

February 2021 PSCS Board Meeting Minutes

February 8, 2021, 6:00 PM,
PSCS, 9300 Bob Beatty Rd, Charlotte, NC 28269
Zoom Meeting

ROLL CALL

Board Members Present

- Abigail Jennings, Barbara Ann Temple, Will Weaver, Erik Giles, Ananth Nilakantan, Peter Blumenfeld

Board Members Absent

- Kim Champion, Sandy Knox, Jeanne Bryne,

Administration Present

- Becky Friend, Erin McDonald, Randolph Lewis

Guests

- Gail Faithful, Kristy Anderson, Michael Rothstein, Jamie Holman

CALL TO ORDER

Abigail Jennings established a quorum and called the meeting to order at 6:04 pm.

PREVIOUS MINUTES

There were no notable discussions or motions. Barbara Anne Temple made a motion to approve the previous meeting minutes. Peter Blumenfeld seconded the motion. Abigail called for any additional questions or comments; there were none. Abigail called for a vote; the motion passed unanimously.

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Ananth Nilakantan presented the January 2021 Financial Statement and Balance Sheet. Peter Blumenfeld made a motion to approve the January 2021 Financial Summary and Balance Sheet. Will Weaver seconded the motion. Abigail called for any additional questions or comments; there were none. Abigail called for a vote; the motion passed unanimously.

GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

Erik Giles reported that the Mid-Year Evaluation Director Evaluation has been completed with Becky Friend, and all is on track regarding this year's primary 3 goals: 1) Human Resources leadership, 2) Academic achievement, and 3) External development.

Erik also reported on the Governance Committee's recommendation to consider Dr. James Freeman to our board. Dr. Freeman has been an active participant in the Social Justice committee and has a wealth of experience working with nonprofits and holds many distinct honors. He is currently an Adjunct Professor at Johnson C. Smith University.

The 21-22SY Lottery will be held on Tuesday, March 23rd at 4:30 pm. A discussion followed on alternative ideas to holding the lottery remotely versus in person. The board decided to proceed with a remote plan and Erik and Abigail will work out the details.

FACILITIES TASK FORCE

Peter Blumenfeld updated the Board on the status of the High School plans. Final plans to be submitted this week. Abigail reported the Pettis Lot has been officially acquired. This lot, north of the Asbury building on Bob Beatty Road, adds two and a half acres to our campus, and creates a solid contiguous campus of over 12 acres. The new lot will be utilized for high school parking, new natural areas, and future wishlist items including high school gardens and future campus animals.

MARKETING TASK FORCE UPDATE

Barbara Ann Temple provided an update on the marketing activities, including working with the Social Justice committee to reach a more diverse audience in our enrollment efforts. Podcasts are being planned, and they are also working with Jennie Lyon on how to increase our audience and promote Pioneer Springs to new families.

DIRECTOR REPORTS

Advancement

Erin McDonald reported:

- Presented the proposed 2021/22 academic calendar, and noted the calendar was sent to staff for comments previously. After a brief discussion by the board, Abigail called for a motion to approve the 2021/22 PSCS Calendar. Barbara Anne Temple made a motion to approve the 2021/22 PSCS Calendar. Peter Blumenfeld seconded the motion. Abigail called for any additional questions or comments; there were none. Abigail called for a vote; the motion passed unanimously.
- On the status of enrollment in the upcoming lottery.
- Additional marketing updates regarding a new newsletter and multiple ads ready for partnerships in the great community, asking our families to help spread the PSCS word by posting in their outside communities; churches, book clubs, running clubs, etc.
- Erin and Becky are putting together a press release to highlight the Rooted in Community campaign with 2300 sandwiches, giving 8 PSCS families in need groceries, and an \$800 cash donation to each of these charities: Roof Above, Classroom Central and FeedNC.
- Valentine tradition has adapted to the pandemic and this year our staff shared ideas with one another and have instead assigned poems to self, poems to nature, older students doing a poetry slam, notes to the troops, Because of You digital presentation, digital valentines to the Oaks, and first responders.
- New Family Meeting this week, a one hour Zoom to connect with the administration team on Tuesday, February 9th at 5pm.
- Erin and Becky to host the first week of live admin office hours for all parents to hop on between 10-11am each Thursday. Starts on 2/11/21.
- 1 podcast recorded and in editing. Plan to do 1-2 more by the end of February.

Facilities

Randolph Lewis reported:

- Continuing to expand on-campus options, which included Phase 2 of Learning Pods for K-9, which began last week, utilizing Asbury, the Hive, and the Red Barn. All students are physically distanced 6 feet apart, every pod classroom has a medical grade HEPA air purifier and is following the same rigorous cleaning protocol as Phase 1.
- To continue to expand options, a survey was sent to parents, which concludes today.

- The renovations for the castle are wrapping up, a few punch-list items remain, and two windows are on back-order due to Covid-related supply-chain issues. Reception and operation offices have already moved, and the finance and registrar offices are in progress.
- E-rate season is here, and we are purchasing additional outdoor wifi access points to cover much of our campus for additional outdoor instructional options.
- Croft shade sail has been installed, which will provide year-round comfort for classes at the picnic tables for lunchtime or for outdoor learning.

Operations

Becky Friend reported:

- Review of the mid-year iReady benchmark data; and offered the caveat that due to remote learning we do not know under what conditions benchmarks were taken/ how much or how little parent support for the benchmark students received while taking the test. ELA summary looks typical for mid-year and additional personnel have been added in gateway grades (2, 3, 5, and 9) to address specific needs for students performing below grade level. Math scores were summarily below the norm which was expected based on math levels prior to the pandemic. Of note were 9th grade math performances which prompted a realignment of scope and sequence for that class as well as adding personnel to serve that class.
- New guidelines for Covid response were published by DPI this week; PSCS continues to follow all requirements and most recommendations.
- Parent survey data regarding preferences for phase III implementation is being disaggregated to inform planning. Responses include interest across the spectrum from maximum days on campus with limited safety measures to a balance of the two to staying remote. A summary of responses will be published in this week's Coop Scoop.
- Admin team is focusing on increased communication in response to parent feedback that more transparency is needed. This includes adding a monthly new parent meeting and administrative office hours once per week.
- Will bring all teachers back for phase III implementation (plan A for K-5 and plan B for 6-9)
- Asked for closed session to discuss matters of safety of personnel.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Michael Rothstein, a PSCS new parent, shared his feelings on the hardship and emotional toll of remote learning on his family. He requested more communication about the school's plans to reopen. Becky shared this information would be coming soon once the parent survey has been completed.

Kristy Anderson, a PSCS parent and administrator for the Pioneer Parents Facebook page, shared that she was actively helping to encourage parents with concerns to contact the administration directly. She expressed appreciation and understanding for the difficult position of the administrative team during this time.

CLOSED SESSION

The board entered Closed Session at 7:17 pm, upon a motion being made by Peter Blumenfeld, seconded by Barbara Anne Temple, and confirmed via roll call vote of all board members present pursuant to North Carolina General § 143-318.11(a)(1) to prevent the disclosure of information that is privileged or confidential pursuant to the law of this State or of the United States, or not considered a public record within the meaning of Chapter 132 of the General Statutes.

The board ended Closed Session and entered Open Session at 7:56 pm upon a motion being made by Peter Blumenfeld, seconded by Barbara Anne Temple, and confirmed via roll call vote of all Board members present.

ADJOURNMENT

Abigail Jennings called for any further comment or discussion and hearing none requested a motion to adjourn. Barbara Ann Temple made the motion. Meeting adjourned at 7:57 pm, without objection.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Abigail Jennings', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Abigail Jennings, Chairperson