



**MEETING MINUTES  
CAPITAL CITY PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL BOARD**

**SEPTEMBER 15, 2020**

***This meeting took place via Zoom due to the Pandemic.***

**Attendance:**

Trustees in Attendance: Alison Arnold, John Campbell, Sarah Dillard, Anne Herr, Rochanda Hiligh-Thomas, Miz Kusairi, Galo Pazmino, Hiram Puig-Lugo, Xiomara Santos, Nitika Tolani

Trustees Absent: Quameice Harris

Staff in Attendance: Chip Chase, Karen Dresden, Samantha Gaffney, Emily Rodegast, Jonathan Weinstein

*Meeting called to order at 6:30pm*

**Welcome**

Karen Dresden, Head of School, and Alison Arnold, Board Chair, welcomed everyone to our first meeting of the 2020-2021 school year. Samantha Gaffney, Special Projects Coordinator, shared a slideshow of photos highlighting the first few weeks of virtual learning.

**Consent Agenda**

*The Board accepted the Consent Agenda that included the June Board Meeting Minutes, September School Report, and Contracts Approved Since Last Meeting.*

**Finance: Family Leave Policy**

Karen Dresden shared the proposal for a new Capital City family leave policy that was first discussed at the Board Meeting in January 2020. Capital City staff worked with our employment counsel to draft the new plan.

Capital City has had the same parental leave policy since 2001, which offered staff members following the birth or adoption of a child two weeks full pay and 6 weeks of half pay. For many years this was considered progressive; however, in 2015 DC Government (including DCPS) started offering eight weeks of paid leave to employees.

In 2018 the DC Council passed the Family Leave Act to provide all DC workers (except DC gov't employees) with paid leave that is funded through a payroll tax. We began paying this tax in SY19-20 and our employees were able to draw from this fund beginning July 2020. The DC Family Leave Act provides replacement income (similar to how unemployment works) of 90% of salary (up to \$1,000 a week) for 8 weeks. This is close to full salary for some of our employees, but far less for others.

In revising our policy, we wanted employees to be able to take at least eight weeks with full pay following the birth/adoption of a child using a combination of CCPCS paid leave and funds from the DC Family Leave Act. We also wanted to expand our policy to include care of family members with serious illnesses and care for an employee's own serious health condition. Additionally, we wanted to allow for more flexibility in when employees can take the leave. These were all things that we heard from our staff were important to them.

The proposed policy provides four weeks of administrative leave with full pay that can be coupled with the DC Family Leave and used within a year of a qualifying event. This would potentially allow staff to take up to 12 weeks of leave.

The Finance Committee has reviewed and provided feedback on the plan.

*The Board voted unanimously to approve the new CCPCS Family Leave Policy.*

### **School Performance: School Year Priorities and Distance Learning**

Karen Dresden shared a presentation to allow Trustees to understand SY20-21 priorities, our approach to distance learning, and how we plan to approach decisions about re-opening. Before the pandemic, we were planning on creating a new 3-year strategic plan in spring 2020. Karen shared that although we decided to delay the development of a long range plan, we have created an interim plan outlining goals for 2020-2021 school year. The goals focus on virtual learning, social emotional learning, special populations, racial justice and equity and recovery planning.

Karen also shared about distance learning and how we drew on lessons learned and feedback from the spring to improve and restructure distance learning for this school year. In response to feedback, we have redesigned schedules to provide more live or synchronous instruction and allow for more social interaction. We have also provided easier access to platforms and more training for staff, students, and parents.

Karen shared that our student re-enrollment has been high for SY20-21, even though some schools have struggled with this. We are fully enrolled and student attendance has been strong. We attribute a lot of this to the hard work of our family engagement team as well as beginning the year having virtual conferences with every student and their parent or guardian.

Karen discussed re-opening and our approach to decision making. Information, process, and timing are all important to decision-making. The considerations remain the same as in the spring: health and safety, student learning, and the needs of teachers and staff. We announced in June that we would be doing distance learning only through November 6, the end of the first

quarter. We want to make and communicate a decision for the second quarter by October 9. Karen and her team are surveying staff and families as part of the information gathering process. Principals are also holding campus listening sessions to hear from families how distance learning is going. Karen will keep the board informed about reopening decisions and plans.

**Governance: Understanding and Preparing for Open Meetings Act Requirements**

Rochanda Hiligh-Thomas shared about the requirements of the Open Meetings Act (OMA) that go into effect for charter schools on October 1, 2020. While there are many things we are already implementing, there are new requirements as well that we must adhere to. The Governance Committee will plan to meet regularly and work with Karen and her team to ensure that we are complying to all new requirements.

The Governance Committee reviewed the bylaws and recommended some small updates to recognize the OMA and its requirements. Rochanda outlined the proposed changes. The changes are not substantive and do not fundamentally change our bylaws.

*The Board voted unanimously to approve the updates to our bylaws to recognize the requirements of the DC Open Meetings Act.*

***The meeting adjourned to an executive session at 8:55pm.***