of Surrogate Parents for Special Education Services (*Attachment 3F*)*
1. Leigh Botwinik shares that if a student requires an IEP and does not have a legal parent/guardian, or are homeless or documented as ward of the state, Freire Schools will provide the student with a surrogate parent/guardian who can approve certain procedures, processes etc for IEP.
 2. The only change we are proposing to the policy is to remove the names of surrogates that we have used in the past as they are outdated.
 3. Bruce Lesser makes a motion to approve. William Brinkman seconds.
 4. William Brinkman, Dawn Eubanks, Bruce Lesser, and Scott Solomon vote in favor of the motion. There are no votes against and no abstentions.

IV. School Report

- A. Student & Staff Update
- a. Nate Durant introduces SGA President Angely Roman (12th Grade Student) and SGA Vice President Imaira Blackwell (12 Grade Student).
 - b. Angely shares her appreciation for speaking with the board today.
 - c. Angely shares she was a transfer student and just finished up her first year at TECH Freire. She notes she is experiencing senioritis and so are her classmates but says the current school year has been productive.
 - d. Angely appreciates the support she receives from her teachers and staff and notes how different the culture of TECH Freire is in comparison to her old school.
 - e. Angely shares the challenges she faced during the pandemic and how it has affected her since post covid in regard to re-enhancing her social skills with her peers.
 - f. Angely shares she looks forward to ending the year strong and going to college
 - g. Imaira shares that as Vice President of SGA, she will ensure a positive and encouraging energy within the school and thanks Nate Durant for being an example anyone can look up to.
 - h. Angely and Imira share the Yonder pouches were difficult to get used to but now all the students are thankful since everyone has been building relationships with each other.
- B. Heads Report
1. October Data Packet (*Attachment 4A*)
 - a. Nate Durant shares in the October Data report, attendance this year compared to last year at the end of September was almost at a 20% increase than those who have attended within 90% or more days.
 - b. The seniors are leading the charge in regard to attendance. There have been a couple days when TECH Freire hit 95% but Nate shares his goal is to get 100%.
 - c. Nate praises the students for showing up every day despite everything going on in the world and in our school and community.
 - d. In regard to Joy, Spirit Week is coming up and the hallways are decorated, and the students really enjoy it since it helps with the culture of the school
 - e. The basement gym provides an outlet for a lot of students and things are rolling this year.
- C. Health Insurance Report (*Attachment 4B*)

1. Renewal Board Meeting - October 26, 2023 11am
 - a. After reviewing the health insurance report, the board requests to reschedule the October 26, 2023 meeting to a date that is within the health renewal window for the coming fiscal year for the vote.
 - b. Olivia Burgess will connect with the board later today to find a new time.
- D. Charter Renewal Update
 1. Mission Elements (*Attachment 4C*)
 - a. The board reviews the Mission Elements for the upcoming charter renewal process.

V. Financials

- A. August 2023 Financial Report (*Attachment 5*)
 1. Nathan Yufer shares that TECH Freire Charter School's anticipated enrollment is 470 students which is less than the original number of 500.
 2. Locally the Philadelphia School District increased the capitation rate by 22% for general education and 14% for special education which offsets the lower than expected enrollment.
 3. Total revenue for the year is expected to be \$11.4M. This is approximately \$500,000 more than budgeted due to the increase in capitation rates.
 4. Expenses are still too early to predict at this time, outside from the basement construction project that began over the summer
 5. TECH Freire Charter School is projected to meet 7 out of the 7 financial ratios for FY24.
- B. Audit Update
 1. The final audit will be shared with the Board at the next board meeting.

VI. Advancement

- A. Advancement Report (*Attachment 6*)
 1. Melanie Reiser shares the new proposed goal for the network wide fundraising target, which will be \$500,000 (\$125,000 per campus).
 2. Bridge to Wisdom Awards Reception will be held on Wednesday, November 15, 2023 from 5:30pm to 8pm at the Liberty View at the Independence Visitor Center. Freire Schools will be honoring one of our major donors and supporters Charles Widger as well as paying tribute to one of the original school board members, Gerry Escovtiz.
- B. Political Landscape Report
 1. Freire Schools continues to pay close attention to any proposed charter regulation, budget cuts or proposed changes to the charter school renewal process

VII. Governance

- A. Board Visitation Day - October 12, 2023
 1. Olivia Burgess reminds the board about the annual Board Visitation Day, which will be held on October 12, 2023.
- B. Resignation of Board Member, Kathleen Visco (*Attachment 7*)
 1. The board acknowledges the resignation of Kathleen Visco and thanks her for her service.

Meeting Adjourned, 10:10 AM