

Meeting of the Board of Trustees  
February 13, 2020  
Thurgood Marshall Academy PCHS Library  
2427 Martin Luther King, Jr Avenue, SE  
Washington, DC 20020

**Board Members in attendance:** Bruce Berman, Jerome Epstein, Regina Foshee (phone), Dan Gordon (phone), Mark Harrison, Ken Jones (phone), Andy Rosenberg, Richard Roe (phone), Jonathan Stoel, Laurence Telson (phone).

**Staff Members in attendance:** Raymond Weeden, Executive Director; David Schlossman, Chief Operating Officer; Giselle Pole, Director of Development; Sanjay Mitchell, Director of College and Alumni Programs.

Mr. Stoel called the meeting to order at 8:02am.

A motion was made to approve the minutes from the November 7, 2019 meeting. The motion was seconded and the minutes were approved unanimously.

Mr. Weeden gave the Executive Director's report.

The school has had an exciting start to the second quarter, notably in sports and student advocacy work. The JV Boys Basketball team won the city championship, and Varsity boys and girls basketball teams are in the playoffs. Varsity player Mike Aiken, scored a record 1,000 points. He is currently on the school's annual Civil Rights Trip which started Feb 12. Twenty students, along with students from IDEA Public Charter High School, are visiting several cities throughout the South that were key to the Movement. Finally, students who participate in Mikva Challenge DC voter participation efforts were featured in a profile on CNN online.

The school received its Quality Site Review which occurs every five years. The Leadership Team is currently reviewing the QSR and discussing how to improve communication among families and teachers.

The Mayor's office committed to 4% increase in city funding to schools. Other factors impacting next year's budget include inflationary pressure from contractors whose rates generally increase by 3% per year, as well as increases in teacher and staff salaries.

Two charter networks announced additional schools. KIPP will open a high school in Ward 8 to serve as a feeder for its students East of the River. The second charter network, Friendship, will acquire Achievement Prep's middle school. While these changes will not immediately affect TMA's enrollment, our Admissions team will revisit our recruitment and marketing strategy to promote clarity about TMA's unique strengths, particularly as the school's 20<sup>th</sup> year approaches.

Finally, the Public Charter School Board has launched a search for its next Executive Director. TMA Board members are encouraged to submit recommendations to the PCSB.

Mr. Weeden opened the floor for questions and discussions. Board members asked for additional information about the enrollment figures, which will be provided at a later date.

Ms. Bierzynski gave the report for the Education Mission Committee, which met prior to the board meeting. The committee discussed the proposed new teacher grading policy, updates to the Dual Enrollment process; and summer programming. In reviewing the school-wide goals for the quarter, the committee highlighted areas of growth and provided feedback to leadership on how to track certain data points and make them more accessible, most notably graduation metrics, including FAFSA completion and SAT scores.

In reviewing the school's 9<sup>th</sup> grade on track data, strategies for improvement include mandatory time for students to complete missing work on half days. Nearly one-third of 9<sup>th</sup> graders and half of 10<sup>th</sup> graders with missing assignments completed their work after school on the first half day.

Finally, TMA academic leadership is reviewing grading policies in comparison with those of similar high schools.

Next, Mr. Mitchell, the school's Director of College and Alumni Programming, shared details around the college process to date, specifically around "right fit" schools for students. The college counseling team meets with students in the second semester of their junior year to generate a list of colleges based on right fit and interest coupled with academic record. To date, 68% of Seniors have a demonstrated letter of acceptance. FAFSA completion rates are low city-wide, and Mr. Mitchell is part of a think tank group at the Department of Education to make the FAFSA application process easier for families.

TMA plans to partner with Bard College or a comparable program to create a dual enrollment program for students to earn up to 12 college credits upon completion of the course. Having these credits would increase students' chances of college acceptance and lower costs for college education by eliminating the need for remedial courses in the first year. This partnership will rely on additional funding to help students and families pay for dual enrollment.

Mr. Epstein then gave the Governance Committee update. The Committee met with Mr. Weeden to assess Board composition and determined the greatest need is for candidates with local business ties. Board members are encouraged to remain active in the TMA community, and to continue identifying potential candidates.

Mr. Rosenberg and Ms. Pole provided the report of the Development Committee, which met on Friday Feb 7<sup>th</sup>. Fundraising revenue is at 52% of budgeted targets for FY20. This is a result of strong performance in the Federal Grants and the Individuals and Corporations category.

Thanks to all board members who have made their annual contributions to date; the deadline is June 30 to make the 100% board giving target.

Next, the committee discussed the 2020 Gala, which will be held April 30<sup>th</sup> at Hogan Lovells US LLP at 6pm. The evening will feature student projects as well as highlights of the ways volunteers impact students. In addition, the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court has been invited as a keynote speaker.

The fundraising target for this year's Gala is \$235,000 – revenue will come from sponsorships, ticket sales, and donations made the night of the event. Analysis of current sponsorship prospects revealed a funding gap of \$35,000. Strategies to meet this gap include asking current sponsors to make stretch gifts.

Included in materials is a list of organizations for the Board to review and indicate any connections. Board materials also include sample invitation language to support the Gala.

Mr. Jones introduced and Mr. Schlossman presented the Audit & Finance Committee report.

Mr. Schlossman began with general items, noting that due diligence procurement reports appear in Board materials. He noted also that the audit of the year-ended June 30, 2019, received an unmodified (i.e., “clean”) opinion and was submitted to the PCSB prior to the early-December deadline.

Mr. Schlossman distributed the annual Conflict of Interest surveys to board members to support fiscal compliance, including but not limited to IRS standards.

Moving to the second quarter data for FY20, Mr. Schlossman reported the school is performing well in comparison to the budget, and is well positioned to meet its fiscal targets. Factors contributing to financial stability include a strong starting-cash position and higher than projected Special Education enrollment, and modest savings for personnel costs. In addition, expenses remain in line with the budget (even when accounting for increased services for additional Special Education students). The current forecast includes also revised Gala revenue based on feedback from the Development Committee. Capital expenditures are somewhat higher than budgeted, but primarily due to the rollover of grant-funded projects from the prior fiscal year.

Finally, the school-wide process of FY21 budget planning is underway. School leadership has appealed to all staff for information and ideas for projects that can be funded next year.

The meeting moved into executive session at 9:40am and adjourned thereafter.