

SOUTH SHORE CHARTER PUBLIC SCHOOL

Board of Trustees Meeting

February 11, 2021

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87465684242?pwd=YWhWS3pUUes5c1BZeXplEjdrQ252QT09>

Meeting ID: 874 6568 4242

Passcode: 396439

Notice of this meeting was sent to appropriate governmental agencies and press, and was published in the "South Shore Charter Public School Update".

Trustees:

In attendance: Edwin Rivera (Chair), William Smyth (Vice Chair), Prue Goodale (Clerk), Vincent Walsh (Treasurer), Leslie Alden, Heidi Aylward, Katie Cianelli, Peter Farrell, Kiki Fluhr, Natacha Julien, Ken Poudrier, Jody Regan, Kathleen Trask, Katie Vecchione

In absentia: Honora Sullivan

Also in attendance:

Staff: Alicia Savage (Executive Director), Kristine Bingham (Director of Finance), Angie Pepin (Principal)

Audience: Amy Koskowski, Darcie Edwards, Debbie Harper Padula, Marian Finn, John Finn, Melissa Freitas, Liz Sweeney, Stephanie Hartman, Kendra Polefka, Jenna Brink, Cindy Lyons, Kerri Doble, Michelle Rankin, Tracy Deveau, Susan Knineh, Elyse Kay, Kassandra Sullivan, Joyce Dandrow, Barbara Folan, Catherine Snee, Siohan Daly, Julie Bartus,

Edwin Rivera (Chair) called the meeting to order at 7:38pm

Board Business:

Approval of Minutes:

MOTION: B. Smyth moved to approve the minutes from the December 10, 2020 meeting as presented. H. Aylward seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Vote by individual roll call: Edwin Rivera (Chair), William Smyth (Vice Chair), Prue Goodale (Clerk), Vincent Walsh (Treasurer), Leslie Alden, Heidi Aylward, Katie Cianelli, Peter Farrell, Kiki Fluhr, Natacha Julien, Ken Poudrier, Jody Regan, Kathleen Trask, Katie Vecchione All in favor. Motion carried unanimously.

School & Academic Report: Alicia Savage, Executive Director reported

Student Achievement

- Beginning February 1 SSCPS is celebrating Black History Month
- World Read Aloud Day was held on February 3
- Students, families, and teachers are struggling with the ongoing ramifications of COVID-19
- Work has begun on designing remedial programs to address academic and social-emotional development
- Class of 2021 College Acceptances; waiting to hear DESE graduation ceremony guidelines

State of the School

- Hybrid and in-person classes resumed January 20th. Full remote is always an option for families
- Town by town metrics remain at 90% red
- Heaters have been installed in the tents. Outside space is being used as much as possible for recess, mask breaks, lunch and snack
- Reviewed the team numbers. Offering 2nd grade in-person beginning March 1 with 3ft distancing
- Waiting for guidelines for next year on the distancing

- Professional Development - work continues on anti-racism. NART conference; Afrika Afini Mills joined us for a full PD day to further explore the topic and how to be prepared in the classroom. Works continues in March for another full PD day
- Learning Model Table - reviewed the current numbers of students in each model and changes since the reported in November

Student Enrollment and Admissions Lottery

- Lottery Wednesday, March 3. Applications are coming in with deadline February 24, 2021
- Postcard sent and information posted on the school's Facebook. Several virtual Open Houses have been held
- Enrollment as of February 5 at 1015; continue to accept waitpool applications at the High School
- Lottery will be held virtually and electronically

Vaccinations and Testing

- Based on meeting the DESE Commissioner vaccinations for faculty and staff will be included in the third part of Phase Two of the MA. This timeline has moved school personnel down further in the timeline. Mass list is different that the CDC guidelines where teachers are in a higher priority
- Testing: Abbott BinaxNOW rapid COVID-19 antigen test. Administering test now. Volunteer program. Some success with the program Ease of use; speedy results; allows for quick contact tracing. Results of the test pick up high viral loads. PCR and/or quarantine is still needed.
- The School would like to apply to be a part of the BinaxNOW pooled testing program. The cost for the initial 6-week project is provided by the state. How it works: A group/pod is tested and those samples are processed as a group. Should one sample in the group by positive then each person in the group would be retested individually with the rapid test. While this is a volunteer program families will have to consent to having their children tested.

MOTION: H. Aylward moved to approve the school to go forward with an application for the BinaxNOW pooled testing program. V. Walsh seconded the motion

Vote by individual roll call: Edwin Rivera (Chair), William Smyth (Vice Chair), Prue Goodale (Clerk), Vincent Walsh (Treasurer), Leslie Alden, Heidi Aylward, Katie Cianelli, Peter Farrell, Kiki Fluhr, Natacha Julien, Ken Poudrier, Jody Regan, Kathleen Trask, Katie Vecchione All in favor. Motion carried unanimously.

School Calendar

Reviewed the FY22 draft calendar. 1st day for the 2021-22 school year is August 31st. Early Release PD

Motion: B. Smyth approve the FY22 Calendar as presented.P. Goodale seconded

Vote by individual roll call: Edwin Rivera (Chair), William Smyth (Vice Chair), Prue Goodale (Clerk), Vincent Walsh (Treasurer), Leslie Alden (abstained), Heidi Aylward, Katie Cianelli, Peter Farrell, Kiki Fluhr, Natacha Julien, Ken Poudrier (No), Jody Regan, Kathleen Trask (No), Katie Vecchione 1 absteinsion, 2 no, 11 in favor; Motion carried

Committee Reports:**Faculty:**

J.Regan and K. Cianelli reported:

- Feb 3 was World Read Aloud Day sponsored by Litworld to promote literacy as a fundamental human right. 25 readers participated by reading to all k-4 classes. The readers were parents, teachers, NHS students. It was a joyful day
- We are at the end of Q2 for 5-8. Virtual parent teacher conferences were held for the first time. We structured them with all teachers in a Zoom with one parent at a time. They received rave reviews from teachers and families. We saw more parents, there was more equity involved for families whose work schedule prohibited the time for in-school conferences. We will continue this model in some way even when we are past Covid times.
- The transition between learning models that Alicia mentioned earlier is very beneficial to our families as they make adjustments in reaction to their family circumstances, and their students' success or struggles with their learning model
- High school remains quiet in the building
- PSAT day went well. Juniors were in the building, and everyone else had asynchronous learning. It allowed for only 2-3 students per room. Guidance did a phenomenal job with the planning, which resulted in a smooth testing environment for everyone
- FASA sent out a few surveys. One was for the return of snow days. The majority voted for 1/2 day remote days at 53.9%, but due to our Reopening Plan we will transition to full-day synchronous remote days
- The other survey was for a proposed change in the travel policy that allowed for travel by private car to private residences in Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont without quarantining for 14 days following if you could provide a negative covid test. It was too close to call a majority, and the policy will not change. Furthermore, the high-risk states are dictated by the Commonwealth
- Lastly, multiple teachers have surveyed or discussed with students their mental health and level of zoom fatigue. Overwhelmingly, students are feeling a lack of motivation, frustration at being away from school and their friends, and that they're generally over staring at their screens all day. We don't have a solution, yet, but Emily and I are planning on re-starting the Best Practices where teachers can come together and discuss what works and what doesn't to better inform what we do with our classes

Students: no report

Parents Association: Katie Vecchione reported

- The PA still has \$2,000 remaining for grants requests form teachers/staff
- Fundraising continues. TV raffle raised over \$1,000 (donated by the Daly family); restaurant fundraiser at the Cottage in Weymouth 10% of sales
- Check the PA website for updates
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- At the last PA meeting the discussion regarding getting more students into school continued. The following statement was read to the Board by K. Vecchione, PA Chair and Board Member

At the last PA meeting, many families voiced that they are looking for the school to increase in person learning time.

As parents we understand the first priority of the South Shore Charter Public School is to maintain a safe and healthy learning environment for students, teachers, and staff. Although teachers have been included in Phase II of the vaccine roll out scheduled to start this month, we acknowledge there will be supply and demand issues and that the vaccine is also not a requirement, and therefore it is possible that not all teachers will get vaccinated.

With the numerous reports and studies that have concluded that schools are not the main source of spread, SSCPS has proven that the safety measures that have been implemented since September are working.

Regardless of the reality being faced with the vaccine, Massachusetts continues to open and local regional public district schools are already planning to phase in more in-person learning for students, and some have already started.

As we approach the 1 year mark, and more parents are returning to work, it would be prudent for SSCPS to review changes to the current model and seek out new ways to get more students in school at any given time. As we see Group D number increase, there will likely be families that will want to remain remote through the end of the school year and if we could work with those number now, we could better plan for what spring could look like.

We understand there are space constrictions with current guidelines, so unless those guidelines change, a full roster of students in person is unlikely. The more likely scenario would be to increase the time hybrid students have at school by changing the current model. We would like to have the tasks force revisit the current model based on average hybrid numbers to make sure all possible seats are filled.

Parents, teachers, staff, and the State alike have recognized the great significance of in-person learning. We all know how much school contributes to a child's emotional, social, physical and educational well-being and how much students need to attend in person. Our goal is to increase time spent in the classroom to benefit students, without compromising safety, and assist the Charter in fulfilling its mission to provide "real-life experiential learning".

As follow up to the statement FASA Representative, J. Dandrow asked: Does the PA Chair have an idea of the percent of SSCPS parents who represent the concern in the prepared statement. PA Chair will work on preparing a survey to the entire parent body for feedback.

Finance: Vinnie Walsh reported

- Finance committee met in January, on February 9 and will meet monthly until FY22 Budget is complete
- Current tuition \$15,594 based on enrollment of 1010
- Next year tuition projection \$16,339 based on enrollment of 1040
- Reviewed charter school tuition calculation
- Looking at \$346,000 budget reduction for the year. \$5M cash reserve with approximately 20% restricted
- State numbers subject to change
- Additional \$40,000 COVID-19 Grant to offset additional purchase air purification system at 100

Development: Leslie Alden reported

- Weekly Update has the Annual Fund appeal letter; the letter was emailed to the board and to all families
- Committee understands the burden on families however some may be interested in participating. Looking for families to donate \$10 for each year the child has been at the school

Governance: Prue Goodale reported

- Interviewed Board candidates and will move recommendations at the April meeting
- Developing a self assessment survey which will go out to the Board members April 4 with a return deadline of April 17. Review feedback at the May meeting. The survey will be administered annually going forward
- Working with other committees to assign an alternate committee chair. Governance alternative: Finance alternative: Ken Pourdrier

Personnel: Bill Smyth reported

- The Executive Director Evaluation survey will be launched by the next Board meeting. Results to be reviewed at the July meeting

MOTION: B. Smyth moved to adjourn the regular meeting. P. Farrell seconded, motion carried unanimously.
Meeting Adjourned 8:54pm

Respectfully submitted:
Pam Algera

Approved by: Prue Goodale, Clerk