

**BENJAMIN BANNEKER CHARTER PUBLIC SCHOOL**  
**Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes**  
January 26, 2017

**Meeting called to order at 6:04p.m.**

**Attendees:** Darnell Thigpen Williams, Sherley Bretous, (Executive Director, ex-officio), James Becker, Bruce Ward, Ivy Washington, Lin Tucker, Deborah Del Dotto, Charline Alexandre-Joseph, Dehlia Umunna, Jenepher Gooding, and Shane Buker.

**Visitors:** Jared Perrine, technology director and Meredith Daley, 1<sup>st</sup> grade teacher.

**Absent:** Lenora Jennings.

**Public Comment:**

There were no public comments.

*Deborah Del Dotto motioned to approve the December minutes, Jimmy Becker seconded the motion, all approved.*

**Board Business:**

- **Financials**

The school got the first announcement for the reimbursement rate for Cambridge, and it is substantially higher than last year. Last year it went down slightly but the rate changes every quarter so you really don't have the actual rate until the end of the year. Last year it was anomaly having the rate go down, every other year it has gone up. So now we are showing a substantial surplus but we have to keep an eye on this because there are rules about how much of a surplus you can have.

- **Capital Improvements**

Now we can make plans to spend some of the surplus. One of the things we are focused on is safety. Ensuring that the buildings wiring is up to code and safe. The windows in the school building need to be changed. There are some plumbing issues in both buildings that need to be fixed. The other two things we would like to address are technology and marketing.

- **Staff Bonus**

Whenever we consider staff bonuses we look at three criteria, student achievement, Cambridge enrollment, and the budget. In student achievement we are strong, solid, and moving in the right direction. Currently we have 146 Cambridge students in house and students projected for next year is 188. We didn't expect this surplus and we have been fiscally responsible. Ms. Bretous is proposing that each staff member get a \$2,000 bonus this year. When the compensation study was completed it was determined that our staff is not overpaid. They looked at some national data and in their external study the finding was that bonuses have an impact, and have a motivating factor. The Board has decided to table this discussion until February's meeting.

## **Executive Director's Report:**

- **School Update**

Banneker has been selected as a National Title One Distinguished School for 2016, one of only two schools in Massachusetts. DESE submits fifty schools and out of those fifty schools the Banneker met the criteria.

The award was given for closing the achievement gap.

MCAS afterschool has started and we have 110 students. This year we are using a program called "I Ready", and it has a program that is tailored for each individual student.

The school connected with Apple cinemas in the Fresh Pond Mall and they did a special viewing for our fifth and sixth graders and they went to see the movie Hidden Figures.

Fifth grade is going to the Providence Performing Center in Rhode Island in March to see the Lion King live. The students performed the Lion King here at the school last year so now they are going to see it and taking their fourth grade teachers, since they did all the work for their play.

- **Marketing Plan**

The billboards are up around the city of Cambridge and people are talking about them.

The school wants to update our voice systems to be more multilingual. Families will have the option to choose to get the voice messages in different languages.

The school application has been updated and we are converting the application into three different languages. (Haitian Creole, Spanish, and English).

- **Enrollment**

Next year our current projected enrollment is 187 Cambridge, with a total enrollment of 387 before attrition. The lottery is in March and the majority of Cambridge applications usually come in over the summer.

- **Technology Presentation**

A lot of changes have gone on at the State level. In instructional technology we hadn't seen a major update in the standards since 2003. New standards came out in June of 2016.

The push is to implement active use computing, the new digital learning, and computer science standards.

Most schools at the beginning replace things they are use to doing like kill and drill, worksheets and passive watching videos, looking at pictures, this is passive use computing.

There are areas from the National Education Plan that Jared has been doing professional development on this year. They are coding, design, video production, simulation, and reaching out for collaboration. The industry is looking for people with these skills.

The community service block has the sixth graders teaching the first grade about robotics. First graders are using coding through the apps such as Scratch Jr., and others are working with a program called Kibo, that was developed at Tufts University. Second grade is using an application called Sphero that is programmable from the I Pad's. Fifth grade is studying the Mayans and the Incas and are building temples with the 3D printer in Mr. Perrine's office. Third grade students choose to give up lunch and recess two days a week to work in the Innovation Lab with Mr. Perrine.

Our vision is to turn the technology lab into more of a studio. Next year Ms. Hicks will go into the classrooms to teach technology.

*Dehlia Umunna motioned to adjourn the meeting, Darnell Thigpen Williams seconded the motion, all approved.*

Meeting adjourned at 7:46 pm.