

SOUTH SHORE CHARTER PUBLIC SCHOOL
Board of Trustees Meeting
October 19, 2023
7:30pm

Meeting held at 700 Longwater Drive, Norwell, MA 02061
Meeting available via Zoom

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

Trustees:

In attendance: Jimmy Juste (Chair), Vinnie Walsh (Vice Chair), Ken Poudrier (Treasurer), Natacha Julien (Clerk), Tiffany Brown-Grier, Katie Cianelli, Tracy Deveau, Kiki Fluhr, Kathleen Sullivan, Kate Trowbridge, Alisha Uhlenbrock-Furst

Remote participation: T. Deveau (8:30pm)

In absentia: Raeven Charles (pending DESE approval), Andrew Sobers,

Also in attendance:

Staff: Alicia Savage (Executive Director), Kristine Bingham (Director of Finance), Joe McSheffrey (Technology Support Specialist), Pam Algera (Director of Admissions)

Audience: K. Doble

Remote Audience:

Meetings documents:

- Meeting Agenda
- Draft Minutes from the September meeting
- Executive Director Report
- Audit Documents Audit documents:
 - Financial Statements
 - Board Report
 - Management Report
 - Ratios Report
 - Debt Covenant Calculation
- BoT DESE Convening Presentation

Opening of Meeting: J. Juste (Chair) called the meeting to order a 7:31pm

Individual roll call: J. Juste, V. Walsh, K. Poudrier, N. Julien, T. Brown-Grier, K. Cianelli, T. Deveau, K. Fluhr, K. Sullivan, K. Trowbridge, A. Uhlenbrock-Furst

Board Business

Approval of Minutes:

MOTION: V. Walsh moved to approve the minutes from the 09/21/2023 meeting. T. Deveau seconded.

Vote by individual roll call: J. Juste, V. Walsh, K. Poudrier (abstained), N. Julien, T. Brown-Grier, K. Cianelli, T. Deveau, K. Fluhr (abstained), K. Sullivan, K. Trowbridge, A. Uhlenbrock-Furst
8 in favor; 2 abstained; motion carried

Finance Committee: K. Poudrier

Audit Presentation: Nicole Reilly, AAF

- FY23 Independent Financial Audit Presentation with a high level overview of the audit
- Audit was in accordance with DESE standard requirements as well as Federal audit standards.
- No compliance findings under the government and federal audits. Good news
- From a financial perspective from high level review there was increase in tuition revenues of \$1.2M from increase enrollment and funds from the Student Opportunity Act
- Expenses increase by about \$1.4M mostly due to the student transportation funding. State reimbursement is not expected to late FY24 for expense in FY23
- School did have a small loss of 372,000 offset by the Foundations activity for a net project for the school and foundation
- Other reports issued by the auditors: Management Letter which was clean and will go to DESE with Board report which outlines the standard communications. New activities with stagnant bank accounts with recommendation to look at receiving more timely cut off statements. Also, mentioned was an immaterial non-compliance in regard to W4 being received for employees during the year. Minor items reported
- There were no audit adjustments no materials findings or materials weaknesses to report
- The Finance Committee review the audit

MOTION: V. Walsh to accept the recommendation of the Finance Committee and approve the FY23 Independent Financial Audit as presented. J. Juste seconded

Vote by individual roll call: J. Juste, V. Walsh, K. Poudrier, N. Julien, T. Brown-Grier, K. Cianelli, T. Deveau, K. Fluhr, K. Sullivan, K. Trowbridge, A. Uhlenbrock-Furst

Additional notes from Finance Committee: K. Poudrier reported

- Transportation reimbursement remains outstanding with a two-year lag in funding. Anticipate 80% reimbursement of cost from FY23 in June of 2024. The reimbursement schedule will be kept in mind during the work on the FY25 budget process
- In compliance with debt covenants on the mortgage loan. No vote needed

School & Academic Report

State of the School Report: Alicia Savage, Executive Director reported

Student Achievement:

- Congratulations to five seniors for their recognition by the College Board for outstanding academic achievement. In addition, one student received the National Hispanic Recognition Award
- Congratulations to the 16 newest inductees the the SSCPS Chapter of the National Honor Society
- SSCPS hosted Guest Speakers: Werner Salinger, Holocaust survivor presented to grades 7th and 8th grade, and two presentations at the high school. Caroline Kautsire from Malawi author of *What Kind of Girl*; presented at the high school

MCAS Scores from last spring: reviewed the scores for ELA, Math, Science.

- Before the scores were released, DESE met with Superintendents and Charter School Leaders and they report that the decline has stopped but the build back from COVID has not yet happened. It appears that our scores reflect that.
- Reviewed the MCAS data by grade and subject. Looked at the Next Generation MCAS annual comparisons. Reviewed the comparisons to the top sending districts. Looked at the growth data. Details are included in the: [Executive Director Report - October 19, 2023](#)
- Reviewed the student PSAT and SAT results for grades 8-11
- New and continuing programs for 2023-2024: for Math iReady for grades K-8; for ELA Wonders has been introduced for K-4 with plans to include grade 5 in FY25. Keys to Beginning Literacy professional development was provided to all K-4 teachers throughout FY23. Collins Writing Program has been

reintroduced for grades 5-12 in Social Studies, History, and ELA. A literacy block for grades K-4 will be extended and professional learning have been established for teachers working with these grades. The DIBELS and Title I services will be extended to grade 5 for further monitoring.

Transportation Update:

- Family feedback received continues to be positive overall
- Additional routes and stops have been honed to better serve families
- Current ridership is approximately 788 students on 15 bus routes
- There are currently no families on the waitlist but some are waiting for openings on a more convenient route
- Student behavior has been acceptable for the most part, but areas of improvement remain
- Students on some routes have needed reminding about remaining seated and not switch seats when bus is moving
- Bus safety training will be provided by First Student on all grade levels in the coming weeks
- Bus driver shortage persists and we continue to work with First Student to minimize the impact

Enrollment:

- Current enrollment as of 10/13/23 is 1059
- Student withdrawal number from FY23 to FY24 as of October 1, 2023 is 86
- Four withdrawn students new to SSCPS
- Eleven students were “no shows” on the first day of school
- Reviewed reasons given: moving out of the district, academic, social/emotional, athletics, vocational educational, private school education, and transportation

Events:

Road Race:

- Thank you for all the participation. 141 registered participants
- Wonderful support from corporate and student sponsors

Literacy Lane - this coming Saturday

Strategic Planning - 1st meeting on October 24

DESE Charter School Convening - J. Juste reported

- J. Juste attended the DESE Charter School Convening meeting with A. Savage and K. Bingham
- Gathered some resources regarding indicators of distress for charter schools. There were also some activities with case studies which will be tabled until a further meeting
- J. Juste shared the [presentation](#) from the conference. Materials from the National Charter School Resource Center. More information is available at www.charterschoolcenter.ed.gov
- Focus is on the Governing Board and the five common themes of indicators of distress:
 - Lack of capacity to execute governance role
 - Out of touch with school population needs
 - No long-term sustainability strategy
 - Inability to convene the board
 - Boards' inability to hold school leaders accountable
- J. Juste asked Board members to participate in an activity to choose two indicators of distress for the board to focus on. Top indicators: governance role and holding school leaders accountable.
- This activity will be repeated in a few months to see if there are any changes
- There was some discussion regarding the indicators. There was also discussion regarding community engagement and ideas as to how to increase engagement through the Parents Association with the upcoming focus group scheduled for next week.

Committee Reports:**Faculty:** K. Cianelli & K. Trowbridge reported

At 100:

- Across all levels, the Literacy Lane is coming up! Families have the opportunity to decorate the trunk of their car and trick-or-treat from car to car.
- Community outings with our special needs population is beginning tomorrow. They will be going to Boundless Bean Coffee and bakery shop and 5 below.
- Level I: Farm visits continue at Holly Hill this year. Students have the opportunity to get hands-on experience at the farm.
- Level II: Third grade has settled in nicely. They have worked a lot on expanding numbers to the hundreds and on regrouping with both adding and subtracting. In ELA, they're working a lot on finding textual evidence to answer questions, visualization as a reading strategy, and have focused a lot on subjects, predicates, synonyms, and antonyms. They'll be wrapping up the unit on culture and traditions soon, having enjoyed reading narrative nonfiction and realistic fiction. We're seeing more independence in our students as they become more used to the routines.
- Level III: This past month, Level 3 went on their annual Nantasket Beach team building trip. It was a beautiful day and students really enjoyed having time with their peers. Currently, the level is gearing up for their annual pumpkin carving contest. Each year students team up to carve a pumpkin with classmates. The pumpkins then get donated for the New England Wildlife Center for their haunted trail of 1000 faces.

At the high school:

- The Cultural Diversity Workshop is conducting a Food/Clothing Drive to benefit the Charity Guild Organization in Brockton. Each advisory is encouraged to bring in canned goods and slightly used clothing. This event ends November 3rd.
- Today, Caroline Kautsire who is a published author came in to speak to the following classes: World Lit, AP African American Studies, the Cultural Diversity Workshop and the Author's Workshop. Students were given a copy of her book, *What Kind of Girl*.
- The National Honor Society had its induction ceremony this past Tuesday. We have 16 new members, bringing our chapter total to 38, which is the second largest group our school has had.
- The PSATs are tomorrow, and this is the first time they will be taking them digitally.

Students: No report**Parents Association:** No report**Finance:** see above**Development:** A. Uhlenbrock-Furst reported

- Met earlier and discussed community engagement;
- Committee will schedule another meeting to brainstorming community engagement idea
- Wednesday 7:45pm Development details will be confirmed

Governance: N. Julien reported

- Discussed starting the recruiting process earlier this year. Three members to be filled or renewed. Looking at candidates with expertise in governance and marketing/development
- Working on a plan to revise the Bylaws

Personnel: T. Deveau reported

- Discussed Executive Director Evaluation based on the presented goals
- Discussed the process for teacher contract negotiations. Board representatives will include J. Juste, K. Sullivan and possibly K. Poudrier. First meeting will be held soon

- Discussed process for the Board to receive Annual Faculty Survey feedback shared with the Board

Ad Hoc Facilities: K. Poudrier reported

- Options for Foxrock proposals and upcoming sublease
- Discussed talking to financial institutions to refinance mortgage/balloon payment. Possible restructure

Audience: Public Comment

There were no audience members and questions/comments in the Zoom chat.

MOTION: V. Walsh moved to adjourn the regular meeting. seconded, motion carried unanimously. K. Poudrier seconded

Vote by individual roll call: J. Juste, V. Walsh, K. Poudrier, N. Julien, T. Brown-Grier, K. Cianelli, T. Deveau (Remote), K. Fluhr, K. Sullivan, K. Trowbridge, A. Uhlenbrock-Furst
All in favor; motion carried unanimously.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:47pm

Respectfully submitted:
Pam Algera

Approved: