

Perseus House Charter School of Excellence

MINUTES OF
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
MEETING OF

February 16, 2021

THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS of the Charter School of Excellence met on Tuesday, February 16, 2021 at Perseus House, Inc., 1511 Peach St., Erie, PA 16501 at 5:01 p.m. via Teams, Facebook live at <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCYRcdMEhpRuneg-wi8YRjVg/>, phone, and in person

Board Members: Via Teams - Mrs. Mary Holliday, Mrs. Judy Mastrian, Dr. Thomas Fortin, Mr. Josh Maloney, Dr. John Linden, Dr. Katy Wolfrom, Mrs. Nicole Ford

Also Present via Teams: Attorney Gary Eiben, Attorney Jessica Fiscus, Mr. Chris Fortin, Mr. Asa McCullum, Mr. Dan Hanas, Mr. Chris Primavere, Mr. Dan Mastrian

Present in Person: Dr. Nick Viglione, Dr. Renee Gordon, Mr. Mario Mezzacapo, Mrs. Stephanie Milford, Ms. Susan Miller, Mr. Chris Maycock

The Pennsylvania School Boards Association has provided guidance on electronic school board meetings via electronic means in compliance with the Sunshine Act (Board Policy 006.1), which the Charter School of Excellence has adopted and adapted to his meeting.

1. The meeting began at 5:01 p.m.
2. No public comment was offered during the meeting.
3. The Board unanimously approved a motion to accept the January 19, 2021 meeting minutes as submitted. (**Motion approved by Judy Mastrian, Seconded by: Tom Fortin, Vote: 7 yea, 0 nay**)
4. Stephanie reported total revenue for the month was \$661,398 with membership at 576. Medical insurance reflects a credit of \$18,688 due to large stop loss payments received for last month and this month's claims. Total expenses/facility acquisition/debt service was \$527,013. Net change in fund balance was \$134,000 and \$264,000 year to date. The projected fund balance through 1-31-21 was \$675,460. Other funding sources indicates the first COVID special education grant allocation was received to be used for mitigation efforts for a total of \$5,000.

On the Balance Sheet, accounts receivable are \$714,000. To note, 4% of the receivables are 90 days or over for billing of primary county school districts. Accounts payable to Perseus House was \$20,799. Other Non-Current Liabilities is for the construction loan with a balance under \$200,000. Total Liabilities and Net Assets are \$4.463 million. The Board unanimously approved a motion to accept the January financial statements as submitted. (**Motion approved by Josh Maloney, Seconded by: John Linden, Vote: 7 yea, 0 nay**)

Accounts payable for January reflect two payments to Connecto Electric for electrical work related to the new wall construction which is under one of our grants. Payments to Gannon University for dual enrollment; tuition reimbursement for Stephanie Linden; and Steve Lewis Contracting for wall

renovations at Skills Center through a Title IV grant. Total accounts payable was \$656,965. The Board unanimously approved a motion to accept the January accounts payable as submitted. **(Motion approved by Josh Maloney, Seconded by: Katy Wolfrom, 7 yea, 0 nay).**

5. Highlighted was the first budget revision for 2020-2021. Adjustments were made to school district per pupil revenue. The county school PDE 363 rates updated to the 2020-2021 rates and ESD still at last year's rates. Actual special education rate is over 30% with a total net increase of \$91,000. Sales for Skills Center reflects a reduction for school related activities expense due to COVID. Expenses reflect reductions in coaching stipends; student worker wages due to remote learning; retirement of program facilitator; and substitute teachers. There was an increase in projected instructional staff PTO days pay-out due to remote learning to be paid out at the end of the year. There is a net difference savings of \$17,000. Health insurance reflects an increase due to current year utilization. Admin services increase of \$17,699 due to vacation payout for Executive Director retirement. Reductions of \$25,000 for acute partial services with less students; tuition of dual enrollment; and culinary program supplies of \$24,000. Technology items were put into licensing fees. There is a general fund increase in asset acquisition of the food truck, repairs, carpeting and painting.

Other funding sources includes an increase in Title I Part A; reduction of IDEA funds; increase for school health and safety grant; additional funding source for special ed mitigation grant; increase in medical insurance; and transfer of expenses from technology supplies and fees to educational software/licensing fees. Total revenue is \$9.525 million with total expenses of \$9.297 million with a projected fund balance of \$396,000. Appropriation of prior year fund balance of \$15,132. The Board unanimously approved a motion to accept the 2020-2021 first budget revision as submitted. **(Motion approved by Josh Maloney, Seconded by: Judy Mastrian, 7 yea, 0 nay).**

6. Nick reviewed the ESSER-2 (Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief) Programs Grant, which has been an additional grant to support mitigation efforts towards COVID efforts under the Division of Federal Programs. The grant is open for approximately two years and we have identified ways to utilize those resources. The grant application will be submitted. Items are relative to student user end or technology items. This offers the opportunity to take our website to a new level to allow better communication and ability to put in parent pages. We will be able to provide an extended year program; new Chrome books; two COVID staff positions; staff stipend to support the extra hours to move us forward; upgrades to HVAC units at Discovery and Leadership Centers, as well as increase of technology. Judy inquired about order of Chrome books which Nick stated now that students are working from home, they take these out of the buildings and will get damaged or not returned. Josh inquired about delivery of the staff stipend. Nick stated all CSE staff across the board will receive a calculated portion, such as a 3% stipend with administrators receiving \$5,000 or \$6,000. This would not impact salaries as it is a one-time stipend for current and existing staff. The Board unanimously approved a motion to accept the ESSER-2 Federal Programs Grant application submittal to PDE as outlined. **(Motion approved by Josh Maloney, Seconded by: Tom Fortin, 7 yea, 0 nay).** Stephanie stated once the application is submitted and approved, it will be presented in a future budget revision. Jessica asked if the monies have to be spent immediately or over time. Nick stated it is allowed to be spent over two years and expires in September 2023. Nick will send the finished grant application to Attorneys Eiben and Fiscus.

7. Dan Hanas stated Leadership Center is at 141 students with 66.6% attendance. Teachers are continuing to engage students in remote learning activities and with classroom work. Students have received certificates for those receiving awards. They are trying to get completion of inventory testing and classroom diagnostic tools with the next testing to be in April. National School Choice celebration was a success. A Google classroom was created with students and teachers sharing pictures working remotely from home and testimonials as to why they love the Leadership Center. They have continued the “Gotcha” initiative where staff recognize students going above and beyond and they will receive a tee shirt.

Dan Mastrian stated Skills Center has 285 students with 87.6% attendance and currently at 88%. Certificates have been sent out for high honors and honors, attendance, etc. They continue with Access testing with makeups being given next week for ELL students. Parent/teacher conferences were this past week with good attendance. The LSS classroom has returned to the Skills Center designed for highest needs special education students. The Workforce Development Program has been adapted to that classroom and they are trying to incorporate more movement.

Asa reported Discovery Center has 149 students with 87.5% attendance. High honor roll was 20% of student population which was very impressive. Staff are conducting phone calls and sending e-mails to engage students. They are still working on getting students to complete assessments. Parent/teacher conferences have been held virtually and they participated in a parent climate survey. Students sent in videos doing their favorite talent for School Choice Week and were very creative. Prizes were sent out.

Chris Fortin stated there are 176 special education students which is 30.6%. They received a grant geared towards students who may have lost or need to recoup skills lost from last year. Teachers have been looking at eligible students’ progress during the time they are in the building and are hoping to get more back in the building. They are looking at providing additional support over the summertime. Nick inquired as to how many special education students we are identifying which Chris reported two out of 176. Josh wanted more clarification as to special education identification. Nick stated in the traditional school system is thinking that charter schools identify more special education students to receive more dollars. General education students receive less dollars compared to special education students. Students come to us identified as special education in their previous school. Families with students identified in need of special education services find our system more conducive to their children. Gary stated we have a legal obligation to identify special education students who have not yet been identified as special education.

8. Renee stated 70 students from the middle school will be transferring to our high schools, which is nearly 100% of our eighth graders. We are accepting applications for next year and project 102 slots already being filled mid-year for next school year. These numbers have historically grown over the years. Decision to move middle school to current location has significantly supported these efforts.

9. Renee reviewed a candidate for employment. The Board unanimously approved a motion to accept Todd DeBello, substitute teacher, as recommended for hire. It was noted he does have an emergency certification. **(Motion moved by: John Linden, Seconded by: Judy Mastrian: 7 yea, 0 nay.)**

10. Renee reported we are on track with our CSI plan with a focus on school culture and data mindset. They will begin with a plan with the CSI team for the 2021-2022 school year by looking at what goals we will have based on our priorities and needs identified. We would like to maintain our current plan as much as possible. Minor revisions will be made and the Board will be notified of them. CSI will suggest and the funding will support a data warehouse platform. They have looked at vendors and PowerSchool has a data warehouse wherein we can triangulate data, disaggregate data, input and export files from other systems and be able to have student numbers, grades, etc. with much information put in one area. There will be many benefits futuristically.

11. Renderings of the food truck was presented. The “Food for Thought” concept was developed over the last year and a half. We received funds from the Erie Community Foundation grant, as well as the Episcopal Church in Erie, which will cover the purchase of the truck. The truck was custom built with a fryer and pizza oven. This will be a culinary arts and Workforce Development collaboration lab on wheels which will provide a varied menu. Students will be trained in soft skills as part of our curriculum. Parking lots of our community partners can be utilized for the food truck and the downtown area. The truck will be on the road in late spring. There has been a lot of staff involvement with much appreciation.

12. A chart referenced one current COVID case of a student at the Leadership Center but was not in the building as students are remote learning. As part of our Continuity of Education Plan, our most recent extension will be through 3-5-21 to continue remote learning. PDE guidance has informed us we are still at a substantial level with COVID. A survey was sent to parents as to their interest of in person learning with 60% wanting hybrid or in person learning. A second survey was sent to parents regarding their commitment and preference of synchronized in person or synchronized remote learning. We are looking at March or April for next round of testing with, hopefully, a return to the buildings.

The vaccine has been available with MHEDS as well as Community HealthNet. We are waiting for our school personnel phase to open. Our nurses will help administer the vaccine at Leadership Center once available. Martin Luther King Center is providing vaccines for anyone over 65.

13. Gary stated that the committee of the Board for review of the charter renewal process was developed. The committee should meet a half hour prior to regular board meetings. Nick stated we are still waiting for a response from the city regarding the renewal.

The meeting adjourned at 6:09 p.m.

Susan Miller, Board Secretary

Date