

**FOLK ARTS-CULTURAL TREASURES CHARTER SCHOOL
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING**

1023 Callowhill Street, Philadelphia, PA 19123

Wednesday, October 21, 2020, 6:30 p.m.

Via Zoom Meeting (Zoom Invitation posted on website)

MINUTES

Present: Pooja Agarwal, Heather Davis-Jones, Xu Lin, Tim Matheney, Selina Morales, Neeta Patel, Alan Phan, Kenzo Sung

Not Present: Allaire Wohlgemuth

Staff Present: David Brown, Pheng Lim, Ellen Somekawa

I. Call to Order: Selina Morales

II. Principal's Report Pheng Lim

- Many Points of View Day: Had our first whole school remote assembly. Many Points of View Day is for students to learn there are many points of view, sharpen skills to see things from other's point of view, build empathy, recognize when some voices are marginalized and when someone else's perspective is hurtful to others, what to do
 - Our anti-bias PD focused on reviewing MPOV lessons through an anti-bias lens. We provided guiding questions for teachers to use in reviewing their lesson plans and provided time to work to make improvements to lessons.
- Mondays, Grades 5-8: folk arts classes give students a chance to learn from six different artists. Vietnamese zither, Jump, Step, Kung Fu, Found Sound Rhythms, Han Chinese Dance, Traditions of India, Indonesian Dance, Yoga and Relaxation, Hip Hop, West African Dance, Circus Arts
- Mini-Grant from Jounce: getting support with how to make virtual lesson plans virtually and use all adults in supporting student learning
- Pheng was featured in an article in the Philadelphia Inquirer about the challenges of remote teaching and learning
- Have gathered baseline data for math and reading in order to identify student who are struggling academically and need small group support
- Started using Talking Points to communicate with parents, a way to communicate with parents with quick translation through text messaging
- Next week is the second round of distribution of supplies and packets (including physical books) collecting packets which can be used for assessment
- Why we're having high rates of attendance and participation is the quality of relationships built with students and the level of trust we've built with students and parents

Discussion:

- Does the school plan more school wide assemblies? Was the MPOV Assembly effective? We had to divide by strand because of the limits of our Zoom sizes. Ability to see everyone together is a positive. If using a webinar format to get the whole school in one assembly, we lose the

ability to see all of the faces. We are working to learn how to capture the heart of the school in the remote setting.

Executive Director's Report

Ellen Somekawa

III. Approval of the Minutes

1. BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Trustees of the Folk Arts-Cultural Treasures Charter School approves the Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes of September 16, 2020.

2. BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Trustees of the Folk Arts-Cultural Treasures Charter School approves the Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes of September 28, 2020.

Moved Resolutions 1 and 2: Heather Davis-Jones

Seconded: Alan Phan

Voted Yes: Pooja Agarwal, Heather Davis-Jones, Xu Lin, Tim Matheney, Selina Morales, Neeta Patel, Alan Phan, Kenzo Sung

IV. Revision of the 2020-21 Budget

Presentation

David Brown

At the time of the passage of the budget last spring, we did not yet know the per pupil allocation or the impact of the Covid pandemic on the school's finances. In the revised budget, income was adjusted for things that had to be cancelled such as the 5K, and expenses for cancelled events like field trips were reduced. The bottom line is not very different from the original budget. We are still expecting to run a surplus. For the five year projection, we are budgeting for a flat per pupil rate because we don't know the impact of the pandemic and the economic downturn on school funding.

Discussion:

- A school in New Jersey reported that they were able to use Medicaid reimbursements to pay for school meals. Is that possible for us?
- The food program is currently serving fewer than half of the students formerly participating.
- Will Covid related grant funds cover all of our Covid related expenses or a majority of it?
 - Some of the expenses not covered will be online subscriptions. Many of the Covid related expenses will be covered by the grant funding.
 - Two instructional supports were covered by the grant. In addition to facilities changes and Covid related supplies, we were able to support two teaching staff to provide additional supports to students who are struggling.
 - The fiscal cliff is still looming. The PA Coalition of Public Charter Schools received a \$30 million fund for charter expansions. Is there any thought of trying to seek funding from this source?
 - Are we fully enrolled now? The Stars program is smaller.

3. BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Trustees of the Folk Arts-Cultural Treasures Charter School approves the revision to the 2020-21 Budget.

Moved: Neeta Patel

Seconded: Heather Davis-Jones

Voted Yes: Pooja Agarwal, Heather Davis-Jones, Xu Lin, Tim Matheney, Selina Morales, Neeta Patel, Alan Phan, Kenzo Sung

V. Finance Report

Finance Committee Report

Neeta Patel

Thanks to the Finance Director for putting forward the revised budget which helps us to better plan our way forward. FACTS is in good shape, with cash on hand. Many of the outstanding receivables have come in. The budget seems solid for this year. However, there are many unknowns related to longer term projections.

4. BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Trustees of the Folk Arts-Cultural Treasures Charter School approves the September 30, 2020 Financial Statements

Moved: Pooja Agarwal

Seconded: Heather Davis-Jones

Voted Yes: Pooja Agarwal, Heather Davis-Jones, Xu Lin, Tim Matheney, Selina Morales, Neeta Patel, Alan Phan, Kenzo Sung

Constitution of the Audit Committee

Neeta Patel

We are in the middle of the audit process. The audit report is in process of being drafted. The audit needs to be approved at the November meeting.

Tim and Neeta will serve on the audit committee.

VI. Policy Committee

Report of the Committee meeting

Pooja Agarwal

The Policy Committee met to discuss reopening criteria, parameters and timelines. The discussion is captured in the report.

Discussion and Questions:

WHAT DO PARENT SURVEY DATA REVEAL?

- Parent comments on the survey were helpful but didn't point to a direction about reopening
- There is a big difference in the response to staying fully remote versus sending students to school between Chinese language responses and English-speaking responses.
 - One factor may be the large number of intergenerational households and also family members' roles in caretaking
 - Families don't want to cut off connections to older generations. Grandparent visits no longer able to happen. Mental health concerns for the elder generation
 - Many Chinese people think that others don't take science seriously enough

- Part of the response may be to the choice being only returning one day a week, so parents have to decide whether to break their bubble or their return for one day a week.

WHAT ELSE ARE WE LEARNING ABOUT COVID SPREAD?

- Do we have data about charter schools in Philadelphia that have in person instruction?
- Information seems to be coming out that schools have not been major causes of spreading Covid
- Looking at the metrics, we see them shifting and it's hard to see how they will stabilize
- Contrasting the PDE criteria and the summer metrics we used.

SENSE OF URGENCY TO GETTING STUDENTS BACK INTO THE BUILDING

- Deeply concerned about K-2 students. Don't feel good about education through Zoom for the little ones. It is incumbent on us, when it is safe for students and adults to get the little ones in school. There is higher level of success for accessing learning remotely for older students.
- There will not be a clear end to the pandemic. It will be a slower improvement. We need to focus on what's best for students. We should start the runway as soon as we can
- Concern that Covid set back could impact students for years to come.

WHAT DO WE NEED TO KNOW IN ORDER TO MAKE THE DECISION TO RETURN TO SCHOOL?

- Policy Committee: we need to be considering whether our families would come back, how our staff feel, and whether our school building is ready
- Any decision to open quickly should be impacted by how online learning is going.
- Want to look at more data before greenlighting something. At the same time there is a feeling of urgency
- The more data the better: how online schooling is going. How it's going for staff. If we could have another month to look at the data.
- Assessment of student learning is hard right now. How to assess whether K-2 students are learning as they should.
 - Specifically interested in how ELD and SPED students are doing
 - There is a huge number of ELD students in K
- Next week we will receive packets back from students so we can better assess how remote learning is going.
- Need more info on how online learning is going. We need to know more about how students are engaging online in order to decide on bringing students back. Can't decide right now.

FACTS PROPOSED MODEL OF HYBRID LEARNING

- The design we have is that the one day a week focuses on supporting students social and emotional well-being, providing supports for remote learning, helping to set them up for success in online learning.
- The content teaching is housed on Mondays, Tuesdays and Fridays; students will not miss out on the academic content whether they choose in person or 100% remote. What students crave most is the socialization and mental health, we are addressing that need in our hybrid model. For

parents who are opting out, perhaps there are ways to support socializing virtually.

- It's positive that parents can make choices to go fully remote.
- We need to find ways to keep the school feeling like a community, with many students staying fully remote and others opting to go in to school.
- Even returning, we need to temper our expectations of what in-person school looks like in the pandemic; school will not feel like it did before. (distancing, masks, etc.)
- At what point does it not make sense to convene a class? Is there a threshold below which it doesn't make sense to convene certain classes/grades?
- Not all parents need to be on board with a plan to bring students back to the building since they can opt for 100% remote.

POSSIBLE SCENARIOS FOR REOPENING

- We should seek to open in January. We should continue to monitor the Covid conditions and safety conditions.
 - Notice to parents: we intend to open in January; will you send your student in person?
 - At November meeting, we could reevaluate the status of the pandemic. We don't use today's statistics to move forward with January opening.
- Restarting in January could be the worst time. If families are traveling, then they may be infected during travel and relaxed vigilance during the holidays. Two weeks after the holidays is when cases may be showing up.
 - If families are traveling, we want them to quarantine for fourteen days.
 - We don't want families to extend their travel since they don't have to return by January 4 with remote learning.
- Admin estimates that it will take about two months between the time we decide on a reopening date and executing on that reopening (we're calling this the "on ramp"). Even if we start right now, we believe that mid to late January is the earliest we would be ready to reopen the building due to holiday breaks.
 - On Ramp includes: school's communication to parents and staff of our intentions; response/commitment forms from staff and parents; based on staff and parent commitment forms we need to regroup students into new cohorts depending on who is opting to stay 100% remote; develop staffing plan; creating schedules for in school and remote learning; training, planning logistics, practicing new Covid safety measures; teacher prep time for new in school model; teacher room set up time
- We want to communicate as soon as possible with parents, but realize that they will be making plans based on these communications which may be shifting. If we tell parents we're aiming for a January start, then parents and staff are setting up their lives around this idea. If we are thinking it's a 90% chance it's one thing, but if we think it's closer to 50/50 then it could be creating a burden on parents and staff families to have them prepare for something that probably won't happen.
- We should take into consideration family preferences. That should also be a factor.

- When we do bring students back, we probably need to do K-8. We may want to prioritize K-2, but for families to make it work, we may need to bring back K-8

DECISIONS:

- We will not decide about a schedule for reopening until the November meeting. We will not call a Special Meeting to make a call.
- There will be an adhoc board/admin committee for planning reopening. The committee will synthesize more info, frame up questions
 - If the data in November points to it, try to open in late January.
 - Pull five teachers together to get some qualitative data
- There will be a two-part process: first a go ahead with a planned date for reopening, and then a green light (last decision to move forward)
- Communicate that we will be in full virtual until the end of 2020. The Board will be making further decisions about returning to the building at its November meeting (between now and December) but they will not take effect until 2021.

VII. Committee Reports

- Development Committee Alan Phan
 - Board Pledge Forms

Please complete and return. Think of your Board Pledge as whatever amount is significant to you. There is not a set amount. You may donate yourself but you may also raise funds from others. Either mail a check or pay online; our mail is getting to us now.

Virtual fundraiser. Virtual 5K as a possibility.

- Nominations Committee Selina/Heather

Nominations Committee has identified a prospective new board member. His background and CV will be shared with the Board. He is invited to the November meeting.

X. Other Action Items

5. BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Trustees of the Folk Arts-Cultural Treasures Charter School approves contracting with Gen3 for the provision of renovation work in an amount not to exceed \$15,000. [Because of the urgency of reconfiguring the Tech Lab into a Nurse's office and Isolation Room as a condition of opening the school, we did not seek three bids. This project falls below the state's threshold pertaining to minimum bids for construction bidding. Gen3 has been a trusted contractor who managed the reconfiguration of our first and second floor]

6. BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Trustees of the Folk Arts-Cultural Treasures Charter School approves contracting with Innovageous for conducting an audit of FACTS's technology platforms in an amount not to exceed \$5,000.

7. BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Trustees of the Folk Arts-Cultural Treasures Charter School approves contracting with Dunya Performing Arts

Company for the provision of folk arts education programs in an amount not to exceed \$4,060.

8. BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Trustees of the Folk Arts-Cultural Treasures Charter School approves contracting with AATMA Performing Arts for the provision of folk arts education programs in an amount not to exceed \$4,060.

9. BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Trustees of the Folk Arts-Cultural Treasures Charter School approves contracting with the New York Chinese Cultural Center, for the provision of folk arts education programs in an amount not to exceed \$4,060.

10. BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Trustees of the Folk Arts-Cultural Treasures Charter School approves contracting with the International Capoeira Angola Foundation, for the provision of folk arts education programs in an amount not to exceed \$4,060.

11. BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Trustees of the Folk Arts-Cultural Treasures Charter School approves contracting with Henry Jun Wah Lee/Evosia Wellness for the provision of folk arts education programs in an amount not to exceed \$11,000. [to be fully funded through the NOVO SEL grant]

Moved: Heather Davis-Jones

Seconded: Tim Matheney

Voted Yes: Pooja Agarwal, Heather Davis-Jones, Xu Lin, Tim Matheney, Selina Morales, Neeta Patel, Alan Phan, Kenzo Sung

12. BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Trustees of the Folk Arts-Cultural Treasures Charter School approves contracting with Asian Americans United for the provision of remote folk arts education instruction in an amount not to exceed \$31,000 (~\$29,000 in artists fees and \$1500 in Administrative Fees). [AAU Board Members should identify their conflict of interest and recuse themselves from the discussion and vote on this resolution]

- Neeta Patel, Kenzo Sung, Xu Lin identified a conflict of interest as they are members of the AAU board; they recused themselves from the discussion and the vote.

Moved: Pooja Agarwal

Seconded: Alan Phan

Voted Yes: Pooja Agarwal, Heather Davis-Jones, Tim Matheney, Selina Morales, Alan Phan

Recused: Xu Lin, Neeta Patel, Kenzo Sung

XI. Adjournment

Moved: Heather Davis-Jones

Seconded: Alan Phan

Voted Yes: Pooja Agarwal, Heather Davis-Jones, Xu Lin, Tim Matheney, Selina Morales, Neeta Patel, Alan Phan, Kenzo Sung