



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

**January 20, 2022**

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

**Attendance:**

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

Trustees Absent: None

CCPCS Staff in Attendance: Chip Chase, Dominique Coote, Laina Cox, Karen Dresden, Samantha Gaffney, Brittney Henderson-Fiestas, Wanda Gregory, Jonathan Weinstein

**MISSION MOMENT**

High School student members of the QTSA and teacher leaders shared about their club and their recent experience leading professional development for all Capital City teachers and staff members about building safe spaces for Queer and Trans students.

*Meeting called to order at 6:45pm*

**WELCOME**

Nitika Tolani, Board Chair, welcomed everyone to the January meeting.

**MEETING AGENDA**

*The Board unanimously voted to adopt the meeting agenda.*

**CONSENT AGENDA**

*The Board unanimously accepted the Consent Agenda that included the November Board Meeting Minutes, Development Dashboard, Finance Committee Meeting Minutes and Contracts Approved Since Last Meeting (none)*

## **FINANCE: FY20-21 AUDIT/990 AND YTD FINANCIALS**

Jonathan Weinstein, Chief Operating Officer and Galo Pazmino, Finance Committee Chairperson, presented Capital City's 2020-2021 year-end audited financial statement and the 2021 Form 990 tax filing (for the tax year July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2021).

Galo shared that for the first time in over a decade, Capital City engaged a new audit firm, SB & Company, for the FY21 audit. Capital City received a clean audit, with no findings of significant nor material weaknesses reported and no instances of non-compliance. This was a strong audit. The audit report was submitted to the Public Charter School Board in December and the 990 will be filed soon.

Our FY22 financial statements show that the school remains in a very solid financial position. Capital City staff are meeting with Ed-Ops this week to reconcile several assumptions that will be incorporated into the Q2 report (after December accounting closes) that will be shared with the Finance Committee and the full board.

*The Board unanimously voted to accept Audit and 990.*

## **SCHOOL PERFORMANCE SPOTLIGHT**

Karen Dresden, Head of School and Brittney Henderson-Fiestas, Lower School Literacy Specialist, shared data from EmpowerK12 Unfinished Learning Comparative Dashboard and provided a spotlight on Lower School literacy.

Karen shared that it had been challenging to make sense of SY20-21 school performance data as it was tough to know how to best interpret the data within the context of the pandemic. Fortunately we now have a helpful tool— in December, EmpowerK12 released their Unfinished Learning School Comparison Dashboard. The Dashboard allows us to see how our performance compares with other DC schools who also use MAP assessments and participated in the study. This data is helpful in that it provides context for how our NWEA MAP results compare to those of other DC schools.

For Lower School Literacy, we saw strong results relative to other schools. K-2 growth data was low for all schools reflecting the challenge of teaching early literacy remotely, but Capital City had the second highest MGPs. For 3rd and 4th Grade Literacy, the achievement percentile for 3-4 ELA has increased steadily over four years. In fall 2019, we were 21st of 32 schools in terms of performance. In fall 2021, Capital City LS was 7th of 41 schools and our 5th grade (mostly students rising from the LS) was 6th. Achievement of English Learners also increased steadily.

We believe that these strong results can be attributed to adopting the EL Education Literacy Curriculum beginning in SY19-20. While we have been an EL Education school since our inception, the Literacy Curriculum is a new component that is not used in all EL schools. It was challenging to adopt a new curriculum during the pandemic, but the Lower School has stayed focused on this.

Brittany Henderson-Fiestas, shared about the curriculum and implementation including challenges and answered questions from trustees.

### **COVID SAFETY UPDATE**

Karen Dresden provided an update on COVID safety measures and how they are currently working. Karen shared that we have been dealing with the Omicron surge as case rates in DC skyrocketed over winter break. We decided to go fully virtual the first week back, requiring all students and staff to get PCR tests before returning. OSSE updated its guidelines over winter break to allow schools to do this.

We are continuing with our pooled testing that allows us to test most students and staff each week, but have made some adjustments. We are now requiring all individuals in a positive pool to get a second test and report results to us. This allows us to accurately report results and to exclude students who test positive from participating in our PCR testing for 90 days. Our partnership with Curative has made testing accessible to our families.

Karen also shared that we expect OSSE to release updated safety guidelines for schools soon and we will adjust our policies and procedures informed by these guidelines. We are planning to consider changes to quarantine policies and testing protocols. We also want to plan ahead for spring vacation so that we can let families and staff know of any testing requirements well in advance.

### **DISCUSSION OF RETENTION AND RECRUITMENT PRIORITY AND EFFORTS**

Karen shared that retaining our current staff and recruiting the best new talent has always been a top priority for school leaders at our school. This year it is more important than ever. Karen will be working with her team in the next month to outline recruitment and retention plans that incorporate feedback from staff surveys (to be conducted this month). We are in the process of doing a review of our teacher salaries compared to other districts. We anticipate that increases will be needed this year and would like to bring a proposal to the March board meeting in advance of the May budget meeting.

### **GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE UPDATE**

Rochanda will be checking in with Trustees about plans for next year. As we determine any Trustees that may be rolling off, the Governance Committee will outline recruitment needs. A few candidates have been identified already and are in the process of meeting with trustees and staff.

### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Trustees adjourned to Executive Session pursuant to DC Code § 2-575 (b)(10) to discuss a Personnel Matter

*The public meeting reconvened and adjourned at 8:53pm*