

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

1023 Callowhill Street, Philadelphia, PA 19123  
Wednesday, December 16, 2020, 6:30 p.m.  
Via Zoom Meeting (Zoom Invitation posted on website)

**MINUTES**

**Present:** Pooja Agarwal, Heather Davis-Jones, Selina Morales, Neeta Patel, Alan Phan, Thierry Saintine, Kenzo Sung, Xu Lin, Allaire Wohlgemuth

**Board Members Absent:** Tim Matheney

**Staff Present:** David Brown, Pheng Lim, Ellen Somekawa

**Public Present:** Edwin Mayorga

**I. Call to Order:** Selina Morales

**II. Swearing in of Board Member, Thierry Saintine** Selina Morales

*I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will support, obey and defend the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of this Commonwealth, and that I will discharge the duties of my office with fidelity.*

**III. Executive Director's Report** Ellen Somekawa

**Principal's Report** Pheng Lim

- Chronic Absenteeism: We have had 87 students who have been absent. Chronic absenteeism is defined as missing three or more days without an excuse. Attendance team has been working with families to see what supports can help increase attendance. Seven students are on our list of chronic absences. We are hovering at around a 97% attendance rate.
- A Holocaust survivor visited sixth grade social studies classes.
- Celebration of Peace is 12/17 at 2:15. It will include the dismantling of the sand mandala this year.
- Continuing with the bookfair. It helps generate funds for the purchase of books for classroom libraries.
- Principal is attending a National Institute of School Leaders training. A lot of the practices we are doing at FACTS are being discussed as model practices such as teacher portfolios with inquiry learning.
- Innovageous is consulting on tech needs of teachers and working with teachers most in need of support.
- Parent Teacher conferences are next week. Coming out of the virtual environment, there are some positives such as remote conferences that make it easier for many parents to participate. We may continue some of these practices.
- Response to Intervention is making good progress. The virtual environment is pushing FACTS to strengthen our data culture. We are forming a data team.
- Special Education team: we are working on staff being conscious of using inclusive of language regarding special education and disabilities.
- Math team is using formative assessments more and better in the virtual context.

- Intent to Return forms are coming back. Two teachers are considering retiring, one teacher wants to reduce hours and responsibilities, one teacher is not returning.
- A letter went out to families to inform them of the choices of books for Read Alouds for grades K-3 (e.g. LGBT, anti-bullying, anti-racism, etc).

Discussion:

- Is it fair to count attendance in the same way? If a student is completing work but not present for Morning Meeting?

[Edwin Mayorga exited]

#### **IV. 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 November 18, 2020.

Moved: Neeta Patel

Seconded: Allaire Wohlgemuth

Voted Yes: Pooja Agarwal, Heather Davis-Jones, Selina Morales, Neeta Patel, Alan Phan, Thierry Saintine, Kenzo Sung, Xu Lin, Allaire Wohlgemuth

#### **V. Finance Report**

David Brown

The financial statements from November 2020 will be reviewed and approved at the January meeting. Our Finance Director had surgery and was unable to complete the statements in time for review. There are no concerns to report for the month of November.

We just transferred another \$100,000 to our reserve account which is now at \$2 million.

#### **VI. Audit Committee**

Report of the Audit Committee

Neeta Patel

The Board's role in reviewing the audit/ what to look for  
Discussion and Questions

The Audit Committee (Neeta and Tim) read the whole audit and met with the auditor. The committee's recommendation is to accept the audit. Note that the large liability for PSERS is part of general accounting standards and not a reason to be alarmed. There is no management letter which is a testament to the Finance Director's work. The unaudited financial statements that we approved in June were largely, with a few small adjustments, the same as the audit. No issues were raised in terms of financial controls. The materials circulated on the board's role in the audit were helpful. There are essentially three audits in one (school, LEA, single audit of federal funds).

Discussion:

- How is our relationship with the auditor going?

- The same firm has been doing our audit for many years, but there are different members of the team who take the lead. The auditor was helpful in answering questions and thorough in going through the notes and talking through the audit.
- FACTS has had a long relationship with Joyce Miller & Associates. We switched away from her firm one year and then came back because it was not a good experience. Most CPA firms do not have deep experience with charter school finances.
- It is good that within the firm, the team switches. The team was very proficient.
- David interviewed a second auditor and found that they had all worked with Joyce Miller and learned what they know from that experience.

**2. BE IT RESOLVED** that the Board of Trustees of the Folk Arts-Cultural Treasures Charter School accepts the Audited Financial Statements for the year ending June 30, 2020.

Moved: Heather Davis-Jones

Seconded: Neeta Patel

Voted Yes: Pooja Agarwal, Heather Davis-Jones, Selina Morales, Neeta Patel, Alan Phan, Thierry Saintine, Kenzo Sung, Xu Lin, Allaire Wohlgemuth

## **VII. Emergency Paid Sick Leave Policy**

Presentation

Ellen Somekawa

Discussion

*Proposed Emergency Paid Sick Leave Policy:*

*From January 1, 2021 until March 31, 2021 or until the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) or its equivalent is reinstated, FACTS will offer staff an Emergency Paid Sick Leave bank of 10 emergency paid sick leave days to be administered as an extension of the expired federal program. This bank of emergency paid sick leave will be available for staff who are subject to leave for the following reasons:*

- *Being subject to a federal, state, or local quarantine or isolation order related to COVID-19 and there is no remote work available;*
- *Being advised by a health care provider to self-quarantine due to concerns related to COVID-19 and there is no remote work available;*
- *Experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 and seeking a medical diagnosis;*
- *Experiencing possible symptoms of COVID-19 per the school's self-screener policy and therefore being directed to stay home;*
- *Caring for an individual who has been ordered or advised to quarantine by a government agency or health care provider; or*
- *Caring for a child whose school or place of care is closed, or whose child care provider is unavailable, due to COVID-19 precautions.*

*If FACTS directs an employee to quarantine or self-isolate at home due to an exposure or possible exposure to Covid-19 at the school, the employee will continue to be paid and will not be asked to use sick leave or personal or*

*vacation days for that period of time. Employees will be expected to work from home to the extent possible. This policy applies to part time staff as well as to full time staff. Compensation to part time staff will be based on their regular hours of work.*

*This Emergency Sick leave bank will be used before an employee's regular paid sick leave. Unused Emergency sick leave will not be rolled over to the next school year. It does not accumulate. For part time employees, Emergency Paid Sick Leave days will be prorated based on the number of hours worked during their regular schedule. Staff who have already used paid sick leave from the FFCRA would not be eligible for leave under this policy that exceeds a total 10 days of Emergency Paid Sick leave (or the part time equivalent).*

*Employees experiencing longer periods of illness have access to FACTS's Short Term Disability Insurance which can take effect after 8 days of sick leave. Employees who contract Covid-19 while at FACTS are eligible for Workers Compensation coverage*

Discussion:

- What has the usage of emergency paid sick leave been to date?
  - Seven employees have been asked to self isolate from three different exposure events.
- Do we have a plan for substitutes?
  - The sub services we have been using have not made themselves available. We have some in house subs.
  - We have been moving staff around to cover for staff who are absent.
- For a future discussion, how would the availability of a vaccine or the ability of teachers to access vaccination change our thoughts on reopening to students?
  - People are hearing different things about the availability and there are many policies and other complicated issues involved; we will have much more information on this in a month or two. More conversation can happen then.
  - Even if every teacher is vaccinated, we still need to have the conversation with parents and students.
  - Children under 16 cannot get vaccinated.
  - As vaccinations proceed, presumably community spread will be reduced. A lot of the concern has been about risk to adults.
- Right now, we are using the assumption that as long as Philadelphia is at a substantial level of transmission, we will not be bringing students back to the school.
- It's good that this is a limited term policy so that we will revisit this in March. So many things are shifting and it will be good to evaluate again in March.
- The financial liability would be limited during this trial period of the policy.

**3. BE IT RESOLVED** that the Board of Trustees of the Folk Arts-Cultural Treasures Charter School approves the Emergency Paid Sick Leave Policy.

Moved: Thierry Saintine  
Seconded: Xu Lin

Voted Yes: Pooja Agarwal, Heather Davis-Jones, Selina Morales, Neeta Patel, Alan Phan, Thierry Saintine, Kenzo Sung, Xu Lin, Allaire Wohlgemuth

[Pooja Agarwal exited the meeting]

**VIII. Pre-Development Letter of Intent**

Presentation

Ellen Somekawa

Discussion

**4. BE IT RESOLVED** that the Board of Trustees of the Folk Arts-Cultural Treasures Charter School authorizes the Executive Director to sign a Letter of Intent with Creative Development Partners to explore the feasibility of developing a new facility to accommodate FACTS's expansion.

Moved: Xu Lin

Seconded: Heather Davis-Jones

Voted Yes: Heather Davis-Jones, Selina Morales, Neeta Patel, Alan Phan, Thierry Saintine, Kenzo Sung, Xu Lin, Allaire Wohlgemuth

**IX. Committee Reports**

- Development Committee

Alan/Allaire

The Development Committee had a productive meeting. Alan is interested in creating a competition between different companies about who can raise more funds for FACTS. The committee is working on the idea of making a donation feel warmer and more concrete without having people buy physical things (such as the teacher wish list). The committee is working on the donations page on the website: for \$300 your donation will buy x. Want people to feel they are donating to something that feels more human. We need to grow the Development Committee. FACTS is asking some parents to join who may be willing to engage their networks.

**X. Other Action Items**

**5. BE IT RESOLVED** that the Board of Trustees of the Folk Arts-Cultural Treasures Charter School approves contracting with Nearpod for the provision of a subscription to an online interactive teaching resource in an amount not to exceed \$4,000.

Moved: Neeta Patel

Seconded: Heather Davis-Jones

Voted Yes: Heather Davis-Jones, Selina Morales, Neeta Patel, Alan Phan, Thierry Saintine, Kenzo Sung, Xu Lin, Allaire Wohlgemuth

**XI. Adjournment**

Moved to Adjourn: Heather Davis-Jones

Seconded: Xu Lin

Voted Yes: Heather Davis-Jones, Selina Morales, Neeta Patel, Alan Phan, Thierry Saintine, Kenzo Sung, Xu Lin, Allaire Wohlgemuth