

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

1023 Callowhill Street, Philadelphia, PA 19123

Wednesday, December 15, 2021, 6:30 p.m.

Via Zoom Meeting (Zoom Invitation posted on website)

Minutes

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

Not Present: Kenzo Sung

Staff Present: David Brown, Pheng Lim, Ellen Somekawa

Members of the Public Present: Edwin Mayorga, Linda Wai, Jill Lingenfelter

I. Call to Order: Selina Morales

II. Public Session
No comments from the public

III. Principal's Report Pheng Lim

- Prepared slide show
 - Celebration of Peace was today
 - Sharing from the Tibetan Sand Mandala. This year's mandala was the Wisdom Mandala. Today was the dismantling ceremony which was live streamed to the whole school. The dismantling is a lesson on impermanence.
 - FACTS received an anonymous donation of \$60,000. Will be used as a matching grant for outdoor and community space when we are ready to do a capital campaign.

Executive Director's Report Ellen Somekawa

- COVID Cases:
 - 7 COVID cases in November. The first time we had two cases who were close contacts of each other which could possibly indicate spread within the school
 - 1 case in December so far.
- Survey of parents on their children's vaccination status went out today. We already have 131 responses. 74% (97) reported fully vaccinated and 9% partially vaccinated, but the early returns could be skewed towards those who got their children vaccinated.
- Submitted our ARP ESSER and ARP ESSER Set Aside Grant application. They are in the pipeline, waiting for approval.

- Busy working on implementing an automated inventory system so we are prepared for an audit of our use of COVID relief funding.

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 17, 2021.

Moved: Pooja Agarwal

Seconded: Xu Lin

Voted Yes: Pooja Agarwal, Xu Lin, Selina Morales, Neeta Patel, Alan Phan, Thierry Saintine, Allaire Wohlgemuth

[Heather Davis-Jones joined the meeting]

V. **Finance Committee Report**

Finance Committee Report

Neeta Patel

Thank you to David for the clear synopsis of our financial picture. Federal funding has started flowing again and ESSER II funding appears set to start flowing. Cash flow issues related to the flow of federal funding as well as changing our bank will therefore be eased. Funds were taken from our reserve that we hope to replenish. There are multiple ESSER grants that may show up on our books at different times. This is an anomalous year with expenses and revenues being more unpredictable than usual.

Finance Director Report

David Brown

Currently not all of the expenses have been tagged to ESSER funding and therefore not all of the income can be recorded as income. This should be resolved by January.

2. BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Trustees of the Folk Arts-Cultural Treasures Charter School approves the November 30, 2021 Financial Statements

Moved: Thierry Saintine

Seconded: Allaire Wohlgemuth

Voted Yes: Pooja Agarwal, Xu Lin, Selina Morales, Neeta Patel, Alan Phan, Thierry Saintine, Allaire Wohlgemuth

Abstaining: Heather Davis-Jones

VI. **Discussion of Enrollment**

Presentation

David, Pheng, Ellen

- Reduced enrollment caused by the pandemic [Pheng presentation sharing details about students who left FACTS and reasons families gave for leaving between March 2020 to the present.]

- Financial, health and safety, and educational implications of our reduced enrollment
- School decisions related to regaining enrollment

Discussion

- Do we have data on where our 8th graders go to high school?
- Changes this year to the process of selecting high schools.
 - No longer looking at essays and letters of recommendations. Students must write “on demand” essays. Their scores determine their eligibility to be entered into a lottery for Special Admit schools. It has been stated that there is a preference for some zip codes.
 - For FACTS, we have had a whole unit on high school essays and invest a lot in writing letters of recommendation and these things will no longer help our students get into high schools of their choice.
 - There is a lot of controversy about the writing sample process
 - Stressful for families that high school selection feels very random now. It doesn't feel like there are actions to take to help students get into special admit schools.
- Is the enrollment data from March 2020 to the present? [Yes]
- Have things stabilized? [Yes, very few have left from the beginning of the year]

Action Step/Decisions/Resolutions

- Admin recommended a pause on enrolling students part way into this school year because of COVID safety and our limited ability to create distancing in classrooms; also knowing that we would be facing increased challenges and stressors such as potential staffing shortages, and adding new students mid year creates more stress and pushes our capacity.
- Board needs to make a decision for next year's lottery and numbers we should admit. Do we also want to entertain adding students in January?
- Admin to determine if there is space to admit additional students given that students will be at individual desks and the odd shapes of rooms and large pillars restrict the number of students that fit into our classrooms at 3 feet of distance.
- Selina, Neeta, Ellen to decide if a resolution is needed.

VII. Approval of the Emergency Instructional Minutes

Presentation

Ellen Somekawa

Discussion

3. BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Trustees of the Folk Arts-Cultural Treasures Charter School approves the weekly instructional schedules for submission to the Pennsylvania Department of Education with FACTS's Emergency Instructional Time Form.

Moved: Allaire Wohlgemuth

Seconded: Heather Davis-Jones

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

VIII. Approval of Teacher Retention Bonuses

Presentation

Ellen Somekawa

Discussion

4. BE IT RESOLVED that the Folk Arts-Cultural Treasures Charter School approves of paying teacher retention bonuses in an amount not to exceed \$200,000; retention bonuses will consist of \$2500 for each Certified Teacher who worked the entirety of the 2020-21 school year and \$2500 for each Certified Teacher who works the entirety of the 2021-22 school year [Bonuses for the purpose of retaining teachers in high needs schools are an approved purpose under the ARP ESSER grant and are included in FACTS's ARP ESSER budget.]

Moved: Thierry Saintine

Seconded: Alan Phan

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

IX. Executive Session

- Discussing agency business which, if conducted in public, would violate a lawful privilege or lead to the disclosure of information or confidentiality protected by law;

X. Return to Public Session

XI. Annual Charter Evaluation, 2020-2021

Presentation

Ellen Somekawa

Discussion:

- This item was delayed until the January board meeting.

XII. Committee Reports

- Development Committee Alan/Allaire
Reminder to write and send thank you notes if you haven't already. You should have received a packet of notes. Alan will check the status of notes for those who didn't receive theirs.
- Nominations Committee Heather/Selina
What are the biggest priorities for new board members?
 - Willingness to join committees
 - Interest in phasing in new members so we maintain cohesion.

XIII. Other Action Items

5. BE IT RESOLVED that the Folk Arts-Cultural Treasures Charter School approves of contracting with DG Network Solutions in an amount not to exceed \$4600 for the procurement of five staff laptops.

Moved: Xu Lin

Seconded: Neeta Patel

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

XIV. Adjournment

Moved: Thierry Saintine

Seconded: Heather Davis-Jones

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