

Independence Charter School-CC

Minutes from BOT Meeting of Wednesday, May 13, 2020

Location: 1600 Lombard St., Philadelphia, PA

Time: 6:00 PM

Next meeting: Wednesday, June 10, 2020

Board Attendees:

Sharon Berney	P via Zoom		Monica Egen (staff/parent)
Camilo Dominguez	P via Zoom		Katrina Flener (parent)
Jamila Dugan	P via Zoom		Cynthia Kwan (parent)
Maureen Eagen	P via Zoom		Vicki
Marc Hensley	P via Zoom	Ex-officio	Carolyn West (parent)
Jamill Jones	P via Zoom	Tanya Ruley Mayo	P via Zoom
Allison Kelsey	P via Zoom	Tiia Reinvald	P via Zoom
Dana Martin	P via Zoom	Also Attending	
Rachel Salis Silverman	absent	Ramzy Andrawos (staff)	
Eleanor Sharpe	P via Zoom	Mike Danyo (Santilli & Thomson)	
Virgil Sheppard	P via Zoom	Kristen Long (staff)	
Jo Tiongson Perez	P via Zoom	Dave Peterson (staff)	
Gina Toppin	P via Zoom	Patricia Prendergast (staff)	
Mehreen Zaman	P via Zoom		

Who	What
Eagen	Maureen called the meeting to order at 6:03 pm.
Eagen	<p>Approval of Minutes Maureen asked for a motion to approve the April 15, 2020 minutes. Motion to Approve: Marc Hensley 2nd Mehreen Zaman Abstain: M. Eagen Action: Passed (Voice Vote)</p>
Eagen	Maureen asked if there were any public comment. No public comment
Ruley-Mayo	<p>CEO Report: Tanya reported the following;</p> <p>COVID-19</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to receive updated federal, state, and local guidance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awaiting guidance on summer programs and the start of SY 20-21 • Have distributed 436 laptops and 4 hot spots – this was using a combination of our own supply of laptops as well as the laptops we received through the PSP Grant • Continued support for vulnerable families in collaboration w/ PTA. Most requests have been around food, security and rent. We are directing families to a litany of resources. The City has

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	<p>also released notification of resources for families with rental assistance. We are sharing this information on our website, through newsletters as well through our family outreach team.</p> <p>Facilities planning for SY 20-21</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Worst case scenario – continued distance learning • Social distancing – if are able to reopen in the fall • Enhanced hygiene measures • Revised seating configurations <p>SY20-21 Student Registration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuing student registration via mailings and fillable PDFs that are being sent electronically to all of our incoming families <p>Human Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contracts for SY20-21 distribution began 4/14/20 via DocuSign • Equity Training – working with Lion’s story to re-frame training/support • iSolved – Onboarding and Time & Effort Modules • End of Year Evaluations for Non-Instructional Staff taking place <p>Grants</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEEG tech grant (\$29.4k) in response to Covid-19 – we did not receive this tech grant. We were not expecting to receive the grant as the focus was on Districts with the highest need. • ESSER Fund allocation \$582,124, authorized by the CARES Act. PDE released guidance on how to use these funds to support our response and efforts around the impact of Covid-19. Will work with the team to identify how this resource can be used and submit an application for those funds. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction began ramping up May 4th <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A revised schedule and timeline for completion is forthcoming – do not have dates yet • Construction team has worked on staging site for a full return of all of the trades, which consists of additional hygiene stations and the site manager will act as a screener of the site. Anyone coming on the property will be screened by him according to CDC guidelines. Signs have been posted on the site around the preventative measures being taken. ICS staff members will also be screened before entering the building. • Construction crew is not yet on site; however, we are still receiving deliveries of equipment, are making final selections for the building and all the pieces that can continue to move are moving so we’ll be ready to resume as soon as the crew returns. • Empty Building = Good News

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classrooms are being packed • Painting, maintenance & refinishing floors is underway • Family update was sent out last week with voting options for the cafeteria and gym • Development/Communications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Revising the development plan in light of the current situation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What we've learned through this process... We initially set-out with reinvigorating the development and communication strategy by looking at and understanding the landscape of giving at ICS from its start. During this time, we met with various constituents to get a better idea of what has worked versus what hasn't. Through this process, we have had some accomplishments. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ We have been able to expand our philanthropy presence online – making the giving content more prominent on our website showing how folks they can become engaged with ICS and all the different ways they can give ▪ Have begun building out more mini campaigns in all current communications ▪ Have started identifying building objectives, budgetary needs and compelling naming opportunities, if we want to go that route and also planning new events and activities around construction that could involve the entire community. ▪ We have learned during this process that it is time intensive. It takes a lot of man hours and if we want to expand beyond what we are doing, we will have to seriously consider adding additional resources. ▪ During the most recent committee meeting, we discussed just the moment we're in and why diversifying funding is so very important. ○ Recommendations to move forward... ○ Developing alternatives to the beam signing and time capsule activities ○ Active solicitations for the mural project are paused; but will resume once it makes sense
Long	<p>Principal's Repot Kristen reported the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8th Grade Graduation Update <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Graduation will be virtual this year.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A meeting with 8th grade families is planned for tomorrow night. ▪ We will make it as special as possible given the circumstances. ▪ Graduation will be held on Tuesday, June 9. • Hiring Continues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Have two open positions, but are in the process of making offers or checking references of the candidates for these openings ▪ There have been a lot internal changes – teacher changing the grades they will be teaching ▪ Have only had to hire five new teachers • Supporting Teachers with Distance Learning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Teachers are doing great –they’re learning curve has been amazing ▪ Very proud of the work we’re doing with our students • Planning for Next Year/End of Year Responsibilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Doing all of the normal planning plus contingency planning in regard to the pandemic/school closure ▪ Doing teacher evaluations virtually <p>Mehreen Zaman and Marc Hensley asked if there has there been hurdles/issues with distance learning for the staff - has it been mostly tech related or are there other issues/concerns from the staff. Kristen responded from her perspective it is mostly tech related, but there are many hurdles. It is hard for people working from home especially if you have small children at home. Kristen continued that there are many obstacles teachers dealing with that aren’t tech related, but they are dealing with them as they arise and teachers have really risen to the occasion.</p> <p>Sharon Berney asked what the plans are for students in the fall who may not have done well with distance learning. Sharon continued to say that she has a sister who teaches in New York who said that lot of the curriculum in New York is being pushed to the fall. Kristen stated that every school in the country is in the same boat. Kristen continued to say that she envisions a lot of student assessments will take place. We have several Intervention Teachers in the budget for next year and we are talking constantly about how we are going to adjust the scope and sequence. We’re interested to see if the State comes up with any type of testing revisions. At this point, the State has not provided any guidance, but we know we will have to reteach content that was taught during the last trimester. Marc Hensley then asked if there will be more focus to have differentiated learning in the classrooms. Kristen responded that we have always have had differentiated learning in the classroom and it is likely it will be more intense when we return. Virgil Sheppard asked if anything is being explored on social and emotional learning. Kristen responded nothing specifically, but we have set aside planning funds as we do every summer which will help with the assessments that will be given the adjustments to</p>

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	<p>scope and sequences and the social and emotional piece is all going to be a major push and a major focus for next year. Kristen added that the social and emotional piece is so integrated in what we already do anyway, but this will be a major focus when we return. Tanya added we have had preliminary conversations about what it will look like when reenter the school year and what types of supports we will have to put in place for both students and staff when we cross that threshold. There is a mental health component connected around this in terms of people feeling safe being in the building. Right now we are focusing on getting through we are presently knowing that there is a lot of planning that is and will be taking place for reentry in to the next school year. Maureen Eagen asked how many weeks of teaching are left. Kristen responded that there are 3.5 weeks remaining. Tanya added that there also planning going on for summer virtual program. Tanya continued to say that everyone has shifted to working from home and there has been no let-up. The work has intensified and it is all scenario based and somewhat reactionary instead of being proactive, which is an uncomfortable space for this team to be in. Folks are very thoughtful and very intentional about what happens and why it happens. Tanya stated that she is in awe of the teams' ability to operate in a very ambiguous state where there is no playbook. The team has been super flexible and super responsive across the board. This is a highly non-ideal, dismal predicament to be in and she thinks the team has done an exceptional job. Jo Tiongson Perez added, that as a parent it has been an impressive and tremendous effort to watch the whole school pivot with no runway and no playbook on a moments' notice. The school has done a terrific job with both group learning, one-on-one learning, tech support, etc., etc. Jo then asked if the the District has provided any guidance on how is the District going to measure the success of the schools. Tanya responded no not at all. Kristen stated that everything is to be determined at this point. Right now, the biggest question is the high school application since there are no PSSA scores. Our counselor, Anne Hall, is actively investigating this. We know what the public knows by watching the news. We have not received any other information yet.</p>
Danyo	<p>Financial Report: Mike Reported the following</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doing fine financially - still getting paid on a monthly basis • Federal funds are still flowing in – just received our IDEA allocation • Received CARES application -will begin working on CARES budget • Revenue is \$27,000 under projected budget – not a concern at this time • Expenses are \$119,000 better than budgeted – leaving us \$92,935 better than budgeted • Will have a surplus this year, which will help relieve some of the pressure for next year • Medical rates came in line with what was projected. Given the current circumstances, we did not want switch providers. We stayed with Blue Cross and stayed within our budget

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Next year’s budget does not have the CARES Act money. This is a one-time grant as of right now unless something else is passed. We do not want to fund any expenditures that goes beyond next year. • Food service is doing well - \$5000 better than budgeted at this point • March disbursements are light this month due to the accounting systems being down. System is back up and there will be many more disbursements in April. <p>Maureen Eagen asked if we need to purchase more technology items and will the CARES Act grant cover those expenditures. Tanya responded that she and Dave Peterson are working on accessing/estimating how many of the laptops that were lent to families will come back damaged and what we will need to purchase to replenish our stock. Also thinking about the pain points of moving to a virtual learning environment. We’re getting great feedback from the teachers around different software applications in terms of what works, what doesn’t work etc. She and Dave are working on a comprehensive list of what are needs are moving forward. First and foremost it will be reconciling all of the devices we lent out, getting those back in and replenishing our stock. Mike added that some of the staff that we normally charge to Title I funds we may not be able to do so since they are not fully engaged with students. Those Title I funds will become available and we may be able to offset some of the technology expenses there. Mehreen Zaman asked where we would be pay these employees from if not from Title I. Mike responded that they would be charged to the General Fund. The State mandated that we had to continue to pay employees during the shutdown since we are still receiving our subsidy. Our budget is flexible and this will not cause a problem.</p> <p>Resolution March Disbursements Be it resolved that the Independence Charter School Board of Trustees hereby approves disbursements from the month of March 2020 in the amount of \$223,319.15. Motion to Approve: Mehreen Zaman 2nd: Jamila Dugan Action: Passed unanimously (voice vote)</p>
	<p>Committee Reports: Staff Report Tiia Reinvald reported the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers and staff very appreciative for the Staff Appreciation Gift • A request for additional sick days for any staff member who is diagnosed/exposed with/to COVID-19. Staff are proposing an additional 14 sick days to self-quarantine if exposed and additional sick days for those who are sickened by the disease. <p>Tiia read an email from a staff member who is requesting as much information as possible from administration as we move forward so that teachers can plan effectively for 2020-2021 in the event distance learning continues in the fall.</p>

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	<p>Maureen Eagen asked if a policy is being developed regarding COVID-19. Tanya responded that this is something that will need to be researched, discussed and developed. Currently, waiting for guidance from the PDE and the District. Ordering and planning for next year has started and Kristen has sent a survey to teachers for summer planning and book ordering. Many more hours will be spent over the summer planning for the 20-21 school year. Mike added Santilli & Thomson will share with administration anything that other charter schools doing. Everyone is in the same boat and are waiting for guidance from the PDE and District. Marc Hensley asked if any new policy that the HR Committee crafts around COVID-19 will come before the board. Mehreen Zaman responded yes and she has reached out to Counsel for guidance. Eleanor Sharpe added that at the Federal level, part of the CARES Act allows for additional FMLA and sick leave.</p> <p>HR Committee Mehreen Zaman reported the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focused on Hiring • One HR matter to be discussed in executive session <p>Communications/Development Jo Tiongson Perez reported the following</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As Tanya had stated in her report, remaining academically sound with distance learning, social and emotional learning remain the priority, we want to reinforce that it is important not to lose who is on our radar. • There is a need for dedicated staff. Tanya will be sharing in a summary all of our take aways and accomplishments in the development plan. • There is still a lot of labor intensive work around building the infrastructure for donors, alumni, contact lists and then there's the execution of it and the continued cultivation of it. • Currently, the lion share of this fall under CEO role • Especially now, with COVID-19, schools are competing for the same pool of funds. With our lack of diversified funds, creates an over reliance on State Funds and grants, which is not sustainable in the long-term. • It's also a becoming a risk that we do not have a strategic plan for fund raising and development and a person to sustain it. This is not something the CEO should be shouldering. • Another consideration is to have a liaison between the PTA and Board to keep communications flowing to streamline efforts on fundraising events that the PTA is doing, what ICS is doing and to keep the Worlds' Board engaged. <p>Maureen Eagen stated that the Worlds' board has two new board members and there is now a requirement that a member of the ICS Executive Committee attends the Worlds' board meetings.</p>

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	<p>Governance Committee Maureen Eagen reported the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee held a conference call Had a call – committee • Had someone interested in joining the board, but he had a death in his family and we have to reconnect with him • If you have anyone, please pass them along and they would be voted on in June. • Need to follow up with Jamill and Dana on the parent rep. Will have Natalie Nassib will email information out to the parents. Jamill will still on as the parent rep if the PTA cannot get anyone. <p>Katrina Flener added that there is a community meeting for parents tomorrow at 1:00 pm. Tanya and Kristen will give an update to the parents and can remind parents to vote for a parent rep.</p> <p>ICS West Mehreen Zaman reported the following</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appreciative of ICS CC helping them out • They're in full of swing of hiring • They're in the same boat and just waiting to see what happens <p>Sharon Berney asked if Tanya and Kristen anticipate any surprises from teachers who may not come back in the fall. Kristen does not anticipate any surprises more than previous years, but you never know.</p>
Eagen	<p>Resolutions:</p> <p>Vendor Contracts Be it resolved that the Independence Charter School Board of Trustees hereby agree to contract with Spectrum Cleaning Services, Inc. for janitorial services including but not limited to daily housekeeping, infection control, and disinfecting systems effective July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2023 in the amount of \$139,900 per year for three years for a total amount not to exceed \$419,700.</p> <p>Allison Kelsey asked if this is a new or existing vendor. Tanya explained this is an existing vendor, but we put out an RFP and they came in the lowest. Camilo Dominguez asked if this more than previous years. Ramzy Andrawos replied yes, but this contract now includes cleaning of the new space plus infection control and disinfecting systems.</p> <p>Motion to Approve: Virgil Sheppard 2nd: Camilo Dominguez Action: Passed unanimously (voice vote)</p>

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	<p>Before passing the Wellness Policy, Maureen asked if there were any questions.</p> <p>Marc Hensley asked about the addition of ala carte snacks items sold in the cafeteria shall comply with the Federal smart snacks in school nutrition standards – does that mean no more ice cream sandwiches? Tanya replied it will depend on what the ice cream sandwiches contain. It will come down to the nutritional factors. Sharon Berney asked about the Committee. Tanya responded that the committee is made up of Odamis, Neyza, students and staff. Sharon Berney wants to be mindful of the food being offered in relation to student allergies.</p> <p>Maureen added that we have to be mindful of government restraints that we have to follow.</p> <p>Wellness Policy Be it resolved that the Independence Charter School Board of Trustees hereby approve the school’s Wellness Policy as presented.</p> <p>Motion to Approve: Marc Hensley 2nd: Dana Martin Action: Passed unanimously (voice vote)</p> <p>Motion to Enter Executive Session for HR Matter: Allison Kelsey 2nd: Mehreen Zaman Action Passed unanimously (voice vote) Entered Executive Session at 7:08 pm</p> <p>Motion to Exit Executive Session: Marc Hensley 2nd: Dana Martin Action Passed unanimously (voice vote) Exited Executive Session at 7:13 pm</p> <p>Approval of Principal Contract Be it resolved that the Independence Charter School Board of Trustees hereby approve the contract for the Principal for the term of July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2023.</p> <p>Motion to Approve: Virgil Sheppard 2nd: Mehreen Zaman Action: Passed unanimously (voice vote)</p>
Eagen	<p>Adjournment Motion to Adjourn: Eleanor Sharpe 2nd: Sharon Berney Action: Passed unanimously (voice vote) Maureen adjourned the meeting at pm7:14 pm</p>

Respectfully submitted by: Patricia Prendergast