

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

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## **Board Meeting Minutes Wednesday May 29<sup>th</sup> 2024**

The meeting of the Board of Trustees Public Meeting was held on Wednesday, May 29<sup>th</sup> 2024 at 6:33 p.m.

### **Open Session**

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

Board Chairman Maurice Baynard called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m.

#### **Board Members Present:**

Maurice Baynard  
C. Wade Mosely  
Jan Gillespie- Walton  
Renee Whitby  
Shawn Blue  
Charis Jackson

#### **Board Members Absent:**

Larry Bell  
Donna Holmes Lockett

#### **Others Present:**

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

#### **Libation (Board member Renee Whitby)**

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

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

There were no visitors present at this meeting

#### **Roll Call**

Board 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 and approval of the April 24<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting Minutes**

Dr. Baynard asked if there were any corrections and/or additions to the April 24<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting Minutes. He opened the floor to Board members for comments. There were no additions or corrections. Board member Wade made a motion seconded by Board member Renee to accept the minutes as presented, all were in favor, none were opposed and there was a unanimous motion to accept the minutes as presented.

**Approval: 6      AYE: 0      Nays: 0      Abstentions: 0      Absent: 2**

Board Chairman Maurice Baynard turned the meeting over to Greg for the CEO report. Greg began with reciting the Mission, Vision and Core Values of the organization.

Harambee Institute exists to offer our community an education with a focus on the origins, current status, and future of the African world.

Our mission is to educate students to succeed as global citizens with a clear awareness of “who I am, where I am from, where I am going, and how I get there.”

Our vision is a collective and informed African American community utilizing science and technology as a means of promoting education for self-reliance, locally and globally.

Our core values are:

Greatness: Pursuit of excellence in all we do

Accountability: Owning what we do and who we are

Innovation: Open to new ideas with a growth mindset

Integrity: Honesty, transparency, and unity in all we do.

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

#### **Graduation Ceremony**

Greg invited members to attend the 2024 closing ceremony on Wednesday June 12<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 a.m. He said that it would be held outside and they have permission from the city to close 66<sup>th</sup> street for the activity. There are approximately 53 students graduating and Board members are encouraged to attend the exercise.

#### **School Reorganization 2024-2025**

Greg reported that they have 12 school days remaining in the 2024 school year. June 14<sup>th</sup> is the terminal date for staff and June 13<sup>th</sup> is the terminal date for students. They have concluded the reorganization of the school as of Friday May

24<sup>th</sup>. He said that every teacher has received their content area, grade level, class list and their schedule for next year. In addition, all teachers that may be moving have received their new classroom locations. Everything has already been set up for the new school year 2024-2025.

### **Year-end Closing Protocols**

Greg reported that all protocols are well underway. They have a school closing checklist that will go out to staff tomorrow morning and they will begin to inventory student text books and technology. They have already begun collecting student chrome books and next week they will collect staff Apple laptops. It is their intent to reach completion by the final week of school.

### **Summer Programming 2024**

Greg reported that summer programming is well under way as they began enrolling students one month ago. The dates are Monday June 24<sup>th</sup> through Thursday July 18<sup>th</sup> and will run Monday -Thursday 8:30 a.m. until 3:30 p.m. They have partners in place who will be providing enrichment.

### **Summer Leadership Retreat**

Greg reported that the leadership retreat will be held Wednesday, July 17<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>. The focus for this year's retreat will be on student support and the MTSS process. He said that in their past retreats they have focused on Mission, Vision and Core Values and then moved on to being Data Driven and Systems Aligned. He said that over the past two years they placed their focus on Instruction and now that those have been accomplished they want to focus on the MTSS process, to provide students with a systemic approach around support and intervention. Greg said that they are closing this school year with an eye towards the future and another amazing school year 2024-2025. Greg concluded his report and opened the floor to questions.

Board member Wade asked about the school reorganization and how many staff will be retained versus how many will not be retained. Greg responded that the reorganization from a general standpoint means that every teacher that is being retained has their schedule, content area, grade level, class list and room assignment. In terms of retention in General education everyone is being retained with the exception of two. In Special education there are three not being retained and in Operations there is one person not being retained. Greg said that they are planning to fill those vacancies for those who are not returning. Greg turned the floor to Nakia for her report on Instruction.

### **Instruction, Nakia Brown**

#### **Curriculum**

Nakia reported that they are in the process of re-ordering and ordering their instructional materials, consumable books and the supplemental materials that go with their curriculum in ELA, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies.

#### **Instruction**

Nakia reported that they are in the process of finishing their post conference observations. She said that 95% of the teaching staff has received an unannounced observation. They are using a best practice survey for teachers to be sure that the decisions that are made come directly from data that is provided by the teachers.

### **Assessment**

Nakia reported that they have successfully completed the PSSA assessment window for 2023-2024. They are hoping to receive their first set of data on June 4<sup>th</sup> for the ELA test that went in for early scoring. She said that they should receive the second set in late June and the official documents will come in late September, early October. She said that they had a very smooth testing window thanks to all of the administrators. Nakia concluded her report and opened the floor to questions. Dr. Baynard asked Nakia if she has the percentages of Harambee students that were able to complete all portions of the PSSA's. Nakia responded that they had approximately 96-97% of the students that completed all portions. She said that they were shooting for 99% but they are still above the 95% that is required for participation. Greg turned the meeting to David for his report on Operations.

### **Operations, David Rosario School Reorganization/Closing**

David reported that his efforts have been focused on meeting the deadline of May 24<sup>th</sup> for the completion of school reorganization for the upcoming school year. He said that they have been successful in the school reorganization process. Greg turned the meeting to Dr. Archer for her report on Specialized Services.

### **Specialized Services, Deleah Archer 3rd Quarter Corrective Action**

Dr. Archer reported that they recently completed their third quarter Corrective Action report for the state and they exceeded their target by having 10% growth in ELA and Math.

### **100% PASA participation rate**

Dr. Archer reported that they completed PASA with a 100% participation rate in grades 3-6.

### **ESY program 2024**

Dr. Archer reported that they are ready for the ESY program which will follow along with the same dates as the summer program beginning on Tuesday June 25<sup>th</sup> through Thursday July 18<sup>th</sup>. The ESY program is only a half-day program beginning at 9:00 a.m. until 12:00 p.m. She said that they have approximately 40 students enrolled in the program. She explained that the ESY program is required for students with IEP's. Dr. Archer told members that they are also planning to add an Emotional Support program next year to better serve those

students with emotional support issues as a disability. She said that they would be working diligently this summer to prepare for that program.

### **Student Supports MTSS summer retreat and focus for 24-25 SY**

Dr. Archer reported that the summer retreat will focus on the MTSS program. She explained that MTSS is a Multi- tiered System of Support that involves everyone, including the students, staff and parents. She said that this summer they will outline how they can improve the MTSS program. They will begin looking at areas of need that they have noticed from the data and how they can best provide support for students. She said that Michelle will talk next about the MTSS program and how it will impact the budget. She concluded her report and opened the floor to questions.

Greg commented that their intent this summer is to put together a systemic, formalized MTSS program to document and formalize the process for the students.

### **Business, Finance and HR- Michelle Thornton**

Michelle greeted members and reported that she would be presenting the 2024-2025 proposed budget. She noted that a copy of the budget was placed in everyone's Board packet and she would provide details of the budget. She told members that part of their focus would be the MTSS program and how the budget would be impacted by the new work. She said that she would share budget highlights and discuss assumptions, revenue & expenses. The final two steps will include timelines and next steps.

Michelle indicated that one of the ways in which you will see the impact to the budget is the engagement with an expert that will help to develop a plan for the MTSS program. She said that they have already started this planning and the group that has been selected will be leading the Leadership Retreat in July. The next area in the budget is staff training and who will implement the system. They will have executive leaders involved as well as key teachers and coaches that will work to develop the plan and also in implementing it throughout the organization. She stated that another way in which the budget would be impacted is additional stipends for staff members. She indicated that the final impact upon the budget would be around professional development for the entire staff in order to implement the MTSS system.

Michelle pointed members to the 2024-2025 General Fund Operating Budget and noted again that it was included in the Board packets. She shared her screen and reviewed key areas of the proposed budget and highlighted the areas that would have the greatest impact on the budget.

### **Key Budget Assumptions**

Michelle told members that the budget is based upon a proposed 5% increase in their per pupil rate. She said that the rate comes from the State and they are waiting to receive their announcement soon. She said that the budget is also based upon an average enrollment of 596 students. One of the other assumptions is based upon the Special Education population being 13-15% of their total population. In addition there is a 3% cost of living increase in the base salary being provided to staff along with a 3% decrease in the PSERS rate. The final assumption area is a small residual of funds left over from the ESSER funds and 21st Century grant award that is included in this budget. Michelle said that key assumptions simply means that these are the key factors that have the greatest impact on the budget and any change could have a significant impact on the overall budget. She reviewed the remaining local, federal and state areas of the proposed budget and said that it should balance. There is proposed 12.1 million dollars of expenditures.

### **Timeline**

Michelle said that they are expected to implement this budget for their July 1, new year and it is the expectation that the Board would vote on the budget tonight. She said that they had already met with the Finance Committee last month and had a meeting yesterday in which there were a few changes. She indicated that she would send out an updated copy to members reflecting those changes. Michelle explained that there was a formula change with the unemployment taxes that gave them an increase in the contingency funding. They made the adjustments that will show in their contingency fund. She said that they are hoping to have the budget approved and signed off within the next two weeks at the latest.

### **Next steps**

Michelle noted that the MTSS program will be the focus of their investment for the year and they are looking forward to a Board vote. She concluded her report and opened the floor to questions.

Board member Wade asked if there was an error in the unemployment tax. Michelle said that the salary cap was inadvertently entered into the incorrect line instead of the rate, which caused the formula error. The adjustment was made and they placed the residual amount into the contingency fund.

Dr. Baynard asked Michelle how long do they expect ESSER funding to hold out in the future. Michelle responded that the ESSER funding goes away this year, but she has been on a number of webinars this year and there is additional federal funding out there. She said that they have already applied for some of those funds that will be in the form of smaller grants. She said that they are hoping that there will still be funding for learning loss since it is still an issue for the educational system. Dr. Baynard opened the floor for a vote on the 2024-2025 operating budget.

## **Action Items**

### **Vote: Approval of 2024-2025 Operating Budget**

**Motion:** Board Chair Maurice Baynard made a motion to approve the 2024-2025 budget, seconded by Board member Wade. All were in favor, none were opposed and it was passed unanimously.

Approval: 6            AYE: 0            Nays: 0            Abstentions: 0            Absent: 2

### **Vote: Approval of the 990 by electronic vote**

**Motion:** Approval of the 990 by electronic vote read into minutes by Board Chair Maurice Baynard. Members included Maurice Baynard, C. Wade Mosely, Jan Gillespie- Walton, Renee Whitby and Larry Bell. All were in favor, none were opposed and it was passed unanimously.

Approval: 5            AYE: 0            Nays: 0            Abstentions: 0            Absent: 3

### **Vote: Approval of Change Orders for the Summer Refresh Project**

**Motion:** Board member Renee made a motion to approve the Change Orders as presented, seconded by Board member Jan, All were in favor, none were opposed and it was passed unanimously.

Approval: 6            AYE: 0            Nays: 0            Abstentions: 0            Absent: 2

Dr. Baynard opened the floor for additional questions or comments from Board members. Board member Wade suggested that for expediency the finance committee review the budget on at least a quarterly basis. Michelle said that they usually review budget vs. actuals on a regular basis and agreed that she would bring it to the committee for review.

### **Old Business**

None

### **New Business**

None

### **Public Concerns**

None

**Motion to Adjourn:** Board member Renee made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Board member Charis. All were in favor, none were opposed.

**Approval:** AYE: 6 Nays: 0 Abstentions: 0 Absent: 2

Next Meeting: Wednesday, June 26, 2024