



Achievement House Cyber Charter School Board of Trustees

Public Meeting Minutes

March 17, 2020

The Executive Session commenced at 6:00 p.m. and continued until approximately 7:05 p.m.

- I. Pledge of Allegiance
- II. Roll Call – Board Members Present:
 - Mrs. Marilou Strangarity (President)
 - Ms. Lisabeth Sweeney (Vice President)
 - Mr. Don Fraatz (Secretary)
 - Dr. Robert Maranto
- III. Notification of Recording
 - A. Marilou Strangarity announced that the Public Session would be recorded on an audio device.
- IV. Executive Session Statement
 - A. M. Strangarity announced that the Executive Session was held to discuss COVID-19.
- V. Approval of Minutes from February 18, 2020 Board Meeting
 - A. M. Strangarity called for a motion to approve the minutes from the board meeting.
 1. Motion to approve the minutes from the February 18, 2020 board meeting by Bob Maranto. Seconded by Lisabeth Sweeney. Unanimous.
- VI. Governance
 - A. PCPCS Resolution - Don Asplen called for a motion that the board adopt the Pennsylvania Coalition of Public Charter Schools Resolution opposing the governor's three-tiered special education funding plan.
 1. Motion to approve the Pennsylvania Coalition of Public Charter Schools Resolution by M. Strangarity. Seconded by L. Sweeney. Unanimous.
 - B. Student Equipment Purchase – D. Asplen called for a motion to approve the \$48,263 purchase of student laptops.
 1. Motion to approve the \$48,263 purchase of student laptops by M. Strangarity. Seconded by L. Sweeney. Unanimous.
- VII. Finance/Business Report
 - A. Ryan Schumm provided the monthly Treasurer's Report
 1. R. Schumm stated that in response to the concerns of the coronavirus disruptions they are making sure that business office functions remain uninterrupted. They worked to create a secure cyber environment for their employees to be able to work at home so that confidential information is not compromised. He is confident that payroll, accounts payable and other business functions will be able to continue regardless of what the next weeks or months may bring.
 2. His primary concern is cash flow since school districts are having their cash flow disrupted. What that means for us is that we expect to see a delay in receiving our school districts funds.
 3. R. Schumm stated that we have 2/3's of a year where we could not collect from districts and maintain uninterrupted business operations. This puts us in a good place to make responsible decisions over the next few months.
 4. M. Strangarity asked Laurie Fiori if she thought there was a need for the board to give approval for emergency accessibility of funds to D. Asplen or to R. Schumm. L. Fiori responded no but also mentioned that they should think about the availability of our credit line as the pandemic gets worse. She suggested we may want to borrow from the credit line now.
 - a. D. Aspen stated that he confirmed with R. Schumm that we exercised our line of credit last month and paid it back two weeks later.
 - b. D. Asplen commented that the interest rates are low so we would not lose much money if we needed to borrow from our line of credit.

- c. R. Schumm does not see us needing to make any decisions like this for at least a few months.
 - d. D. Asplen made a recommendation to revisit this next month and if something happens in the next 14 days, they should have an emergency board meeting to decide what to do. R. Schumm and the board members agreed with D. Asplen.
- B. D. Asplen made everyone aware that normally the paystubs and notice of electronic deposits are handed out to everyone in the office but Bob Worn thought ahead and asked Charter Choices to mail them to everyone's home until further notice.
 - C. M. Strangarity called for a motion to approve the written Treasurer's Report. Motion to approve the Treasurer's Report by B. Maranto. Seconded by L. Sweeney. Unanimous.

VIII. Academic Performance

A. Discussion Academic/SPED Video Report

1. D. Asplen explained that they made the decision to pause live forward moving instruction indifference to assignments, coaching, help, engagement building, and future ready sessions that keep a continuity of education without introducing new topics in order that we might comply with the federal law that says that we would have to provide related services to students. Now with all of the new guidance that has come out, and the most recent one in writing delivered by the PDE, sort of qualifies that with an undefined "that you provide related services to the greatest extent possible." On the table is the discussion should we, starting Monday, March 30th, resume live instruction because we would have put in place all virtual related services with a backup plan of going to all asynchronous should a sufficient number of employees opt for whatever FMLA relief there may be and make it impossible for us to offer equitable live instruction. Some discussion followed.
2. Neal Thomas said that the teachers would be very happy to be teaching again whether its synchronous or asynchronous and that they are willing to be flexible to benefit the students and the school.
3. N. Thomas noted that we set up help sessions based on feedback from teachers. We've worked on setting up resources that are not assignments but if you complete them you can get points to be used for extra credit.
4. M. Strangarity asked N. Thomas to let the teachers with children know that they are extremely aware of the circumstances and they want them to be as professional as possible but understand there may be extenuating circumstances where they may be interrupted by their children during live classes and feel that it is an opportunity for the students to see the humanity of our teaching and it is a good lesson for them to learn. N. Thomas agreed with M. Strangarity that humanizing things helps with connecting with the students.
5. M. Strangarity also suggested that it's posted that students should feel free to let us know about the situations in their home as well.
6. Kris Botes asked if there was a possibility to split middle school and high school. The reason she asked was because they don't have any middle school teachers with children of their own and she has received phone calls from parents saying that their kids were struggling with not having class. Parents would like to see live classes as soon as possible. They thought that having class was a stabilizing routine for their kids. Some discussion followed.
 - a. M. Strangarity stated that she did not feel comfortable starting back before Monday, March 23rd because of the fluidity of the situation occurring on the federal and state level.
 - b. It was discussed whether or not we are at jeopardy of not meeting the equity argument if we were to offer live instruction for middle school and asynchronous learning for high school or vice versa. On the advice of L. Fiori, it was decided that was not an option.

7. The board discussed which date they thought would be best to return to forward moving education and they agreed on Wednesday, March 25th.
 - B. It was discussed when they should gather next. D. Asplen stated that the PDE is supposed to make another announcement tomorrow and if it is dramatic, he will send out some possible dates and times for another meeting.
- IX. Discussion Enrollment/Marketing Video Report
- A. Alane Butler asked if they foresee any issues with enrolling new students when the sending school is closed. D. Asplen answered no and said she could continue to enroll students at this time.
 - B. M. Strangarity asked if we offered any services to the student prior to their official start date. A. Butler explained that during student orientation we are just preparing them to enter our school and we do not bill for that time.
 - C. M. Strangarity asked A. Butler to tell the parents calling in to enroll their child that we were trying to honor Governor Wolf's request that we should not remain open. It was not our choice not to remain open and now we are trying to find that healthy balance of honoring what medical and educational voices are saying to us while at the same time wanting to give opportunity to educate our students which is why we decided to start teaching again on March 25th.
 - D. A. Butler announced that we now have 798 students.
 - E. A. Butler shared that we now have live chat on our website that she and Becky Aller are staffing. This is in addition to the live texting that we offer. Our online enrollment forms are available now, and that program is up and running.
 - F. M. Strangarity asked everyone if there was anything else that they could be doing as a board to reassure us at this troubling time. N. Thomas shared that their responsiveness has been great, and we are grateful to have a board that took everything into consideration, and we appreciate their flexibility moving forward. Bob Worn shared that some of the teachers that had recently been able to attend some board meetings had shared with him that they really got the sense of their support and he thanked the board for that.
 - G. L. Sweeney asked N. Thomas if he could let the staff and the teachers know that they are praying for them.
- X. Adjournment
- A. M. Strangarity called for a motion to adjourn the public board meeting. Our next meeting will be May 19, 2020 at 7:00 PM.
 1. Motion to adjourn the public meeting by B. Maranto. Seconded by D. Fraatz. Unanimous.