

Harambee Institute of Science and Technology Charter School

Board of Trustees Public Meeting Minutes

Board Meeting Minutes Wednesday, January 25, 2023

The meeting of the Board of Trustees Public Meeting was held on Wednesday January 25, 2023 via Zoom at 6:30p.m.

Open Session

Meeting Called to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m.
by Board Chairman Maurice Baynard

Board Members Present:

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

Board Members Absent:

Others Present:

Gregory Shannon	CEO
Michelle Thornton	CFO
Deleah Archer	Assistant Principal of Specialized Services
Nakia Brown	Assistant Principal of Instruction
David Rosario	Assistant Principal of School Operations
Danielle Bryant	Executive Assistant to the CEO
Baba Terrance	Facilities Manager
Jenita Lunsford	Board Liaison

Libation (Mama Renee Whitby)

Libation was lead by cultural leader and Board member Renee Whitby.

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.

Introduction of Visitors and Others Present

Jen Leone, Phil Solomon, Chris Rear, Matt Melady (all members of the ICS team) for exterior and mechanical upgrades
Zakia Price- Parent of Harambee student

Review of the November 30th Board Meeting Minutes (Approval of minutes)

Dr. Baynard Board Chair stated that the Board has already ratified the November 30th Board meeting minutes. He explained that they held a separate meeting due to an upload that needed to be submitted earlier. He said that the following Board members were present and voted to approve the meeting minutes as presented:

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

Approval: 5 AYE: 5 Nays: 0 Abstentions: 0 Absent: 0

CEO Report, Greg Shannon

Dr. Baynard Board Chairman turned the meeting over to Greg and he thanked Board member Wade for his efforts with the HVAC project. Greg introduced the team from ICS and announced that Jen Leone the project manager would provide a brief presentation on exterior and mechanical upgrades to the building. She proceeded with the presentation highlighting that there are 17 rooftop units being replaced, as well as siding to the building to begin in 2023 and to be completed by summer 2024. She said that they will begin the windows project this summer and it should be completed by the 2023-2024 school year. The roof access unit replacement is scheduled to be completed by August 2024, which will be critical because that is when ESSER funds expire.

Board member Larry asked if there were any stipulations in the bid documents for minority contractors or labor. Jen said that yes they try to reach out to as many minority contractors as they can to get them involved with these type of projects, but all contractors must meet all of the requirements of the ESSER funding. The ESSER funds layout all of the requirements and the process for the bids and unfortunately they did not receive any bids from minority owned businesses. Chris from ICS mentioned that they could add the stipulation for minority businesses for some of the other bids, which would need to be put in the bid documents upfront. Greg thanked ICS for their presentation and thanked the

internal team for their efforts as well.

CEO Board Report, Greg Shannon

Enrollment/Lottery

Greg reported that they have successfully completed the enrollment lottery process and they have gained 108 new students, which encompasses approximately 87 new families.

New Prospective Board Member

Greg reported that both he and Dr. Baynard have a meeting next Monday with a prospective new Board member. Her name is Dr. Shawn Blue currently on the staff at Jefferson University.

Mid-Year Appraisals

Greg reported that all members of their faculty staff and senior leaders are having appraisals done on their job and work performance at midyear. Each senior leader is heavily involved with the appraisals of the instructional staff, operations staff and the specialized services staff.

Fundraising and Development

Greg reported that they have included in everyone's Board packet two proposals for fundraising and development. He said that they are going to engage in two signature fundraising events and will continue to work with Roz McPhearson. The first will be their 5 for 50 campaign which means five dollars for the 50 years of service in their community. They will ask each member of their parent brigade to donate for the month of February, March and April five dollars per child to Harambee. He said that all donations will go toward their HBCU 2023 College post secondary "Get on the Bus" tour. They will also ask their faculty, staff, administration and Board to match dollar for dollar what ever the children and families donate.

Greg announced that the second fundraising event will be similar to the event that they held last spring. It will take place at the Pyramid Club on Wednesday evening May 17th 2023. They will be reaching out to University Presidents to request that they participate in a panel discussion with the theme of "Then and Now". They want to discuss the importance of post secondary education and what it was like when these University Presidents were in Middle School and what it is like now as a University President. They have invited President's from Lincoln University, Community College of Philadelphia, Cheyney University and Temple University. They are asking Friends of Harambee, Board members and the Senior Leadership team to donate \$2,500.00 give or get. They are suggesting that members and staff utilize their networks to help support their \$2,500.00 donation.

PDE Corrective Action

Greg reported that they have received notice from the PA Department of Education that Harambee has been placed in corrective action as a result of last years PSSA scores. He said that the reason they were placed in corrective action is because it is a designation for any LEA who's performance on state assessments and data metrics falls below standards in any of the domains such as academic achievement, participation rate and student attendance. He explained that when their special education enrollment increased, they were counted for a student group but they were never informed by PDE that they actually had enough students to form a student group. Also, the special education student's performance in Math and on the PSSA fell below standards along with their attendance. He acknowledged that they had two McKinney- Vento students with 97 and 84 absences respectively, which skewed their special education attendance downward and placed Harambee below standards.

Greg told members that their plan to get out of corrective action would be to focus on their formative assessments of the instructional performance of their special education students particularly in the content area of math. He said that they would also focus on student attendance for special education students with monthly parent meetings. Greg concluded his report and shared some good news with members. He wanted members to know that one of their 5th grade students has landed a recurring role on the hit television series "Abbot Elementary". Greg opened the floor for questions. Dr. Baynard asked if we are specifically underserving the Special ED population by simply following them more closely. He suggested that they might need a unique or additional intervention. Greg responded that they are approaching it in a bifurcated manner by working more creatively to deliver interventions from their case managers and also to increase what they are receiving from their general education teachers. Greg turned the meeting over to Nakia for her report on Instruction.

Instruction, Nakia Brown

Nakia reported that they have been focusing on some of the new curriculum resources that have been added. She shared that Study Island is a program by which they can access more state standards and common core standards to help students focus on specific trends and target areas where they see deficits. It also provides them an opportunity to have a benchmark system in science and to be able to track the student's science data. She said that over the next three months they would have an intense focus on small group instruction using their paraprofessionals and their intervention paraprofessionals. She reported that they are also partnering with some of the ASA schools and the African Schools Association (ASA) to increase academic rigor in student achievement.

Nakia stated that they now have enough data sets to begin their IReady progress monitoring. This will allow them to predict which percentage of their students will leave them on grade level. She said that they have a six-week unit assessment where the students take an assessment on the standards that have been taught

over those six weeks. She said that they will use all of those data points to continue to plan for students during their small group instruction and through their IReady independent learning path. Nakia concluded her report and opened the floor for questions.

Dr. Baynard asked what should they be focusing on the most to ensure that eighth grade students leave Harambee on grade level in both reading and Math. Nakia responded that she believes that they should be focusing on increasing academic rigor at grade level with quality work on grade level. She said that there are four things that help to increase academic achievement:

- Appropriate grade level assignments
- Teacher motivation
- Deep student engagement
- Reading and writing well with access to books

Zakia Price-Collins, parent of a Harambee student asked if there is a designated space in Harambee for a school library. Greg said that it is there intent to continue to build digital libraries. Greg passed the meeting to David for his report on operations.

Operations, David Rosario

David reported that they had an offsite review of their food services back in November 2022 to be followed up by an onsite audit. He reported that the onsite audit took place today on January 25th. He said that the audit consisted of their food services and cafeteria and an exit interview from the PA Department of Education. He stated that at the conclusion of the audit they passed with flying colors. There were no financial problems with the audit, only a few clerical pieces that will be fairly simple to fix. David informed the Board that they will not have another audit for the next five years.

Continued Infinite Campus Functionality

David reported that they have successfully placed all of their student data and records in order with grade book and Infinite Campus working together seamlessly. He said that they are currently working on their student portal and creating student passwords. He also reported that their ROBO calling ability is both functional and operational. They will begin with messaging for tardiness and absenteeism. The planned time for the calls to go out to parents is from 10:00 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. to report tardiness and absentees for the day. David concluded his report and opened the floor for questions. Greg turned the meeting over to Deleah for her report on Specialized Services.

Specialized Services, Deleah Archer

Deleah stated that she would be brief since she did not have very much to report to the Board this month. She told members that they had been very busy with a

number of audits in the first half of the year.

Child Find Count

Deleah reported that the State requires that they count and identify all of their students that receive Special Education services by December 1st. She told members that they are 100% in compliance.

Bureau of Special Education Cyclical monitoring

Deleah reported that the state requires cyclical monitoring every six years. She stated that they were able to complete the audit with 90% compliance. However, the state requires that they have 100% compliance so they have 10% of work that they need to clean up in order to comply with items that have been requested and they are currently in that process. Deleah told members that part of the packets that they received in their Board packets are polices that require Board approval and are a part of the 10% that needs to be rectified for local and state regulations.

McKinney-Vento Audit

Deleah explained that McKinney-Vento is the program, which supports their students that are displaced or homeless and they were able to complete this audit with 100% compliance. Deleah concluded her report and Greg turned the meeting over to Michelle for her report on Business and Finance.

Business, Finance and HR Michelle Thornton

Michelle reported that she would only have a couple of updates this evening. She reported that they were able to finalize the audit and get it submitted to the School District, Epicenter and all other authorities meeting their deadlines and submitting it on time. She also reported that their annual Bond meeting went well and now they are in the process of Budget meetings for next year.

Michelle reported that they are in the process of advertising and interviewing for teachers and have had a host of interviews both this week and last week. She reminded members that they were awarded the Cohort 11 grant for the After School Program and over the past couple of weeks they have been meeting with their partners. She mentioned that they also applied for a Farm to School grant and will find out around July if they have been awarded. Michelle concluded her report and passed it back to Greg. Greg indicated that this would conclude updates for this evening and passed the meeting back to Dr. Baynard. He announced that the newest member of the Board (Stephon Fitzpatrick) needed to resign from the Board, but will continue to be a member of the Friends of Harambee and will continue to provide support to Harambee students. Dr. Baynard opened the floor for questions and comments. He acknowledged that in December the Board met and approved the 2022 Audit.

Public Concerns

None

Old Business

None

New Business

None

Action Items 1) Vote to approve Special Education Board Policies (9)

Motion: Board member Larry made a motion to approve the Special Education policies seconded by Board member Joseph. All were in favor, none were opposed. Passed unanimously

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

Action Item 2) Vote to approve the Board of Directors Calendar

Motion: Board member Joseph made a motion to approve the Board of Directors yearly calendar as presented, seconded by Board member Larry. All were in favor, none were opposed. Passed Unanimously

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

Action item 3) Vote to approve ESSER Capital Projects (HVAC)

Motion: Board Member Joseph made a motion to approve the ESSER Capital Projects seconded by Board member Wade. All were in favor, none were opposed. Passed Unanimously

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

Motion: Board Member Larry made a motion adjourn the public session; all were in favor none were opposed.

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

Next Public Meeting:

The next Public Board Meeting will be held on Wednesday, February 22nd 2023.

