

**YouthBuild Philadelphia Charter School
Board of Trustees Meeting
1231 North Broad Street – 5th Floor
February 8, 2019**

MINUTES

Present: Keith Anderson (arrived 9:20 a.m.), Graham Brent, Martin Brigham, Timothy Daniel, Charles Esser, Scott Lillis (until 9:50 a.m.), Melanie McCottry, James Mergiotti, James Multari, David Thomas, Robert Totaro.

Attending by phone: Jared Farbman (from 9:18 – 10:25 a.m.), Kiley Smith Kelly (joined at 9:05 a.m.), Tiffanie Talley-Baines.

Absent: Erin McNamara Horvat, Khalilah Lawson, Roxanne Tillman, Sai Yerrapathruni.

Guests: Nicole Connell, Kyasha Tyson.

Staff: Scott Emerick, Adesanya Karade, Brian Leffler, Eva Lexie, Meredith Molloy.

Staff guests: Ted Molloy, Nikkia Moss, Allison Predjulek.

The meeting was chaired and called to order at 8:50 a.m. by Board Chair M. Brigham.

Welcome: (M. Brigham)

- M. Brigham welcomed and introduced the visiting guests.

Approval of Minutes: (M. Brigham)

- The draft minutes of the regular board meeting of December 14, 2018 and the special expulsion meeting of December 20, 2018 were distributed to the board in advance of this meeting. There were no corrections. Eleven board members were present to vote on the following resolution:
- **Motion by J. Multari: To approve the minutes of the December 14, 2018 board meeting and the December 20, 2018 special expulsion meeting as submitted. J. Mergiotti second, motion unanimously approved.**

Required Forms:

- E. Lexie described the requirements for board members to complete the Statement of Financial Interests and the Conflict of Interest Disclosure form annually. They were also asked to complete the annual self-assessment rubric.
- K. Smith Kelly joined the meeting by phone at this time.

Conversation on Student Leadership and Critical Consciousness:

- Several students attended the meeting to speak in a panel about their experiences with leadership at YouthBuild Philadelphia. The students introduced themselves, and board members introduced themselves to the students. Zuri Stone, Director of Student Life, led the panel in a series of questions and responses.
- K. Anderson arrived at the meeting and J. Farbman joined by phone during the student panel.

- S. Lillis left the meeting at the end of the student panel.

Finance Update: (J. Mergiotti)

Financial statements as of 12/31/18

The financial statements as of 12/31/18 were distributed to board members in advance of this meeting, and a copy is on file with these minutes.

- J. Mergiotti reviewed the balance sheet. There is currently a 10 to 1 ratio of assets to liabilities. The cash balance is considerably higher than at this time last year. A. Karade and J. Farbman are looking into alternative ways to invest our funds. Our receivables are relatively current and all deemed collectable.
- J. Mergiotti reviewed the income statement, which is net positive. Revenues are ahead of budget primarily due to increased School District funding for the higher proportion of Special Ed students. Expenses are under budget primarily due to delays in hiring for some open positions, as well as reduced medical expenses.

Modified FY 2019 budget

- A proposed modification of the 2018-19 budget was distributed to the board in advance of this meeting and a copy is on file with these minutes.
- When the annual budget is approved in June there are still some unknowns that can't be included in the budget until they are finalized. We make the budget conservatively until the new information comes in. We are now ahead on revenue after our Special Ed numbers were finalized and some additional funding came through. The modified budget shows an overall increase in revenue of about \$600K.
- We are working on building a significant reserve in preparation for future program needs, facility needs, and as protection against risk. The new budget allocates \$350K to reserve.
 - There was a discussion of the impact of having a reserve. We are careful about which funds can be allocated to it and which funds must be spent down. The Finance Committee will discuss this further at their upcoming retreat.

Thirteen board members were present to vote on the following motion:

- **Motion** by R. Totaro: **To approve the modified 2018-19 budget as submitted.** M. McCottry second, motion **unanimously approved.**

Program Update: (D. Thomas and B. Leffler)

- In advance of this meeting a Program Outcomes Update document was distributed to the board. In addition, at the meeting B. Leffler distributed a handout about the Comprehensive School Improvement Plan. Copies of both documents are on file with these minutes.
- B. Leffler reviewed outcomes data comparing retention, attendance, and graduation statistics overall vs. those for students with IEPs.
- Our graduation rate in recent years has been lower than our goal. We are working hard to improve it. However, given our target population and the nature of our program our outcomes cannot really be compared with traditional four-year high schools. Project U-Turn, which oversees many alternative schools, states a graduation rate goal of 50%. In 2015 their published graduation rate was about 35%. We significantly exceed these goals. However the target for four-year public schools in Philadelphia is 92%. The SDP overall graduation rate for 2017 was 67%.

- Although we do not have a 4-year cohort, based on our graduation rate we have been flagged by the State for a Comprehensive School Improvement (CSI) Plan. We welcome resources and support towards improving our graduation rate, but need to communicate to our funders and others the quality of our work based on fair comparisons.
 - There was a discussion about how we fit with the model being used to flag schools needing improvement, and whether there will be an adjustment for how success is measured for alternative schools.
 - We are forming a CSI School Community Steering Committee led by a state-assigned facilitator, which should consist of board, community, student and alumni representatives in addition to staff. The committee will set direction, gather and assess data, and make a plan. Any board members willing to participate please let B. Leffler know.
 - The designation comes with a \$75K grant from the state, but we don't yet have a grant agreement that clarifies how we can use it.

Fundraising Update: (M. Molloy)

- A Fundraising Committee Update was distributed to the board in advance of this meeting and a copy is on file with these minutes.
- M. Molloy stated that we are on track for reaching our overall fundraising goal.
- Work on the annual event is now gearing up. It will be at the HIVE on May 2 and we have seven sponsors so far. Board members are requested to give and/or obtain in-kind donations for the auction and raffle. Tickets will be available for sale soon.
- J. Farbman left the meeting during the fundraising update.

Governance Update: (E. Lexie)

- The committee has been working on planning the Board Retreat. The Strategic Plan will be a main area of focus, along with continuing our work on Social Identities training. It will be on April 26. Recommendations for a venue would be welcome.
- T. Talley-Baines stated that there are five candidates for the new HR Committee and she is planning a meet-and-greet with them.
- E. Lexie stated that the Governance Committee is also working on a pipeline of candidates for other committees, especially Fundraising.
- J. Multari reported on the process of board assessment. In addition to the individual board member rubric that was distributed today, we have committee assessments and a full board assessment that are administered in alternate years. This process fell behind schedule in recent years and we are working to catch up on both.
 - We use the data to help us understand where we need to focus, and will share with the board what is learned.
 - Committee assessments were digitized and distributed recently to all committee members and we request completion in the next two weeks.
 - There will be a longer full board assessment that we hope to complete by the time of the board retreat.

Executive Director Report: (S. Emerick)

Strategic Plan

- The two primary topic areas of focus for the Strategic Plan are facilities and enrollment, with risk mitigation and the Learning Exchange as additional topics.
- We are seeking a consultant to write the Plan document, with the goal of having a draft by mid-April to distribute before the board retreat.
- We need to figure out the timing and mechanism for engaging students, staff, and other constituents in the planning process – before or after the creation of the first draft.
- The Executive Committee brought up questions about the primary audience for the Plan. We have been thinking of it in terms of being primarily for the board and school leadership. Should there be a more public-facing version that would be used with partners and funders, for example if we have a capital campaign?
 - The first version will be internal. Once more decisions are made about our direction on facilities and enrollment, then a second version can be drafted for public use that is adapted to those decisions.

Facilities

- There has been limited progress on the conditions in our current facility. We are documenting issues and negotiations are ongoing.
- We have spoken with Schultz & Williams about a potential capital campaign process, to gather information. We welcome suggestions of others we should speak to. The timing of a campaign depends on time remaining on our current lease.
- We are looking into having a community-facing social enterprise café in West Philly. This would enhance the student experience for customer service well beyond what we can provide with our little café space in the school. We have some community partners who are interested and we have been looking at several potential spaces. One looks promising at this point but we would not have access until at least this summer.

Program Structure

- B. Leffler currently supervises 8 members of the Program Team. We are looking at restructuring the Team in a way that aligns similar functions into two smaller groups, and adds an additional Director on the Senior Management Team to oversee half of the group. Part of the goal is to help with improving student attendance, retention and graduation. One half would be focused on skill development (academics, vocation, college and career partnerships) and the other on student leadership and support (student life, specialized services, student success/case management, career planning for alumni).
 - We are beginning to share this plan with staff. It would not involve any staffing cuts, only changes in reporting structure. We hope to complete the process in the next 90 days.
- There was a question about how this would affect the Board Program Committee. Will it also be restructured? This will need to be determined as the program changes fall into place.

Closing and Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned at 10:53 a.m. Twelve board members were present to vote on the adjournment resolution.

- **Motion** by R. Totaro: **To adjourn the meeting.** D. Thomas second, motion **unanimously approved.**

Respectfully submitted,

Eva S. Lexie