

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

Board Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, June 29th 2022

The meeting of the Board of Trustees Public Meeting was held on Wednesday June 29th 2022 via Zoom at 6:30p.m.

Open Session

Meeting Called to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:32 p.m.
by Board Chairman Maurice Baynard

Board Members Present:

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

Board Members Absent:

Lakiesha Creighton
Donna Holmes- Lockett

Others Present:

Gregory Shannon	CEO
Michelle Thornton	CFO
Deleah Archer	Assistant Principal of Specialized Services
Nakia Brown	Assistant Principal of Instruction
Danielle Bryant	Executive Assistant to the CEO
Jenita Lunsford	Board Liaison

Libation (Renee Whitby)

Introduction of Visitors and Others Present

There were no visitors present at this public meeting

Roll Call

Board Chair 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 May 25th Board Meeting Minutes (Approval of minutes)

Dr. Baynard Board Chairman asked if there were any corrections and/or additions to the May 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 May minutes as presented, seconded by Board member Joseph. All were in favor, none were opposed, and there was a unanimous motion to accept the minutes as presented.

Approval: 8 AYE: 8 Nays: 0 Abstentions: 0 Absent: 2

CEO Report, Greg Shannon

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

Organizational Leadership

Annual Leadership Retreat

Greg reported that the Annual Leadership Retreat will be held on Wednesday July 13th, Thursday July 14th and Friday July 15^h 2022. The event will be hosted at The Desmond Hotel in Malvern, Pa. again this year. He reported that virtual access is available through ZOOM. The event will begin with lunch on Wednesday, a full day on Thursday and a morning half-day on Friday. He noted that the focus of the Retreat will be building on last year's topic of becoming data driven and system aligned.

Organizational Expansion/Property Acquisition

Greg reported that they are still engaged with the Flynn Group and most recently they learned that they would have to share the property that they were considering with a Dollar Tree. However, the deal with Dollar Tree fell through and the Developer has asked through their real estate broker if they would be interested in an additional space in the same building or to occupy the entire building. He said that they are partnering with a number of Early Childhood providers to create a pipeline of kindergarten children in Delaware County that would allow them to afford the property.

Summer Program 2022

Greg reported that they have a robust summer program underway with Nakia Brown, Leah and support from Dr. Archer. They currently have about 90 children registered in grades K-5. The program was underway on June 27

th and will conclude on Thursday July 21st.

Fall Fundraising Event

Greg reported that they are in the process of planning their Fall Fundraising Event and gave many thanks to those who participated in the Spring Fundraising Event at the Pyramid Club. He said that one of the participants, Dr. McPhearson wrote a letter indicating how impressed he was with Harambee and the students. He pledged to remain engaged with Harambee and included a check in the amount of \$1000.00 dollars. Greg informed members that he is currently working with Roz McPhearson and the McPhearson Group in planning their Fall Fundraising event. He noted that they are looking at the weeks of October 17th and October 24 to host the event as a luncheon and possibly to be held at the Belmont Mansion. He said to stay tuned for details. Greg indicated that this would conclude his Board updates and asked if there were any questions. Greg turned the meeting over to Nakia for the Curriculum and Instruction Report.

Curriculum/ Instruction, Nakia Brown

Nakia reported that they just completed their spring curriculum project that included updating their Scope and Sequence for both ELA and Mathematics. They also created a 40 week planning and scheduling timeline. It allows the teachers in ELA and Math to know which assessment anchor they are teaching and how long they are teaching it and what to do with the data after they receive it.

Instruction

Nakia reported that this summer they are engaged in their summer academic enrichment HASA program. There will be 89 students serviced in the HASA program. In addition each student in the building grades K-7 and arriving 8th graders will receive a 9-week booklet of enrichment and remediation to combat learning loss.

Assessment

Nakia reported that this week in the summer program the students are participating in baseline assessments. They will administer the assessment 6-27 through 6-30 to determine how much growth the students have made. She noted that in the last week of the program they will administer a post- test so that teachers can do a data analysis to see if they were able to make any gains and which areas students still have deficits. This information will be provided to the regular teacher for next year so that learning can continue. Nakia concluded her report and opened the floor for questions.

Board member Renee asked if the 9-week enrichment/remediation is on chrome books. Nakia responded that the 9-week enrichment and remediation is an actual workbook.

Board member Renee also asked if she could have a copy of the social studies

curriculum to review. Nakia noted that she would send a copy to Board member Renee.

Dr. Baynard asked Nakia if she has a sense of the formative assessment data overall from K-8 now that the year has wrapped. Nakia noted that she is currently transitioning into the position and gathering that data now. Greg turned the meeting over to Deleah for the Specialized Services report.

Specialized Services, Deleah Archer

Deleah reported that they are at the end of the year and they really do not have a lot going on in Special Education. She said that they are focusing on end of the year reports that are due. She noted that their Career Readiness Report was completed and identified in Infinite Campus. She also reported that the Special Education State Reports were sent to their PIMS coordinator to be uploaded. She said that they are running their ESY program for students that qualify for extended school year, which is a part of their IEP. They have 13 students participating and about 6 other students in the HASA program with related services. Deleah concluded her report and opened the floor for questions.

Dr. Baynard asked that in response to the global pandemic, if there has been an increase at Harambee in the number of students testing for special education. Deleah responded that yes there has been an increase in the number of students and she thinks that it may be because parents were noticing changes in their children and their ability to grasp the concepts that were taking place in the classroom. She noted that this year they identified 19 new students with IEP's, 3 students for 504's and 1 gifted student. She said that they completed 42 evaluation reports this year, which is a great number of evaluations.

Business/Finance, Michelle Thornton

Michelle reported that she has 3-4 key updates to report this evening.

2022-2023 Per Pupil rate

Michelle indicated that the budget was approved last month without having a final notice from the School District of what the rate would be. She said that they proposed it to be at 6% decrease, however they received the announcement and it is actually a 13% decrease. She said it is about 12.9% decrease in regular education and less than a 1% decrease in special education. She said that she believes the adjustment will probably increase and that the state and the district are moving schools to utilize their stimulus money.

Michelle noted that for Harambee it amounts to approximately \$835,000.00 that they have to make an adjustment for. She said that there are a few places that they will have to pull that money from. She noted that they have about \$720,000.00 dollars in contingency funds that they will pull from. She said that they would not pull the entire amount from those funds because they still need to have a cushion in place. They

will pull approximately \$550,000.00 from the contingency fund, which would bring the contingency to \$167,000.00. The other areas that they will pull funds from will be the depreciation fund. They will pull approximately \$188,000.00 from depreciation planning, which would leave about \$97,000.00 that they would have to use from their ESSER funding.

Fund Raising Event

Michelle reported that they continue to receive dollars from the event and at the last Board meeting they reported \$9,050.00 dollars net revenue, but as they continue to receive funds they are now at a balance of 10,650.00. She noted that they are still hearing from people who want to give and she encouraged any Board members that have not given to please get those donations in as they close their books for the year.

Talent Acquisition

Michelle announced that in addition to the positions that the Board is already aware of that are not returning, their culture teacher has decided to retire as well. Fortunately, they were able to hire someone to fill that position. She said that there were other separations that included 2 Certified teachers, 1 Non-certified teacher and 1 Special Education teacher. She reported that they have hired a few new teachers and are still in the process of interviewing, but they still need 2 additional Special Education teachers, 3 General Education teachers, 2 Science teachers and 1 Math teacher. She said that 2 out of the 7 positions are pending which still leaves 5 open positions.

Michelle reminded members that in their last presentation they introduced a new model for next year, which will allow for a paraprofessional for each grade level. This would give them an additional 5 paraprofessional positions. She asked members to refer any teachers or paraprofessionals that they might know to her. She also informed members that they have completed all evaluations and all contract meetings with staff. She said that all staff have their contracts and are in the process of signing them through the Bamboo system. She concluded her report and opened the floor for questions.

Board member Renee asked if they are going back to a system that they used before with paraprofessionals, and how qualified are the paraprofessionals to really assist the teachers with educating the student's as it had been a major problem in the past. Michelle responded that with the paraprofessionals and substitute teachers, they look for candidates that are qualified and most of them are on track to become teachers. She said that as a result of the pandemic they must have the infusion of additional support in order to help student's growth. She added that these positions may not be a permanent situation past a 5-year period, but for now, they are needed and that is how they want to utilize the stimulus money.

Board member Renee also asked Michelle to provide some insight on the new

culture teacher that was hired. Michelle agreed to share the teacher's resume and indicated that she worked with Harambee before and has also covered for the culture teacher at Harambee in the past.

Board member Wade asked if the paraprofessionals would be coupled with the coaches. Michelle asked Nakia to speak to that question. Nakia replied that under each cluster there will be coaches and the paraprofessionals will have their own coach for the grade to which they are assigned. Dr. Baynard opened the floor to any questions or concerns from Board members.

Dr. Baynard indicated that there were two things to mention before adjourning the meeting. He said that this is the end of the school year and the Leadership Retreat is coming up in a few weeks, so they need to make a decision, since they will not have a July meeting when they would have the first meeting of the next year. He said the calendar that was submitted to School District reflects August as the 1st meeting of the year, therefore the first meeting of the next school year will be the last Wednesday in August.

Dr. Baynard also noted that he wanted to mention that Board Member Charis would be attending her last Board meeting as Parent Representative. He thanked her for her service in the representation of the parents. He stated that the Board values and loves her and thanks her for her hard work years of service.

Board Member Wade asked what would preclude Board Member Charis from continuing to be a member of the Board. Dr. Baynard replied, that there was nothing to preclude her from continuing as a Board member if she so chooses. He stated that they have set a precedent that any parent can continue on as a member and there is no need for a vote, she simply has to indicate to the Board that she would like to remain as a member. Board member Charis indicated that she wanted to remain as a member and was delighted to know that she was welcomed. All of the Board members were in favor and none were opposed.

Board member Wade made a recommendation that they have discussions on how to improve the retention rate at Harambee. He noted that the turnover appears to be a topic worth discussing. Dr. Baynard suggested that the discussion take place during the Leadership Retreat. Greg mentioned that it could be included but interjected that they have a great core staff that has been retained over years. He indicated that some of the issues are due to labor force availability as well as performance issues of some staff. Michelle also noted that there are staffing supply shortages nationally but they also have shortages because of different demographics compared to 15-20 years ago. She noted that they have interviewed paraprofessionals that are asking for \$75,000 dollars because other organizations may be offering those salaries. She agreed that they need to come together to review and evaluate what they can do as an organization about the retention issue.

Dr. Baynard also agreed that there were staffing issues nationally and welcomed the conversation. Dr. Baynard asked Michelle to take the lead to move the discussion forward.

Action Items:

None

Old Business:

None

New Business:

None

Public Concerns:

There were no public concerns

Motion: Board member Joseph made a motion to adjourn the meeting seconded by Board member Wade. All were in favor, none were opposed.

Motion:

Approval: 8 AYE: 8 Nays: 0 Abstentions: 0 Absent: 2

Next Public Meeting:

The next public Board meeting will be held on Wednesday, August 31st 2022

Submitted by Jenita Lunsford, Board Liaison