

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

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## **Board Meeting Minutes Wednesday, February 23, 2022**

The meeting of the Board of Trustees Public Meeting was held on Wednesday February 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2022 via Zoom 6:30-8:00 p.m.

### **Open Session**

#### **Meeting Called to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 6:33 p.m.  
by Board Chairman Maurice Baynard

#### **Board members Present:**

Maurice Baynard  
Joseph Foster  
Renee Whitby  
Larry Bell  
C. Wade Mosely  
Jan Gillespie- Walton  
Charis Jackson

#### **Board members absent:**

Lakiesha Creighton  
Donna Holmes- Lockett  
Monique Braxton

#### **Others Present:**

Gregory Shannon	CEO
Ericka Washington	Assistant Principal of School Operations
Michelle Thornton	CFO
Sara Ferguson	Assistant Principal of Instruction
Deleah Archer	Assistant Principal of Specialized Services
Jenita Lunsford	Board Liaison

#### **Libation (Mama Renee Whitby)**

Board member and Cultural Leader Renee Whitby lead members with libation.

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

Visitors were asked to state their names and titles for the record.

Leah Young - teacher and Tymeia Anderson- assistant to teacher Leah for the HASA program introduced themselves, gave their titles, explained their roles at Harambee and informed members that they would provide a presentation on the HASA program.

### **Roll Call**

Board member and Chairman Maurice Baynard asked Board members and the senior leadership team to give introductions. Board members and the senior leadership team introduced themselves, stated their names and titles.

### **Review of the January Meeting Minutes (Approval of minutes)**

Board Member Maurice Baynard asked if there were any corrections and/or additions to the January meeting minutes. He opened the floor to Board members for comments. There were no additions or corrections. Board member Wade made a motion to accept the January minutes as presented, seconded by board member Larry. All were in favor, none were opposed, and there was a unanimous motion to accept the minutes as presented.

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

Dr. Baynard turned the meeting to over to Greg for leadership reports.

#### **Organizational Leadership**

Greg reported that they are placing the final touches on their Charter Renewal process and will be submitting it to the School District on February 28<sup>th</sup>. Greg stated that they are partnering with attorney Barbara McNeil who will be their compliance officer. She will be leading and managing the meetings and information to keep them focused and to help them satisfy their conditions for renewal. This will help them to always be prepared on an ongoing basis.

#### **Mid-year appraisals**

Greg reported that the mid-year appraisals are due on Monday February 28<sup>th</sup> for executive teams and all divisions. He stated that all of them will be completed by the due date.

#### **Property Acquisition**

Greg reported that they are still searching for properties within a 3-5 mile radius from Harambee. They are currently looking at the old Shop Rite at 6710 Haverford Avenue. The property has 17,000 square feet available where they could create seven classrooms, four offices, a multipurpose room and also the opportunity to create an early learning center for students K-1 and 2. This site is currently under investigation while they continue to look at properties for the best fit for Harambee. He informed members that he, Board member Wade, Board member Larry and Michelle, CFO are scheduled to meet with the Owner/Developer to tour the facility

tomorrow.

### **Twin Doctors**

Greg reported that Board members Jan and Monique were instrumental in bringing the Twin Doctors to Harambee. The twin doctors are with the Philadelphia Chapter of the LINKS. They are scheduled for a monthly series of virtual workshops with the students at Harambee. He encouraged everyone to visit the website as the Twin Doctors are prominently featured on the landing page of their new website.

### **High School selection process**

Greg gave thanks to teachers and coaches Goldie, Danny and Nicole for their assistance. He reported that many of Harambee students have been accepted to some of the top high schools in the region. He informed everyone that Harambee is featuring students on their website that have been accepted to top tier high schools and encouraged everyone to visit the website.

### **Athletes**

Greg reported that three of their basketball players are top flight and highly recruited to different teams around the city. He indicated that they are working diligently to get them into Imhotep Charter. The coaches and scouts for Imhotep have been out to see these students and they have made the all-star team for their league. They are currently undefeated at 10/0 and one of the students won MVP of the all-star game.

### **Curriculum and Instruction, Sara Ferguson**

Greg turned the meeting over to Sara for the report on Instruction.

### **Observation protocol**

Sara reported that their observation protocol is well underway. All of the announced formal observations for staff have been completed and will be submitted prior to the close of business on Monday February 28<sup>th</sup>.

### **Student Success Plans**

Sara reported that they are now working on Student Success Plans and have been holding student success meetings for students that are not making adequate progress. They have been meeting with the students and their families in order to put a plan of support in place for the students to get them back on track. She reported that they started the program last year and it was very successful. They were able to change the trajectory of some of the students. They have been working on the plans this year while the students still have some time to rectify their situations. She stated that the plan also helps to bring the parents on board so that they have more involvement in the process.

### **Diagnostic Assessments**

Sara reported that the data shows that students are making great improvements.

She indicated that the students are really excited and have been inquiring about their scores. The students were aware of what their data had been in the past and now are very happy in the progress that they have made. Sara stated that they have been giving shout outs to the students on the progress that they have made.

### **Data Protocols**

Sara reported that the teachers have completed their data protocols based on diagnostic assessments. They have examined their data and analyzed it. The teachers saw strength and growth opportunities and have since formulated plans to address areas in which the students need support. They have also identified the areas that the students need to maintain and continue to excel in. She also reported that the data protocols for this administration of the diagnostics would be due on March 7<sup>th</sup>. She noted that they are focused on the data and using it to drive their instruction.

### **PSSA Assessments**

Sara reported that their PSSA assessments are coming up soon and they have identified students for the HITS team (Harambee Intervention Team Students). These are students that are on the cusp of proficient and advanced. She indicated that her team would be supporting those students to give them the extra push that they need to make the proficiency and to have an advanced score.

Sara concluded her report and asked if there were any questions. Dr. Baynard asked how many students are in danger of not making progress. Sara indicated that she does not have those numbers just yet, but would be able to provide that information later. She also mentioned that there was a very small sample of students tested last year.

### **School Operations, Ericka Washington**

Greg turned the meeting over to Ericka for the Operations report.

### **Capital Improvements & Facilities Master Plan**

Ericka reported that they have been working with the ICS contractor and plan to enter into a professional services agreement with them using the ESSER funding to conduct capital improvements in the building. She noted that they met with the contractors last week and they presented a professional agreement for their services, as they will be leading the process for them to bid out the work to make the improvements to the building, in particular the roof and HVAC system.

### **Health & Safety Plan**

Ericka reported that they have recently updated their Health & Safety Plan to align with the guidance that they received from the Philadelphia Department of Public Health. She noted that the major changes are related to the way in which they facilitate contact tracing. The Philadelphia Department of Public Health has loosened their standards for contact tracing and therefore, the focus is mainly on those times where students are unmasked. She indicated that this mostly happens

at Harambee during lunch and recess. She stated that they have adjusted their plan and they will continue to adjust their practices and follow the guidance from the Philadelphia Department of Public Health.

Ericka also reported that there are two items on the agenda that require a Board vote. She indicated that the Board would be voting later this evening on the two items below.

### **Emergency Instructional Time & Charter Board Resolution**

Ericka informed Board members that approval of the Emergency Instructional Time Template and the Charter Board Resolution Agreement must be signed and submitted to the School District. She stated that it is required in order for them to fully execute their new Charter Agreement.

### **100 Days of School**

Ericka concluded her report with announcing that the students celebrated one hundred days of school. Most of the students participated by attending the event dressed in creative costumes. They also participated in a parade in the building with drummers and a marching band. She reported that Board members Joe and Renee participated in the event by reading to the students. Ericka thanked Board members Joe and Renee for their participation and their continued support to the Instructional Program.

### **Specialized Services, Dr. Archer**

Greg turned the meeting over to Deleah for the Specialized Services report.

### **Files**

Deleah reported that they are continuing to review and monitor their hard copy files so that they can identify where they are and how good their files are. She indicated that the School District could periodically come in and to look at their files to measure and be sure that they are on the right track.

### **Professional Development**

Deleah reported that they are having Professional Development training on Friday February 25<sup>th</sup>

### **MTSS**

Deleah reported that they have created a MTSS committee comprised of a number of individuals that represent many areas. They have also created a process to track the different services that they provide in supporting the students. They have added members and coaches that represent all grades K-8.

### **Business & Finance, Michelle Thornton**

Greg turned the meeting over to Michelle for the Business and Finance report.

### **Paid enrollment**

Michelle reported that paid enrollment for December 2021 is 597 and reconciles to actual enrollment. She also reported that enrollment is steady and on target with the budget.

### **21st Century grant update**

Michelle reported that the 21<sup>st</sup> century grant expired on December 31, 2021 and that they are in the process of applying for the Cohort 11 grant. The application for Cohort 11 is in process and is due on March 25, 2022

### **Statement of Financial Interest Forms**

Michelle reported that all of the Statements of Financial Interest Forms have been completed and are now uploaded to the Epi-center. She thanked Board members for completing the forms and getting them back to her.

### **HR**

Michelle reported that she did not prepare an HR report but wanted to share with members that two of their staff have left. One staff member resigned and another had to be terminated. She reported that the first was a teacher of eighth grade science and the other taught six-grade math. She noted that they have added two Special Ed teachers and also filled the eighth grade science slot with an outstanding teacher. She reported that they also have a new hire coming in on February 28<sup>th</sup> to fill the sixth grade math slot. Michelle told members that she would be sure to include the HR report in the next Board report.

### **Dissolution Policy**

Michelle reported that the dissolution policy is a requirement that Schools must have a plan in place for closing as a condition of their Charter renewal. She stated that Harambee is required to develop a Dissolution Plan and Policy. The policy must be adopted at a board meeting and a vote and signatures are required by the Board. The resolution states that Board members are giving approval for Harambee to design the document. Michelle noted that they are working on the document and have presented it to the finance committee and to Barbara McNeil, the attorney for Harambee, for her review.

Greg indicated that this would conclude reports for the evening and asked for final questions or comments. There were no additional questions or comments.

Dr. Baynard introduced Leah Young to members and announced that she would be providing a presentation on the HASA program.

### **Presentation: (HASA) Harambee After School**

## **Academy**

Leah thanked the Board for providing her with the opportunity to present on behalf of the HASA program.

She began by discussing the overarching goals and objectives of the program. She explained that HASA is a program opportunity for students to enhance or enrich the in-class instruction that they receive on a daily basis and where those students who need additional support receive opportunities to reach success through intervention supports. She also indicated that HASA is a program where those students who are excelling are able to extend their learning through enriching activities that support and extend their classroom instruction.

She shared her screen and allowed members to follow the slides. She pointed out that 80% of the students in the HASA program that need intervention receive it and that 80% of students receiving intervention have had an increase in Math and Science by 3%. She moved on to the performance data and reviewed performance indicators in all grade levels that showed that they are meeting their goals.

Leah then highlighted Programming and Partnerships. She spoke about the Stroud Water Research Center Outdoor Classroom and shared pictures of the students at work. She continued to emphasize the collaborative efforts of teachers and partnerships with groups like Twin Sister Docs and Natural Lands. She also spoke of proposed partnerships with Stocks Vs. Sneaker, Community College of Philadelphia, Einstein Network, Philadelphia Library and a possible collaboration with Drexel University.

Leah expressed to members how much the program has grown and improved. She reached out to the Board and expressed the need for their help in the continued growth of Harambee.

Leah reminded members that the Cohort 11 grant application is in process and that they are trying to receive the maximum award of \$500,000. She noted that they want to serve 300 students opposed to the 250 students that they served in Cohort 8.

She asked members if there were any further questions from the presentation. Board member Larry asked how Board members might be able to help, as Leah had expressed earlier that there is a need for the Boards help with continued growth. Michelle answered on behalf of Leah and stated that Board members can help by providing some of their connections to the school through groups and organizations that they are affiliated with. Leah concluded the presentation by sharing a video created and filmed by Harambee students. The students provided commentary on the growing process of foods that they planted and harvested in their garden. The presentation was concluded with many thanks to the Board for their support.

**Old Business**

None

**New Business**

None

**ACTION ITEMS:**

**Action Item: 1)** Correction of Previous minutes regarding active Board membership. It is noted that the Board is in possession of an email confirming that Board member Marirose Roach had an official resignation date of January 2020.

**Motion:** Board member Larry made a motion to accept the official resignation from Board member Marirose Roach with an official date of January 2020. Board member Wade seconded the motion, all were in favor, and none were opposed.

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

**Action Item: 2)** Vote on Emergency Instructional Time

**Motion:** Board Member Larry made a motion to accept the Emergency Instructional Time resolution as presented, seconded by Board member Wade. All were in favor, none were opposed.

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

**Action Item: 3)** Charter Board Resolution