

ELSIE WHITLOW STOKES COMMUNITY FREEDOM PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL

BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING

MINUTES

JANUARY 11, 2020

Trustees Attending: Carlos Bonner, Heather Harding, Hoyt King, Ami Richardson

Trustees Participating by Telephone: Rodney Rice, Verleria King-Jones, Erica McGrady, Tracey Friedlander

Staff Attending: Erika Bryant, Bill Moczydlowski, Linda Moore, Julia Senerchia

Board Chair Heather Harding called the meeting to order at 9:35 a.m.

Minutes of the November 2019 meeting were reviewed and approved unanimously with the following corrections: Tracey Friedlander should not have been listed twice in the attendance list and Heather Harding was present. Ami Richardson made the motion to approve the minutes and Carlos Bonner provided the second.

Financial Report:

Director of Finance Bill Moczydlowski presented the financial report for the period ending November 2019.

- \$7.5M of revenue was recognized YTD. The majority of this revenue was per pupil funding (\$6.8M), Stokes Kitchen (\$2.K) and Aftercare (\$294K).
- Revenue items exceeding budget included Per Pupil Revenue (+\$161K) and Stokes Kitchen (+\$100K).
- YTD expenses were over budget by \$126K.
- The balance sheet shows a cash balance of \$3,528K (+\$149K from the previous year).
- Accounts Receivable balance was \$528K (+\$112K).
- Accounts Payable balance s \$89K (+\$1K from the previous year).

The refinancing of the Brookland mortgage with BB&T will occur this week. The mortgage will be for a term of eight years with a 20 year amortization.

Academic Data Presentation

Director of Data and Accountability Julia Senerchia presented a report of SY18-19 academic data.

- The school had significant growth on accountability frameworks. The Brookland campus was designated as Tier 1 on the PCSB School Quality Report, up 4.2% to 74.4%. The East End campus was not yet tiered.

- Improvements in student performance can be attributed to a number of factors, including additional development in math and culturally appropriate instruction, and increased investments resources to support special education and SST programs.
- At risk and ELL students performed less well in math and English Language Arts compared other schools in DC.
- 79% of students received home visits last year.
- At the end of 5th grade, Stokes administers the STAMP assessment of French and Spanish proficiency. Students tended to score higher in listening and reading as opposed to writing and speaking.
- Stokes students scored better than 84% of all DC elementary schools on the DC Science Assessment.
- As a result of student performance, SY 19-20 instructional priorities are focused on data analysis, social justice, IB and target language instruction.
- To support these priorities, Stokes is emphasizing coaching, an improved SST process, professional development, guiding principles document development and structured grade level IB and data meetings.

Discussion:

Q. What can Stokes do to better support ELL students?

A. Plans are to provide additional ELL Coordinator staffing.

Q. Does the school have the capacity to analyze student performance by family income level in addition to race and ethnicity?

A. While Stokes collects some family income information, e.g., FARM data, it has not analyzed student performance by this metric.

Executive Director's Report

Legislative/Policy Updates

At-Risk Lottery/Admission Preference

There is growing support throughout the city among school leaders and education advocates to establish a lottery preference for "at-risk" students. Currently, the term "at-risk" is defined as or families receiving SNAP or TANF, children experiencing homelessness or in the foster care system, and/or students in high school who are overage/undercredited. There are efforts to expand this definition to include other categories of students like immigrant and ELL students. Almost half of DC's public school students in DCPS and public charter schools qualify as "at-risk of academic failure" (47%, or approximately 46,500). Stokes School's at risk population at both campuses is under 10

To increase equity of access and funding for students at-risk of academic failure in DC, groups of school leaders and education advocates are meeting with city officials to request that they consider two proposals: (1). Creating a way for school leaders to prioritize at-risk students in the school lottery so that students have equitable access to great schools and (2) Increasing the weighting for at-risk students in the school funding formula so that schools receive adequate resources to appropriately support these students.

Discussion: Carlos Bonner suggested that the school contact DGS so that the school can identify and recruit families who are homeless and/or living in temporary housing. There was also the suggestion to recruit from neighborhood child development centers that serve low-income and high risk students.

Transparency Act

DC City Council's proposed Transparency Act has not yet passed but in anticipation of approval, PCSB and some charter schools have begun to comply with portions of the proposed legislation. Specifically, PCSB has created a Transparency Hub which houses school documents and responds to frequently asked questions from the public. <https://dcpcsb.org/transparency-hub>. Several schools have also begun to make all of their board meetings public.

Program

East End Facilities Renovation

Phase II of the East End facilities renovation will be complete next week. This phase of work includes completion of the administrative wing which includes six offices, one conference room, one staff lounge, two rest rooms on the building's first floor and a health suite on the third floor. The third and final phase of renovation will begin in April of 2020 and is slated to finish in July 2020. This will include completions of classrooms, a library, conference rooms and an office space on the second floor of the building. The conclusion of this phase of work will provide the East End campus with Pre-K through 5th grade classrooms and will accommodate a total of 400 students – the projected maximum enrollment ceiling in school year 2023-2024.

Exploration of Establishing a Middle School for the East End Campus

In four short years, SY 2023-2024, families at our East End campus will need to explore middle school options. Currently, DCI is unable to accommodate additional students from our East End campus. For several years, Stokes School has engaged in conversations with city officials, DCPS personnel and funders about the possibility of creating a DCI-like middle/high school East of the River. We have discussed the idea of collaborating cross-sector (DCPS and PCS) with Houston Elementary and Stokes feeding into the new middle/high school. Houston (DCPS) is the only other language immersion school located in Ward 7 and has Spanish immersion program that is growing at the same rate as Stokes School's East End campus. Houston's students will be in need of middle school options at the same time as Stokes students. Additionally, there is another proposed Mandarin immersion school that could potentially open East of the River in SY 20-21 and school leaders may be interested in joining this collaboration. There appears to be considerable interest in the idea. Both Councilmembers Grosso and Gray have expressed support for the idea. There are current conversations about cross sector (DCPS and PCS) collaboration taking place at the DME and PCSB Chancellor level. And Stokes School's major funders have expressed their support for a project like this. An East End language immersion school is still in the conceptual stage

Discussion: Hoyt King recommended exploring the tax-exempt bond funding for a middle school. Heather Harding recommended beginning to work toward network funding to support increased expansion.

Proposed Early Learning Center Proposal

Stokes has also been approached by leadership of a local church to partner with them to develop a charter school serving 0-5 year olds.

Governance Committee Report

Within the next few weeks the committee will begin looking at strategies for filling future board seats. The committee will distribute a board skills matrix to assess trustees' interests, experiences, and skills in support of the school. There will also be an effort to assess board committee needs.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:30 pm.

The next scheduled meeting of the Board of Trustees is March 14, 2020.

Items Requiring Action

- 1. Continue exploration of the proposed middle school—Erika Bryant & Academic Excellence Committee**
- 2. Exploration of tax-exempt bond financing for proposed middle school—Erika Bryant, Bill Moczydlowski and Finance Committee**
- 3. Exploration, completion and analysis of financing to support the Stokes School network—Governance Committee**