

BENJAMIN BANNEKER CHARTER PUBLIC SCHOOL

**Held virtually on Google Meets
Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes
October 22, 2020**

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

Sherley Bretous (Executive Director, ex-officio), Deborah Del Dotto, Shane Buker, Lin Tucker, Jenefer Gooding, Janel Granum, and Josiane Julmeus.

Visitors: Molander Etienne (3-6 Literacy Coach), Heather Martin (K-2 Literacy Coach), Tyrone Mowatt (Marketing Director), Barbara Brothers (After school Director) Georgia Balan (6th grade Teacher).

Absent: Tirsit Habetariam

Public Comment: N/A

Josiane Julmeus motioned to wait until next month to approve the September minutes with some added verbiage, Lin Tucker seconded the motion, all approved.

Board Business:

● **Financials**

There is a lot of variance because of the Coronavirus. One thing to highlight is the cost of the audit which is a one-time cost. Nothing much has changed in the financials from last month.

The enrollment is 195 Cambridge students with a total of 344 students. The school has closed enrollment.

● **Approve Audit**

Policy and procedures will be reviewed every year by Board members, but they are in line with state guidelines that (DESE) recommends. Every couple of years the policies and procedures should be reviewed and updated. The dual signature policy wasn't updated as it should have been. The check amount went from \$5,000 to \$7,500 and that requires two signatures.

From now on the Finance Committee will review checks over \$7,500 at their monthly meeting and credit card transactions.

Shane Buker motioned to approve the audit, Lin Tucker seconded the motion, all approved.

● **Set Board Goals 20-21**

Janel Granum motioned to approve the Board goals that were discussed here tonight, Shane Buker seconded the motion, all approved.

Executive Director's Report:

● **School Update**

The school is making exceptions for students in great need at this time. The school did allow about two dozen students to change from remote to hybrid that the teachers thought to be struggling.

Right now, with Covid numbers rising we think it is best to maintain the current number in hybrid and remote students, and not add any more students at this time. The school will revisit this decision in January. The school needs to keep social distancing based on class size, and spacing.

Business manager candidates are still being reviewed and interviewed. Within the next couple weeks, we will be moving into round two of candidates and we will be inviting Board members to join in the process.

- **Charter School renewal (Tyrone Mowatt presentation)**

This will be the fifth Charter Renewal since the school opened. Massachusetts Board of Education grants the Charter. The Department of Education (DESE) monitors the Charter, The Board of Trustees is responsible for school oversight, and The Executive Director is responsible for school management. Faculty and staff operate the school. The primary role of the Trustees is to provide long term strategic direction. The Trustees hire and evaluate the Executive Director, and if need be, they can remove the Executive Director. The Trustees are responsible for academic outcomes, fiscal policies, and adherence to the law.

DESE monitors the school through looking at our MCAS scores and proficiency scores. They compare us to our primary district which is Cambridge, other ascending districts, and to the Massachusetts average. Banneker out performs Cambridge, Boston, and the State average by almost 20 points.

The State has a checklist and some of the things they will look at is if the Board knows their legal responsibilities and obligations. Also, i the Board complies with its bylaws and exercise their fiduciary duties, and does the Board follow the Open Meeting Law.

One thing that was added to the regulations regarding charter schools is that Board members must be trained. DESE wants to know that new Board members are brought up to speed on what are the bylaws of the school. What is the process for self-evaluation of the Board, and what is the process for recruiting, and selecting Board members with needed skills and expertise.

When the Board has a focus group it will not be the entire Board, only selected Board members. The reason for this is if DESE had a meeting with the full Board of Trustees they would have a quorum, and that would mean the meeting would have to be posted, and minutes would have to be taken. So, they ask that Board members that attend the focus group not be a quorum so they don't have to follow the Open Meeting Law.

The renewal is every five years, and The Massachusetts Board of Education must renew your charter.

The Renewal Presentation will be emailed to Board members.

The Board has decided to hire a consultant regarding project outcomes. There are some things the Board has to address like the succession plan, and teacher education reimbursements. This will be considered a Board training, and the consultant was recommended by the Mass Charter School Association.

Janel Granum motioned to adjourn the meeting, and go into the Executive Session to discuss strategy sessions in preparation for non-union personnel, or contract negotiations, Josiane Julmeus seconded the motion, all approved.

Meeting adjourned at 8:06pm.