



MINUTES
Board of Trustees Meeting
October 27, 2020

The meeting was held virtually via Google Meets.

PRESENT

Lourdes Putz, Chair
Samuel Rivera, Trustee
Manuel Morales, Trustee
John Witherspoon, Trustee
Kathleen Gaffney, Trustee

GUESTS

Jahi Bashir, Head of School I.A.
Ellen Eagen, School Attorney
53 Teachers & Support Staff

Val Jacobson, Head of Ops
Mary Kenny, Minutes Transcriber

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The meeting was called to order at 6:10 pm. Ms. Putz welcomed everyone and said that she hopes they are staying healthy.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- Ms. Gaffney made a motion to approve the minutes pending legal review. Mr. Morales seconded. All were in favor.

3. ACADEMICS

Chromebooks

Mr. Bashir stated that Chromebooks were distributed to in-person students as soon as they arrived. Some students still have to pick them up. Students who had not previously requested one are asking for one now. These issues are being sorted.

Progress Reports

Families received Trimester (T) 1 progress reports. Virtual teacher/parent conferences will be next week. A number of students are failing and the main reason is that they are not turning in their work. Mr. Bashir said that he will be making instructional changes to address this concern.

Afterschool

Afterschool programs have started and Ms. Johnson reported that students are turning out. SAT prep is going well.

Teacher Wellness Data

67 teachers participated in a social emotional wellness check-in survey. Results indicate that lack of student participation has increased stress, but participating teachers feel as though they are able to do their job without feeling overwhelmed.

T2 Plan and Student Schedule

Mr. Bashir asked the Board to consider going fully remote beginning at the start of Trimester 2 (November 30) until further notice. The school is concerned about the risk that holiday travel poses to our community. In addition, those traveling are required to quarantine, which would pose a number of logistical challenges.

Mr. Bashir presented a draft schedule for T2. On Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays, the schedule would consist of 110 minutes for each class, transitions between each class, and four blocks a day with 30 minute lunches. On Wednesdays there would be asynchronous learning and mandatory sessions for students with special needs and English Language Learners. In-person instruction will be reassessed in January.

Ms. Putz asked Mr. Bashir to review the T2 schedule with the Parent Leadership Council. The Board would vote on the schedule following parent consultation.

STAR Data

Mx. Leghorn stated that 2020-2021 STAR testing began October 5 during synchronous advisory classes. Makeup office hours have been offered. This is the final week of daily office hours. Data will be sent to students and families the week of November 2 via email. Mx. Leghorn reviewed preliminary data and stated that WCHS recently hired a literacy teacher who will be able to do pull outs with students.

4. OPERATIONS

2020-21 Safety Plan

Ms. Jacobson requested approval of the 2020-21 Safety Plan. The draft plan has been available on the website for at least 30 days for public comment.

- Ms. Gaffney made a motion to approve the 2020-21 School Safety Plan. Mr. Morales seconded. All were in favor.

Attendance

Ms. Jacobson reviewed attendance by cohort as of October 19, 2020. Average school attendance is 80.6%. Operations staff are deploying daily auto-calls, weekly letters, and grade team outreach. They are also following up with pending/zero attend students and conducting outreach to students with low percentage attendance.

Ms. Eagen and the Board asked Ms. Jacobson and Mr. Bashir to review and reconsider the 2020-21 attendance policy, noting that it may not fully capture student engagement.

Historical Graduation Rates

Ms. Jacobson presented historical graduation data. WCHS reported the highest four-year graduation rates over the course of eight years with 83.1% of seniors graduating in June and 86.9% of seniors graduating in August.

Ms. Jacobson said that we are continuing to work with our fifth and sixth year seniors to ensure they are on-track to graduate and have postsecondary college and career options.

Computer Update

There are currently 586 laptops in inventory. 250 hotspots have been ordered.

Flu Shot Reminder

Families received a flyer reminding them about flu prevention.

5. COVID SAFETY AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS UPDATES

Ms. Manion showed the daily screener participation data and noted that most staff are now in compliance. She reviewed Governor Cuomo's Cluster Action Initiative and what it means for WCHS. Ms. Manion explained that WCHS is not in a color-coded zone at this time; however, if WCHS were to be placed in the yellow zone, 20% of in-person staff and students must be tested for COVID-19. She noted that there have been 0 confirmed cases of COVID-19 at WCHS and she has been submitting the New York State Department of Health Daily Survey regularly.

Ms. Manion also stated that updates to the School Safety Plan are forthcoming. Some issues have arisen surrounding COVID screening protocols and calling out of work. A reminder was sent to all staff earlier to clarify. She has been utilizing the NYC Situation Room as a resource.

a. SAFETY

Ms. Manion presented on behalf of Mr. James. Safety staff have prioritized daily temperature screening checks for all staff, students and visitors upon entry to the building. There have been no reports of any incidents during in-person learning at the school. Two fire drills, one lockdown drill, and one Code Blue drill have been conducted. There are no reports of staff issues.

b. FACILITIES

Facilities staff are sanitizing daily and disinfecting nightly with an electrostatic sprayer. One air conditioning and heating compressor was replaced. Air conditioning units have been shut down and the heat is prepared for winter. Both elevators are scheduled for annual Category 1 testing to ensure proper operation.

6. RECRUITMENT AND ENROLLMENT

982 students are enrolled in both PowerSchool and ATS. The FTE is 962. 18 students have zero attendance. We are trying to place these students in an alternative learning environment or help them pursue their GEDs.

There are 1015 applications for 2020-21 in SchoolMint. 2021-22 applications opened on September 1, the school has received 24 applications so far. The next open house will be on November 7 at 10am. The Common Application will launch on November 9.

7. FINANCE

Ms. Fernandez reported that as of September 30, 2020, the total collected revenue is \$4,230,990 and the total expenses for the period are \$3,867,047. The surplus is \$363,943. Total assets are \$18,400,000. Rent is \$10,059,919.

The audit is now complete and had no major findings. Ms. Fernandez thanked everyone for their participation. She reminded the Board that the auditors need a copy of the WCHS resolution approving the application for the PPP funds.

- Mr. Rivera made a motion to approve the financial audit. Mr. Witherspoon seconded the motion. All were in favor.

8. ACCOUNTABILITY AND DEVELOPMENT

Governance

Ms. Manion thanked Ms. Cruz for her excellent work assisting administration across the board. Students from the summer leadership program are interested in applying to be student advisors to the Board. She will circle back about the selection process and other open advisor positions. Executive Orders are continually monitored. Open Meetings Law has been extended through November 3. Ms. Manion reiterated that WCHS is not in a color-coded zone. The NYSED Annual Report Progress Towards Goals and Audit are due November 2. The Title I Comparability Report and Supplement not Supplant Surveys were submitted earlier that day. The ESSER fund application needs to be re-submitted by all schools due to changes from the federal government. They are now due by the end of November, although charter school applications do not need to change much. Ms. Manion attended a number of NYCSA's Annual Conference sessions last week. Mr. James' safety video was submitted to NYCSA's PPE video contest. The video was not selected but WCHS received complimentary tickets to next year's conference.

Community

The October Parent Leadership Council Meeting and Elections on Thursday, October 29 at 6pm. The PLC Vice-President, Ms. McFadden, spoke briefly. The WCHS' GoFundMe for a student injured in a fire that destroyed their home has raised \$3,885 so far for the family. Ms. Manion thanked the staff who've generously donated and shared to their networks.

Website

Ms. Manion noted that the club webpage has been updated. The Social Emotional Academy Leader and Parent Leadership Council pages will be updated next.

Ms. Eagen asked if the Digital Equity Survey has been submitted. Ms. Jacobson said that Mr. Medina is working on it and it should be completed soon.

9. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Witherspoon made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Gaffney seconded the motion. All were in favor.