

REGULAR MONTHLY BOARD MEETING
Charter School of Inquiry
404 Edison Street
Buffalo, New York 14215
Wednesday August 11, 2021 @ 4:45PM
Meeting Minutes prepared by Laquitta Reid

Trustees Present: Valerie Nolan, Chair
Anne Henry
Janet ("Jan") Peters
Peter Dow
Mary Jo Pfeiffer
Nichelle Gray

CSI Staff: John Sheffield, Head of School
Joseph Peek, Associate Principal

Guest: Angel Beiter
Steven Polowitz

Excused: Melvin Bankhead III
R. Bruce Haydon

1. Call to Order:

The regular meeting of the Board of Trustees (the "Board") of the Charter School for the Inquiry (the "School") was called to order by Valerie Nolan, the presiding officer, a lawful quorum being present on Wednesday August 11, 2021 @ 4:48 p.m. The meeting was held in-person at the school with remote access via Zoom videoconferencing (Meeting ID #: 868 8959 2436), for those not able to attend in person.

2. Proof of Public Notice:

Public Notice was sent to all media outlets via electronic mail on/or about August 3, 2021, and meeting announcement was posted on the door, for public display, at Charter School for Inquiry. A notarized affidavit stating such is available upon request.

3. Conflict of Interest:

Reminder: If anyone has a potential conflict of interest concerning a subject under discussion by the Board, he/she has an obligation to disclose the potential conflict and, if deemed a conflict, recuse him/herself and leave the room during any discussion and vote on the subject.

4. Approval of Meeting Minutes:

- a. Minutes of Business – June 1, 2021.
Motion was made by Peter Dow to approve June 1st Board of Trustees Business Meeting Minutes. Seconded by Mary Jo Pfeiffer. Motion carried unanimously. June 1st Minutes -Approved.
- b. Minutes of Business July 21, 2021 – Delayed

Committee Minutes (FYI):

- a. Academic Committee – May 2021
- b. Audit/Finance Committee – June 22, 2021
- c. Governance Committee June 2021

5. Announcements / Updates:

- a. Governance Committee
 - Mary Jo standing in for Melvin Bankhead, III
- b. Other Announcements

6. Academic Committee – Peter Dow, Chair

Peter is very proud of the Summer Program. One question arose, “How do we know what the impact of Summer School was?” One answer is – we will see the impact in the Fall during the STAR & Benchmark testing. We will be able to compare the ones who were in Summer School, the students who were remote part of summer school (Freckle Program), and the students who didn’t attend at all. We are also working on two (2) certified teachers in every classroom plus TA’s.

7. Parent Association Report – Nichelle Gray, Parent Representative

Parent Association Meeting was held yesterday (8/10/21). Ms. Gray discussed with Mr. Sheffield & Mr. Peek about having a Parents – Teacher Night. We are working with the parents to coordinate volunteer opportunities. Further, Ms. Gray had an idea for a Health Fair and working with the Fair Housing Officer regarding Rental & Landlord Tenant Rights. Our Fundraiser at Urban Air Galleria Mall is set for September 9, 2021.

8. Head of School Report – John Sheffield

- a. Consolidated Dashboard Report – July 2021
 - Number of students enrolled is 294 and Courtney Eaton, Director of Enrollment, is confident that we will reach our enrollment goal of 305 students.
 - We are adding additional staff: RTI teachers (2), and a New Teachers Assistant (“TA”) this month.
 - Our open positions are at: Social Worker, two (2) RTI teachers, two (2) SPED Teachers, and five (5) TA’s.

- Joseph Peek, Assistant Principal & Tamika Johnson, Director of Student Support Services, have been interviewing for the Social Workers position.
 - Maria Giancarlo and Staff have been screening for RTI and SPED candidates.
 - Mr. Peek has been interviewing for TA's.
 - Special Education Coordinator will become Director of SPED & RTI Services.
 - Director of SPED & RTI Services should change from 10-month position to 12-month position. The SPED Coordinator often works through the Summer.
- The following positions will also be changed from Coordinator to Director:
 - RTI Coordinator – Director of Data and Assessments (10-month position)
 - Recruitment & Family Support Coordinator – Director of Recruitment and Family Support.
 - Support Coordinator – Director of Student Support Services.
- The title changes are necessary for supervisory reasons as our staff continues to grow.
 - The Director of Data & Assessment will work with the Teachers in a supervisory way and make sure they are carrying out our assessment plan with will consequently help us meet our goal. Director of SPED & RTI has 7 RTI & 7 Special Education Teachers working under him and Courtney, Director of Recruitment, has a team working with her.
 - Mr. Peek will be an Associate Principal as opposed to Assistant Principal for purposes of autonomy, leadership, and areas of curriculum & instruction.
 - There is no salary change with the move from Coordinator to Director.
 - Motion was made to approve the title changes was made by Anne. Seconded by Peter. Motion Approved- Unanimously.
- b. Summer School 2021 – Update:
 Mr. Sheffield reported that Summer School Program was an “extreme success.” David Hathaway, Summer Program Principal & Staff did an amazing job.
- The Boys & Girls Club “left something to be desired.” On evaluation, the Staff & Vendors were not pleased with their contribution. As such, we will not be using them for our Fall Afterschool Program.
 - Alternatively, John proposed that the school run their own Afterschool Program, again. This time it would be better staffed. Courtney Eaton, Director of Enrollment has agreed to run it with an assistant.

- c. School Reopening 2021-22 School Year:
We await reopening guidelines from State & County Government. We will have a mask mandate in our building for the upcoming school year.
- d. Charter Renewal Application (Action):
Mr. Peek spoke about the Africana Infusion Task Force. He is impressed with the team & wealth of cultural knowledge.
- Benchmarks – There is a lot of information that needs to be submitted along with the 45-page narrative on the 10 benchmarks including, proposed 2023 calendar, admissions policies, procedures and plans for evaluating Head of School, sub administrator, teachers and supportive staff, a board table, our strategic plan, board self-evaluations, certificate of occupancy and fire inspection, code of conduct and discipline policy, narrative on community-based authorizing, complaint policy, a fiscal table and an enrollment projection table.
- e. Code of Conduct:
We need to make sure our Code of Conduct & Disciplinary Policy is compliant with all laws & regulations. We are working with a local attorney, Andrew Friedman of Hodgson Russ, to revise the policy. Once completed, the Board will need to approve them for purposes of including them in with the Charter Renewal Application. Mr. Friedman suggested some non-substantive changes to the code of conduct policy. A motion was made by Peter to approve Mr. Friedman's changes to the Code of Conduct Policy. Seconded by Anne. Motion approved Unanimously.
- f. Cover Letter:
Revisions to the cover letter will read 38% proficiency in Mathematics, and 39% Language Arts with overall proficiency at 40%. Anne motioned to approve the Renewal application and its submissions. Seconded by Peter. Motion carried unanimously. Renewal application and submissions-approved.

9. Finance/ Audit Committee – Bruce Haydon, Treasurer & Chair

- Angel Beiter ran through the Financials in Mr. Haydon's absence.
- Ms. Beiter opined that we have good cash & certain loans have been forgiven.
- We are still waiting on the Special Education Intercept from the Buffalo callback.
- In terms of income statements, we ended up \$1.5 Million Dollars ahead of budget.
- Ms. Beiter is working on the next two ESSER budgets. ESSER-2 budget is already in and ESSER -3 budget is due at the end of August.
- Ms. Beiter will contact the Branch Manager at M&T regarding signatory privileges.

- The audit starts in about 3 weeks.
- A motion was made by accept the report by Jan. Seconded by Mary Jo. Motion approved - Unanimously.

10. Governance Committee – Jan Peters, Chair

a. Head of School Evaluation 2020-21: we have Consultant, Andy Stack working with John Sheffield on his goals. The Trustees will have to evaluate John. A special Board of Trustees Meeting will be necessary to review John's Performance Evaluation.

b. Board Administrative Assistant – This position is direly needed.

11. Old Business

a. Website RFP status – Nichelle Gray (*this discussion was tabled to the next meeting – due to technical difficulties.*)


12. New Business:

13. Other / Open Discussion:

14. Next Meeting: Wednesday, September 8, 2021 @ 4:45PM

15. Adjournment: Motion to Adjourn was brought by Peter. Seconded by Anne. Motion carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned @ 6:10PM.

Respectfully Submitted



Peter Dow, Secretary

Date: January 26, 2022