



The Sojourner Truth Public Charter School
Board of Trustees meeting
June 13, 2020. 10:00 a.m. By video conference.

Board members on call:

Sarah Navarro
Atalie Jacobs
Caroline Hill
Jonathan O'Connell
Craig Robinson
Richard Pohlman
Kiva Zytnick
Wendy Pugh
Charis Sharp (ex-officio),

Board members absent:

Marlena McWilliams
Laure Fleming

Staff on call:

Justin Lessek
Contractor John Kenchelian of Ed-Ops (joined for portion of meeting)

Orders of Business

1. General school updates, from Justin

a. Enrollment

PCSB projection for Truth School is 80 students. We have 76 students enrolled. We had 151 total applications. About one-quarter of enrolled students have IEPs.

b. Facilities

Sublease with LAMB and agreement with Perry Street Prep have both been finalized.

c. Staffing

Most positions have been filled. We have not hired a PE teacher or social worker yet.

d. COVID contingency planning

Ad-hoc committee has been formed with Caroline, Laure and Sarah. Five parent volunteers have come forward.

2. Finance update

Craig and John Kenchelian of Ed-Ops provided a budget update. The budget needs to be sent to PCSB by Aug. 1 for final charter approval. John says we are in a very positive position due to enrollment numbers. The interim budget needs to be sent to PCSB next week. That budget is balanced. Having a strong financial position will be critical to future facilities decisions.

In terms of private funding we have \$155,000 from EdForward committed for Year 1 and \$165,000 from New Schools Venture Fund for Year 1 pending PCBS approval. We have 17 full-time staff, including five teachers, and higher salaries compared to similar schools. Our lease is set for \$300,000 for the year.

Atalie inquired about potential impacts of COVID on the budget. Justin said we are in good shape but may spend more on wifi access for students. Caroline asked if we can provide two devices for students. Justin and John said if there is more distance learning there may be some savings from that, which could free up more funds. Richard asked why there is no official contingency money in the budget. John said a contingency is built into enrollment figures.

Action:

Sarah moved to approve the budget. Caroline seconded. Richard proposed amending budget to reduce legal fees and increase translation fees. Caroline and Craig asked that the budget be amended to add money for more devices for distance learning. Craig said he can make the changes so the amended budget can be considered. Vote was tabled.

3. Strategic planning

Justin explained PMF and STAR. PMF is important to maintaining our charter but not the be-all-and-end-all of what we want to be as a school.

Atalie explained draft school goals created by the governance committee. Diversity, equity and inclusion do not have their own bucket of goals but instead are included in all our goals. Craig suggested we have some goals for enterprise activities. Caroline asked how we can reinforce behaviors we do want rather than focus on discipline of those that we don't want. Kiva asked what happens to money earned from enterprise activities. Justin agreed we should have a plan.

Atalie asked participants to brainstorm some measures to attach to the draft goals. Participants brainstormed and Atalie asked board members to continue adding ideas over the following week.

4. Committee updates

a. Ad-hoc school opening task force

Caroline said the task force has met to think through various opening scenarios given COVID. Task force will have more details to share.

b. Governance committee

Atali said the committee is seeking two parent board members. Justin has already drafted an invitation letter. Charis's board term ends in July and we are seeking replacements.

c. Academic Achievement Committee

Discussion tabled.

d. Ad-hoc facilities committee

Committee has met and is working with LISC but needs to meet again. Hoping to make 1800 Perry Street work at least for a second year and possibly a third year.

e. Finance committee

Craig reported that we have 251 days of cash on hand right now. Projecting to end fiscal year with \$322,000.

Next steps

Sarah raised the possibility of an August meeting. Wendy proposed an in-person working session. Sarah said she will send out an invite for Saturday Aug. 8 and a calendar for coming months.

Closing

Meeting adjourned at 12:53.

Materials