

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

1023 Callowhill Street, Philadelphia, PA 19123

Wednesday, October 19, 2022, 6:30 p.m.

Via Zoom Meeting (Zoom Invitation posted on website)

MINUTES

Present: Pooja Agarwal, Jeff Koung, Xu Lin, Selina Morales, Neeta Patel, Alan Phan, Thierry Saintine, Allaire Wohlgemuth

Board Absent: Leana Cabral, Nancy Nguyen

Staff Present: David Brown, Pheng Lim, Ricque Porter, Ellen Somekawa

Public Present: Judy Huynh

- I. **Call to Order:** Selina Morales
- II. **Public Comment**
 - None
- III. **DeBriefing the 5K**

Appreciations Ricque Porter
Report
Follow Up Steps

Presentation by Ricque Porter

We had incredible weather and turn out for the 5K. Thanks to the Development Committee members: Parents, John Gerbec and Jen Lai; Board of Trustees and Development Committee members Alan, Allaire, Jeff, Nancy, and Leana; and Staff: Lisa Pankey, Daisy Ling, Eric Joselyn. Admin team felt very appreciated and supported during the 5K. We surpassed our fundraising goal, raising over \$42,000 (net profit: \$37,100). 21 sponsors, 424 participants (our largest number so far), and over 200 individual donations. All water, snacks, and prizes were donated and costs are low. Photos show that the event is about more than raising money. We chose to have a 5K instead of a banquet because it is a community building event, giving students a chance to spend time outside of school and for parents to meet. It's a time for alumni, founders, and staff to gather. Our 5K is a fundraising event that people actually want to go to.

We are thinking of having a race next year that is not officially timed because of the large majority of participants who choose not to be timed. Fundraising teams are key to our fundraising success. They are a way to grow our donation base. We should find ways to encourage more people to make teams. Keeping registration fees low, especially for children, encourages participation and our fees are enough to cover costs.

Next steps: Ricque will reach out to Board members to ask for them to send handwritten thank you notes to sponsors. We will also do an email blast in part because it's a way of sharing lots of photos. Tax letters will go out by the end of November. By March, the goal is to have the Development Committee choose a new fundraising platform, revisit sponsorship levels, and start seeking sponsors. By July, the target is to have the registration site up.

Discussion:

- Are corporate matching gifts included in our fundraising totals? No; more will be coming.
- Really appreciate the Development Committee and staff who worked on moving this vision forward.

III. **Principal's Report**

Pheng Lim

[Pheng's slide show]

- Response to Intervention (RtI): There have been major improvements in the program since having a dedicated RtI coordinator; improvements in data collection, monitoring, staff training etc.
- The School District of Philadelphia high school application process has changed again.
 - On demand writing was discontinued
 - PSSAs are now factor in to the admissions criteria
 - Students who didn't take the PSSA have to take another standardized test (Terra Nova)
- We are excited to welcome families back into our building for the Back to School Open House on October 26.
- Parent Teacher Conferences will happen over zoom; we found it to be effective.
- Many Points of View Day:
 - Sharing the new intentionality statement for MPOV. There were changes this year because we are recognizing Indigenous People's Day as a holiday (day off) for the first time and are continuing to observe Many Points of View Day on a different day (not the second Monday in October).
 - Students presented at the MPOV assembly
- We are writing a grant to support field trips. We are encouraging field trips to explore Philadelphia and many are linked to instructional units. We are excited to return to this mode of student learning.
- A third grade student's grandma knitted hats for all 28 students in the class and staff.
- 5K was a beautiful day for coming together for students and community

Discussion:

- It is always heartening to see photos and to hear stories. It is joyful to be in the school and hear the laughter of students again.
 - We welcomed over 50 new students from 1st to 8th grade; they seem to be loving the school and acclimating well.
 - There are many new students and families; are there opportunities for them to learn about the ritual calendar ahead of time?
- What time is Back to School Open House? It will be from 3:10 to 4:00 so parents who are picking up students can stay and visit. There will also be five additional curriculum nights when parents can come and visit the school and also publishing parties.

- PDPH guidance on October 3 calling for universal masking following extended breaks. FACTS will follow this guidance for Thanksgiving Break, Winter Break and Spring Break.

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 September 21, 2022.

Moved: Allaire Wohlgemuth

Seconded: Thierry Saintine

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

Abstained: Alan Phan

V. **Finance Report**

Finance Committee Report

Neeta Patel

The Finance Committee reviewed the statements but did not meet. Thanks to David for the thorough report. No new patterns have emerged. Our enrollment numbers are slightly lower than we budgeted for. The bigger financial hit was that our per pupil allocation was reduced this year. Shortfalls from COVID include smaller enrollment, and increased expenses of hiring more teachers such as Intervention teachers for student support; these are covered by ESSER grant funding. We are still working on developing a policy for our reserve.

Discussion:

- Can we afford this level of per pupil reduction next year if this is to persist?
 - If it weren't for ESSER funding, we would have to be making cuts or eating into our reserves. We can use ESSER funding to offset the reductions in revenues and increases in costs. FACTS is spending much of ESSER funding to cover the structural deficit we are facing this year and next year. This means we do not need to disrupt programs or staffing to deal with the decreases in funding.
- We have strategic planning on our minds. We have ESSER funds to help us through the structural deficits. How would you propose that we as a board approach addressing the structural deficit now so that when ESSER funding runs out, we are prepared to deal with it?
 - Expansion, adding an additional K-8 class to the school is key to sustainability of the school
 - Returning to the strategic planning aspect of expansion
 - Discussing how to raise more money. But we know we can't fundraise our way out of this scale of a structural deficit.

- We need to have hard discussions about trade offs; what reductions in expenses are we willing to make so that we can achieve our goals?
- What has changed organizationally?
 - Pre-pandemic, we were not a technology school
 - \$175,000 annual costs that we have taken on for technology and there is no more extra funding for this. When ESSER goes away, what will pay for these increased expenses?

2. BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Trustees of the Folk Arts-Cultural Treasures Charter School approves the financial statements of September 30, 2022.

Moved: Xu Lin

Seconded: Neeta Patel

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

VI. **Approval of the Revised Budget**

Presentation of the Revised Budget

David Brown

When we passed our budget in May, we did not know our level of per pupil funding. We budgeted for a 3% reduction in per pupil funding. But the actual allocation came in at a 13% decrease for regular ed students. This was radically different from our projections. This results in a reduction in income of around \$330,000. The revised budget does not reflect changes in expenditures except that it uses actual salaries instead of estimated salaries. Other expenditure items were not revised.

We made some changes in our projections of the per pupil rates after learning of the increase in public school funding from the state; however it is not clear how this increase will filter down to local districts and to charter schools. We shifted from a 0% increase to the per pupil to a 5% increase next year and a 2% increase in subsequent years. We are also basing our projections based on the SDP estimates. Future year budgets also reflect a norm of 500 students enrolled.

Discussion:

- Why do the staff numbers shift? Why is there a reduction in the salary line item?
 - FY 2025 is the fiscal cliff. There will be layoffs in 2025; some people who were hired in positions that were dependent on grant funding will likely be laid off. We will try to sustain some of these positions.
- Per pupil is such a big part of our budget. Has enrollment stabilized?
 - There are two slots that are open in Kindergarten. K needs are high. We needed additional supports in K before filling those slots.
 - There are openings in some grades and one student is in process of enrolling.
 - The Stars enrollment met our goal.
- What are our Special Education numbers looking like?

- There are a lot of evaluations in the pipeline. We can get the numbers to the board later.
- We have 159 students in our ELD program. This is the highest that we have ever been at FACTS.
 - At David's Educational Finance program, he learned of other school districts getting increased funding for ELD students.
 - FACTS could consider a campaign to have SDP funding follow ELD students.

3. BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Trustees of the Folk Arts-Cultural Treasures Charter School approves the revised 2022-23 budget.

Moved: Neeta Patel

Seconded: Xu Lin

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

VIII. Approval of the Revision of the Anti-Bullying Policy

Report from the Policy Committee

Pooja Agarwal

The Policy Committee will be revisiting and revising the Anti-Harassment Policy which we separated out from the Anti-Bullying Policy.

4. BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Trustees of the Folk Arts-Cultural Treasures Charter School approves the revision of the Anti-Bullying Policy.

Moved: Neeta Patel

Seconded: Thierry Saintine

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

IX. Committee Reports

- Nominations Committee

Selina

Welcome new committee members: Allaire Wohlgemuth and Xu Lin

X. Other Action Items

5. BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Trustees of the Folk Arts-Cultural Treasures Charter School approves hiring the following personnel:

- Jenray Shou - Teaching Assistant K & 1 - \$28,000 salary

Jeff Koung disclosed that he is the cousin of Jenray Shou.

Moved: Pooja Agarwal

Seconded: Xu Lin

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

Abstaining: Jeff Koung

6. BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Trustees of the Folk Arts-Cultural Treasures Charter School approves hiring the following personnel:

- Nelly Roestina - ELD Teaching Assistant - \$30,000 salary

Moved: Allaire Wohlgemuth

Seconded: Alan Phan

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

XI. Adjournment

Moved: Allaire Wohlgemuth

Seconded: Thierry Saintine

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