

BENJAMIN BANNEKER CHARTER PUBLIC SCHOOL
Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes
March 26, 2015

Meeting called to order at 6:05p.m.

Attendees: Darnell Thigpen Williams, James Becker, Sherley Bretous Carre' (Executive Director, ex-officio), Bruce Ward, Atinuke Diver, Ivy Washington, Dehlia Umunna, and Lin Tucker.

Visitors: Barbara Brother, afterschool director.

Absent: Anita Burke-Johnson, Lenora Jennings, Jean French, and Deborah Del Dotto.

Public Comment:

There were no public comments.

Lin Tucker motioned to approve the February minutes, Jimmy Becker seconded the motion, all approved.

Board Business:

- **Financials**

There aren't many changes from last month. The forecast shows a surplus of \$369,853 but by the next meeting Ms. Bretous will have added in more expenditures.

The state has changed on how they look at charter schools and one of the things they are expecting to see is a surplus budgeted every year. Last year they implemented a dashboard that rates your school. One of the many measurements they look at is to see if the school has a surplus set aside for big capital projects or things you might need in the future. They want to see that the school is financially secure.

- **Budget 2015-2016**

The leadership team shares their priorities and new ideas with the executive director and then the business manager drafts their individual budgets. They are told to ask for everything they want but they realize they might not get it. The scale increase usually is about 4%, if you are off scale the average is about 2%. The Cambridge enrollment is an indicator of what we budget, so we look at tuition rates and enrollment together. The staffing plan also determines how we budget. The school might have to add another third grade, and that would mean additional staffing.

At the next Board meeting there will be draft budgets presented for discussion only. The Board will then have a month to think on the best budget. Currently we have 150 Cambridge students enrolled for next year so if we budget for 135 Cambridge students it should account for any attrition. If we can agree on the number for Cambridge enrollment for next year then we can focus on the variance in the salaries.

The Board would like to look at the Cambridge attrition numbers for the past few years between April and September.

- **Learning Walking Tour**

On March 16th some of the Board members attended a learning walk in the school. They went into a lot of classrooms, and it was exciting to see the students at work. Teaching was high level with serious concepts. Students were engaged in the classrooms, but the boys in the upper grades seemed to be more engaged in math than the girls. The Board thought there was a lot of use of tools, strategies, and technology in the classrooms. The students seemed comfortable and safe in their surroundings, and that's where learning begins. Fourth graders were working on their laptops giving responses to a story, and the Board was impressed in the level of engagement. The students are learning a new problem solving method. They figure out what the answer is and whether or not everyone agrees. They have to dialog and they might have the wrong answer, but the right logic. Sometimes you give the right answer for the wrong reasons. In PARCC testing you can get the right answer and not get full credit because you haven't explained the answer properly, and you can get partial credit for the wrong answer, but the right explanation.

Executive Director's Report:

School Update

Some of the things we will be doing with the extra surplus is updating some library books, and buying some new social study books. Also, update the classroom with new cameras, and with the older cameras we will let the students take them on field trips. We will give them to two kids on every field trip so they will have two photographers and one reporter to document the field trip. At the end of the year they can have a little skit of all the places they visited.

The Board has a self-evaluation coming up and Ms. Bretous will send it out in a "Survey Monkey".

- **Afterschool Presentation/Barbara Brothers**

Parents are very comfortable with afterschool staff, and the staff is the core of the afterschool program. The staff is always very attentive and focused on our students. Three of our volunteers were sixth grade students here last year, and every other Wednesday they come in and volunteer at the school. Banneker is doing something special to make our students want to come back to volunteer, and the volunteer students take their responsibilities very seriously.

Ms. Brothers looked everywhere to find an example of a meteorite to show the afterschool class. NASA said they could send a small dust particle encased in plastic in about six weeks. The Museum of Science and The Children's Museum didn't have an example. Dr. Bruce Ward saved the day and brought in a large meteorite that the students were allowed to touch and feel, and the staff was just as excited as the kids to see it.

The BEE program had their annual chess festivals with BB&N high school students. The students had their life size chessboard out, and they had a blast. Some other activities afterschool students engage in are nutrition class, dance class, drama club, film class, astronomer's club, and computer coding.

Dehlia Umunna motioned to adjourn the meeting, Bruce Ward seconded the motion, all approved.

Meeting adjourned at 7:45pm.