

MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

FEBRUARY 7, 2024 | 8 AM

ZOOM MEETING ID: 890 4201 3707

LOCATION: ZOOM & FREIRE CHARTER MIDDLE SCHOOL (1026 MARKET ST., PHILA. PA 19107)

Board Members Present: Dawn Eubanks, Bruce Lesser, Anthony Royster, Scott Solomon, Joann Wszolek

Others Present: Kiara Allison, Paul Archibald, Phyllis Bookspan, Leigh Botwinik, Olivia Burgess, Kelly Davenport, Pam Dougherty (Freire Chestnut Staff), Nate Durant, Brian Galletto (TECH Freire Staff), Daniel Hall (TECH Freire Parent), Hallee Lusk (NVP Intern, Freire Schools Network), Brittany Maugeri (TECH Freire Staff), Chris Moore, Alexis Prince (Freire High Staff), Tanza Pugliese, Paul Ramirez, Melanie Reiser, Bridegette Tshimbi (Freire Middle Staff), Lilian Wehbe, Nathan Yufer, Andrea Zepp

Meeting Start, 8:07 AM

I. Public Comment

- A. No public comment

II. Resolutions

- A. Review & Approve Minutes from Board Meetings on December 13, 2023 (*Attachment 2A*)*
 1. The board reviews the minutes from the December 13, 2023 board meeting.
 2. Dawn Eubanks makes a motion to approve. Anthony Royster seconds.
 3. Dawn Eubanks, Bruce Lesser, Anthony Royster, Scott Solomon, and Joann Wszolek vote in favor of the motion. There are no votes against and no abstentions.
- B. Review & Approve Health & Safety Plan (*Attachment 2B*)*
 1. Leigh Botwinik shares that the plan is a requirement of accepting ESSER funds and every six months we are required to review the plan to ensure we are in compliance with guidelines. We are proposing no changes to the plan since the last time it was approved and continue to stay aligned to the CDC recommendations.
 2. Anthony Royster makes a motion to approve. Joann Wszolek seconds.
 3. Dawn Eubanks, Bruce Lesser, Anthony Royster, Scott Solomon, and Joann Wszolek vote in favor of the motion. There are no votes against and no abstentions.

III. School Report

- A. Staff & Student Report
 1. Nate Durant introduces Brian Galletto and Brittany Maugeri to the board.
 2. Brittany and Brian share their thanks for being at the board meeting today.
 3. Brittany recently joined TECH Freire this year as an instructional coach/teacher. She provides an overview of the TECH design process, a strategy for encouraging hands on learning, critical thinking and engagement across the curriculum.
 4. Nate shares with the charter renewal site visit is coming up soon and staff are excited and prepared.
- B. Heads Report
 1. Freire Network Dashboard (*Attachment 3A*)
 - a) Nate Durant shares that the basketball team lost the first round in the playoffs but still had a great season.
 - b) Nate echoes the notion from Andrea Zepp that the disciplinary issues at TECH Freire recently have required a lot of attention but praises the culture team for the work they do weekly and setting up outside sources to maintain the safe environment.
 - c) Academically the students are growing and Nate thanks Brian Galletto for his work this school year.

- d) Brian Galletto shares the students academically are trending upwards. This was especially evident in recent English/reading benchmark tests. The staff is looking expects to see positive momentum reflected in the Keystone data coming shortly.
- 2. Safety Report
 - a) Leigh Botwinik acknowledges and thanks Paul Archibald and Joann Wszolek for their regular participation in safety meetings with school staff.
 - b) The School has begun implementing the safety procedures that were revised during the 22-23 school year. This included a full staff training led by the FBI on the new lockdown procedure following the "Run Hide Fight" methodology. Students have received training on safety procedures, consent, and Safe to Say, an anonymous hotline students and families can use to report any safety concerns. Recently there has been better coordination between neighboring schools and the police to try to get ahead of the challenges we have periodically experienced at dismissal. TECH has continued to pay for an off duty police officer to be present at dismissal as well. The school continues to work on the initiatives funded by the PCCD grant, which has included a new PA system and training in the CSTAG methodology of threat assessment.
- C. Response to health benefits discussion
 - 1. Scott Solomon shares an update with the board.
 - a) a few board members met with the teacher who spoke at the last board meeting to further hear her concerns about health insurance and find ways for the school to support her
 - b) Scott proposes that the Board include a couple of staff members on a committee to review insurance next year and the Board likes this plan.
- D. Mission Elements (*Attachment 3B*)
 - 1. The board reviews the school's three mission elements : high quality curriculum; a culture of asking for and receiving help; and think build do. Leigh and Nate share examples of each mission element in action.

IV. Financials

- A. December 2023 Financial Report (*Attachment 4A*)*
 - 1. Nathan Yufer shares the December financial report. TECH Freire anticipated an enrollment average of 470 for the year, which is less than the 500 we anticipated when the budget was originally passed.
 - 2. However the School District of Philadelphia increased the capitation rate of 22% for general education and 14% for special education which will help offset the lower than expected enrollment numbers.
 - 3. Revenues for the year is expected to be \$12,100,000 which is approximately more than the budget due to the increase in capitation rates.
 - 4. Expense expenditures will most likely be under budget for the year. TECH Freire budgeted \$1,700,000 for the basement gym project but anticipated the cost ending up at \$1,400,000.
 - 5. Dawn Eubanks makes a motion to approve. Bruce Lesser seconds.
 - 6. Dawn Eubanks, Bruce Lesser, Anthony Royster, Scott Solomon, and Joann Wszolek vote in favor of the motion. There are no votes against and no abstentions
- B. FY23 Financial Audit (*Attachment 4B*)*
 - 1. Nathan Yufer reviews the completed Audit Report for TECH Freire Charter School. As expected there were no significant findings and the auditors deemed TECH Freire a proper client.
 - 2. Dawn Eubanks makes a motion to approve. Bruce Lesser seconds.
 - 3. Dawn Eubanks, Bruce Lesser, Anthony Royster, Scott Solomon, and Joann Wszolek vote in favor of the motion. There are no votes against and no abstentions.

V. Advancement

- A. Advancement Report (*Attachment 5*)
 - 1. Melanie Reiser shares the network-wide unrestricted funds target for FY24 is \$650,000. To date, the Advancement team has raised \$451,000 in donations and pledges toward the goal, which leaves \$198,000 left by June 30, 2024.
 - 2. Melanie notes with the Freire Wilmington gym being finished the Freire Wilmington Athletic Center will hold its official ribbon cutting ceremony on Wednesday, March 20, 2024 at 5:30 PM. This part of a capstone project and a capital campaign that raised nearly \$2,000,000 for the gym.
 - 3. All Freire Board members across the network are encouraged to attend.
 - 4. A few updates include:
 - a) Valentines Day cards and notes of appreciation will be sent out to all FY23 & FY24 donors.
 - b) World Live Cafe collaboration will start back up this semester, with music programming at all three Philly Freire campuses.

- c) A choir director has been acquired and is set to launch at Freire Charter High School in memory of Gerald Escovitz and the funds raised from his memorial fund.
 - d) Spring Fundraising prep will commence soon and will be accompanied by a copy of the donor appeal in April.
- 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.

VI. Governance

- A. Feedback on Potential Board Event
- B. Statement of Financial Interest 2023
 - 1. Olivia Burgess shares the Statement of Financial Interest forms are due by March 11, 2024.

Meeting Adjourned, 10:10 AM