

Harambee Institute of Science and Technology Charter  
School  
Board of Trustees Public Meeting Minutes

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**October 28, 2020**

**Public Board Meeting via ZOOM**

**6:00-8:00 P.M.**

The meeting of the Board of Trustees Public Meeting was held on Wednesday, October 28, 2020 via Zoom

**Meeting Called to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m.  
by Board Chair, Maurice Baynard

**Roll Call**

Dr. Baynard asked Board members and the senior leadership team to introduce themselves. Board members and the senior leadership team introduced themselves, stated their names and titles.

**Board Members Present:**

Maurice Baynard  
Renee Whitby  
C.Wade Mosely  
Charis Jackson  
Joseph Foster  
Donna Holmes Lockett  
Larry Bell

**Board members absent:**

Marirose Roach  
Jan Gillespie- Walton  
Lakiesha Creighton

**Others Present:**

Gregory Shannon      CEO  
Michelle Thornton      CFO

Ericka Washington      Assistant Principal of School Operations  
Sara Ferguson          Assistant Principal of Instruction

### **Introduction of Visitors and Others Present**

Visitors were introduced and stated their names, titles and purpose  
Zakiya Price- parent of 2<sup>nd</sup> grader at Harambee Institute

Dr. Baynard, Board Chairman welcomed everyone and thanked them for attending. He turned everyone's attention to the September 30<sup>th</sup> Board meeting minutes and asked if there were any corrections or additions. There were no corrections or additions. Wade made a motion to accept the minutes seconded by Joe. All were in favor, so passed and accepted.

**Motion:** Approve September 30, 2020 Board Meeting Minutes

Approval    AYE: 7    Nays: 0    Abstentions: 0    Absent: 3

### **CEO Report, Greg Shannon**

Dr. Baynard introduced Greg Shannon and asked him to present his CEO report. Greg thanked everyone for their time and indicated that they are moving along with their organizational development and their partnership with the Roz Group, around development and fund raising. They are planning for their virtual event in the spring of 2021. He also reported that they are moving along with their on line platforms such as Google classroom, Zoom and many other intervention platforms. He indicated that they had a robust professional development last week on Friday and another one is scheduled again on November 3<sup>rd</sup>. All of their faculty and staff are moving along with respect to the delivery of their instructional programs. Greg turned the floor over to Sara Ferguson for a brief update of their instructional program.

- **Instruction**

Sara indicated that the instructional program is well underway and they have been emphasizing in their classrooms the implementation of their school wide strategies, which include races and cubes. Cubes is the math strategy and both strategies are to help with the way in which students are answering questions and to give students a framework for the way that they answer questions. She reported that they have very good support this year for the teachers with the coaches that were put in place. The coaches are modeling, observing and giving feedback to teachers. The coaches are providing overall support to the academic program. She reported that they have a multi tiered system of support for students who may be struggling around attendance,

behavior and academics. They have started with grades four to eight (4-8) to administer their math diagnostic assessment and by all accounts it went very well. They will continue with math diagnostics on Thursday. Sara reported that they also had their monthly professional development on October 23. Professional development included sessions around Cultural practices, Math and ELA and the MTSS program. Dr. Baynard asked Sara two questions. First, to briefly explain races and cubes as frameworks and secondly what are the biggest challenges that students are experiencing across the board, as well as, challenges that teachers may be experiencing.

Sara began with the first question regarding races and cubes. She noted that races is an acronym and the R stands for restate the question, the A stands for answer the question completely, the C stands for cite text evidence and the E stands for explain text evidence and the S stands for sum it up. In math they use the acronym Cubes. The C stands for circle, key numbers, U stands for underline the question, B stands for box all math clue words, E stands for evaluate and eliminate which means find out what they're asking you and what steps you need to take solve the problem and eliminate any extraneous information and the S stands for solve the problem and show your work.

With regard to other challenges and virtual instruction, Sara mentioned that she has received calls from parents around screen time. She noted that screen time is a challenge and what they have done is share articles on how to take screen breaks, how to close your screen and other strategies that help to eliminate fatigue. Also, with younger students they have recommended Go Noodle and Brain Pop, which are short videos that can be shown to students that allow them to take a little break away from the screen.

- **School Operations**

Greg asked Ericka, Assistant Principal of School Operations to provide operations updates. Ericka indicated that they are in the process of installing exterior doors in the building. They are taking advantage of the time that people are not in the building to have those repairs done. The door installation began this Monday and is projected to be complete by next Monday. If they do not meet that deadline, it will be completed by the second week of November.

With regard to food service, they have made the decision to discontinue distribution of food for the breakfast and lunch programs. After careful evaluation they determined that they would no longer offer that service until they return to in person instruction. She added that they have

communicated with families and suggested other food distribution sites along with services from food pantries.

Ericka also reported that the technology team continues to support students, families, faculty and staff with technology issues. They are lending support as it relates to navigating platforms, setting up emails and working on devices. They have also been trying to connect families with free Internet service. They were successful with getting a family free service today, which will extend over a two-year period until June 2022.

- **Specialized Services**

Greg indicated that he would provide updates for Specialized Services on behalf of Angela. Greg reported that Harambee has completed the audit from the Pennsylvania Department of Education, Bureau of Specialized Services. The audit has come back clean and Harambee is in compliance.

### **CFO Report, Michelle Thornton**

Greg asked Michelle, CFO to provide updates from her department. Michelle reported that enrollment is currently at 585 students, with a target of 600 students. She noted that Harambee is still working hard communicating with parents and families that are on the waiting list in order to meet their target. She also highlighted that spending over the past three months has been in respective departments with large amounts spent in Facilities purchasing desks, lockers, curriculum materials, as well as spending for Professional Development, the Summer Institute program and the Annual Retreat. Funds were also allocated to COVID-19 relief for supplies and materials along with additional spending for equipment to students and staff. Overall they have been able to maintain their cash flow and cash on hand, especially with grant money that was received earlier than expected.

Michelle highlighted two positions that they were able to fill, a certified Art teacher and a long-term substitute teacher. They have also held meetings with their non-certified staff to review their certification plans and to ensure that they are on target with those plans. The meetings have been held so that administration will understand any obstacles that the teachers may have with obtaining their certifications. Dr. Baynard asked Michelle where her department is with the audit report. She reported that they are on target and are not showing any findings thus far. She noted that she is scheduled to have a draft by November 6, and feels that it will be a good audit. Dr. Baynard

stated that he would add the Audit report to the agenda of the next Board meeting.

Dr. Baynard also asked Ericka if she happened to have pictures of the new doors that have been installed at Harambee. She indicated that she would send pictures of the installation to him. He also asked if there were any problems with the lights in the gym. Ericka indicated that those repairs have already been done and that they would be receiving their certificate shortly, for all of the repairs of the electrical work.

Dr. Baynard asked Greg how they execute HASA during the COVID-19 changes and where they are with the HASA grant. Greg responded that programmatically they are poised to begin a virtual HASA program in November.

Dr. Baynard opened the floor to Board members for Old or New Business. Wade asked if there would be a second phase for the installation of the new doors. Ericka responded that there would not be a second phase of the installation. The installation included all of the doors around the building. The company that they used (ICS) gave a discount because they had them installed all in one phase.

### **Public Concerns**

Dr. Baynard opened the floor for Public comment. The visitor Zakiya Price, parent of a 2<sup>nd</sup> grader at Harambee indicated that she did not have any comments or questions.

### **Old Business**

None

### **New Business**

None

### **Motion:**

Dr. Baynard entertained a motion to dismiss the Board meeting, the motion was seconded by Wade, all agreed, meeting dismissed

### **Adjourn Board Meeting**

The Board meeting was adjourned at 6:45 P.M.

The next scheduled Board meeting will be held on Wednesday November 18, 2020.