

March 24, 2021 | 8:45am

via Zoom

Board members present: Lydia Adelfio, Jerenze Campbell, John Duncan, Charlene Fadirepo, Gretchen Guffy, Betsy Hanlon, Margaret Horn, Kelli Jareaux, Roneal Josephs, Areesah Mobley, Ammena Nazeen, Tom O'Hara, Neville Waters, JD Wilde

Board members absent: Art Moran

CCPCS Staff present: Russ Williams, Jacquelyn Green, Clarice Ulu

## Agenda

- I. Call to Order
- II. Chairman's Remarks
- III. Introductions
- IV. Routine Business
  1. Approval of Minutes
  2. Materials Contract Approval
- V. CEO Update
  1. Planning for Spring/Summer/Fall
  2. Reopen Safely
  3. Accelerate Learning
  4. Student and Staff Mental Health

BREAK (10 min)

- VI. Jackie Green, Director of Family Engagement
- VII. Committee Reports & Goals
  1. Academic Committee
  2. Development Committee
  3. Finance Committee
  4. Governance Committee
- VII. Executive Session

Betsy Hanlon, Board Chair, called the meeting to order.

## Chairman's Remarks

Art Moran sends his regrets that he is unable to attend due to the loss of his mother. Betsy asked all of the members to briefly introduce themselves to bring all of the new members up to date - who you are, how long you've been on the board and what do you do.

- **Tom O'Hara** - 20 year veteran, taught two years at Congress Heights (formerly Assumption) was on the original board, switched over to this board in 2008; retiring from the board June 2021

- **Meghan Quinn** - started on the board in October 2020; was on the original board (consortium) and stayed on until she joined this one; masters in urban education; taught in the inner city Boston, Chicago, DC (Shaw, formerly Immaculate Conception)
- **Neville Waters** - currently serves as the chair of the Governance Committee, been a teacher, worked in public relations ; currently works for DCRA of DC Government; enjoys serving on the board and working with the diverse members; working on preserving an Afrtican American cemetery in Georgetown where family members have been interned and this has allowed him to reconnect with his roots and family members who were active in Georgetown
- **Lydia Adelfio** - been on the board since 2013; former board chair; formerly long time PreK-12 school administrator
- **Jerenze Campbell** - parent board member in his second year; son is a 7th grade student at the Trinidad Campus; 23-year veteran educator with PG County Public Schools
- **Roneal Josephs** - systems engineer with the Mitre Corporation; native Washingtonian; lives two blocks from the Petworth Campus; lived in the neighborhood her entire life; been on the board a little over 3 years; looking forward to being a future educator
- **Margaret Horn** - been on the board for 9 years; was recruited by Tom O'Hara when she moved to DC about 10 years ago; works in the education space at a nonprofit - CenterPoint; formed education advisor to the Governor of Tennessee; worked in the education technology space
- **Jeffrey (JD) Wilde** - been on the board for several years; chair of the Finance Committee and also serves on the Academic Committees; been in DC since 2004; affordable housing developer based in Pittsburgh, Baltimore and Philadelphia
- **Gretchen Guffy** - been on the board for 18 months; former teacher; currently works in the education space; been in DC for the past 15 years; welcomed the new board members
- **Betsy Hanlon** - current board chair; been on the board for almost 8 years; former treasurer and former chair of Finance Committee; background is all finance and not education
- **Areesah Mobley** - grew up in Fairfax County; been in DC since 2004; not an educator, but has worked in development in the youth and non-profit space for 16 years; worked at Martha's Table, Kid Power and now at 826DC for the past 6.5 years; just accepted a

national role with 826; has worked with boards, but this is her first board service; excited for the work

- **Kelli Jareaux** - attorney by trade and her heart is in ministry; she just wrote a book; worked in higher education for a decade in working to accredit schools; been on a university board
- **Ammena Nazeen** - parent board member; former secretary at AppleTree; worked with MySchoolDC and helped to design the DC lottery process; volunteers at Petworth; before Covid-19, was manager of son's travel soccer team

#### **IV. Routine Business**

##### **Approval of Minutes**

**Action Requested:** Approval of minutes from December 9, 2020, quarterly meeting  
**Motion approved unanimously** \_\_\_\_\_

##### **Approval of Minutes**

**Action Requested:** Approval of minutes from March 3, 2021 email request for approval of Kelli Jareaux, Areesah Mobley and Ammena Nazeen to become new board members  
**Motion approved unanimously** \_\_\_\_\_

##### **Approval of Materials Contract - Nurses and DC Net**

**Action Requested:** Approval of April 13, 2021 email request for the following:

1. Vote to approve a contract with Maxim HC Services to provide nurses for (6) campuses during Q4 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This project will cost between \$69,552 and \$149,040 and will be covered by the ESSER I Grant during April 1, 2021-June 30, 2021.
2. Vote to approve a contract with DC-NET to upgrade the internet access to 200MB Fiber access for schools and 100MB Fiber internet for the Central Office. This project will cost \$74,246 (\$59,396.80 reimbursable at 80% discount rate) and will run July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022. This contract is a renewal.

**Motion approved unanimously**

#### **V. CEO Updates**

Russ Williams updated the board:

He welcomed all the new members. After about a year into the pandemic, it has been challenging in many ways, but also a year of learning for all staff, families and students. Jackie Green will join in the discussion shortly. She has been here a little longer than Russ and is a trusted member of the team.

### Review Key Data

- Enrollment drives our budget. We started the school year with 1450 students and are now at 1419. This trend has been due to some moves to Maryland and families keeping younger students at home or sending them back to daycare.
- Attendance is not where it would be if we were in person. Normally we would sit at 95%, but are currently at 94%. Our peers are at 88%. In the past, Brightwood had the highest attendance across DC, but even their attendance has dipped a little this year.
- Chronic Absenteeism/Truancy is creeping up overall and we are following that trend. Since March, our number was a little higher than DCPCSB. We are working hard to stay in touch with families. This year has been a lot more challenging due to virtual learning.
- HR/Staffing has been strong and steady this year. At this point, we have had three vacancies (Congress Heights, Petworth and Trinidad) that were quickly filled. In the past, we have had some of our seasoned teachers leave us, but they have stayed steady this year. For this school year we hired 22 positions including 4 DA's and 3 NYU Fellows (SPED and Humanities). We also experienced a loss/death of a staff member a few weeks ago at TRI.

### Planning for Spring/Summer/Fall

- When the pandemic first started, each LEA had to submit a Continuous Learning Plan (CLP) to OSSE and will be asked to submit another one this spring

### Reopen Safely

- We are doing various cleaning projects. Each student and staff member will receive two reusable masks. Sneeze guards have been installed at the front desk of each campus. We have upgraded our air quality/filtration system. We've installed portable air purifiers. There are at least two windows in each classroom that can open for ventilation. We have touchless faucets and flushes. Free-standing sanitizing stations have been installed at each entrance, exit, and communal space.
- We have used some funds from the city to get this work done.
- For now, kids will sit 6 feet apart, but would like to move towards the 3 feet in the summer and fall as allowed by CDC.
- About 40% of the families said they want to return for Q4 but more likely 15-20% will.
- COVID-19 Testing - We are using Capital Diagnostic to provide weekly tests on Monday mornings and expect results back in 24 hours. Parents can use their portal to get results. Elaine Ellis Health Center is another company LEAs in the city uses.
- Maxim Health Services will provide nurses at each campus to help with testing and provide health assistance. We currently have health suites at each campus, but nurses at only two.

**ACTION:** R. Williams will circulate the 70-page COVID-19 Readiness Guide that the Ops Team assembled to the members after the meeting.

Accelerate Learning - We acknowledge the learning loss and want to address it.

- The Principals, Academic, Curriculum and Data Teams have been working with OSSE to respond to all of their requests on how we will handle learning.
- OSSE has notified us that there will not be a PARCC test this year nor will we do the year-end end access testing.
- To measure growth from beginning of year BOY to EOY, we will use the following:
  - Edmentum Diagnostic Assessment (similar to NWEA MAP) - [Math will be given to all grades K-8; Reading and Language will be given to all grades 2-8]
  - DIBELS/TRC will be given to all K-2 at EOY - measures progress in specific literacy skills, phonemic awareness and reading comprehension
- To get students ready for SY21-22 all Math and Humanities teachers will give pre-assessments ahead of each unit/module next year. This already exists for part of the Great Minds (ELA/Humanities) and Eureka (Math) platforms, which we plan to purchase again next year. We will need to create pre-assessments for Wit & Wisdom for next year.

**ACTION:** R. Williams will share with the board the TNTP and Achieve the Core guides around accelerating learning going forward rather than remediating loss.

- Weave foundational standards from prior grade levels into new work
- Longer scheduled school year - The school year will start about 10 days earlier in August and as a result, we will compensate staff using some of the ESSER II funding to provide a 10% increase in their pay.
- We will build breaks into the school year by cutting down some of the professional development sessions to ensure staff and students can recover..
- Summer School - will run about 4 weeks this summer at a couple campuses - the staff are electing to work and will be paid a stipend.

Mental Health of Student and Staff

- There's a student well-being study that the Empower K12 team administers to collect data on how the students are doing. They collected info in the fall and winter, and there will be one more in the spring. We have or expect to participate in all three.
- Psychological Assessment Solutions (PAS) has supported our counselors in working with our students and families.
- Department of Behavioral Health (DBH) - will provide tools and training for our staff and families
- Wendt Center for Loss and Healing - have done some work with our counselors and will help us expand it to families

- We have done some staff well-being events - food trucks, yoga, boxing - and will look at others.

#### Office Lease/Maker Space

- Our lease will come to an end with our current Central Office lease this fall
- We are still looking for space, but the price points have been higher than we would like to pay.
- Mitre is interested in getting involved to help us (Russ and Roneal to discuss).
- We have 7,000 square feet of office space and what we have learned through the pandemic that we could use less space/hoteling and share space with students (9-10,000 square feet).
- Assessing options with our broker (Civitas) and architect ( Todd Ray, Pagethink).

**ACTION:** R. Williams will reach out to R. Josephs to see how Mitre would like to assist us in finding the new space.

#### Brief Overview of the Trinidad Annex + Six Campuses and Their Leases

[Will deep dive on this topic at the retreat]

- We have six campuses throughout the city
- The Archdiocese is our landlord.
- The buildings are all beautiful and massive structures, but were built back when the trend was to build “fortresses”.
- The buildings are nestled in the neighborhoods, and in some cases are taking up half or full city blocks.
- Each building is a different situation (Capitol Hill and Trinidad) are the only schools that are not located on the same campus as the church.
- We are working to purchase a parcel from the Archdiocese, but the work has been put on hold due to the pandemic. We have done architectural studies
- We will plan a walk-through for board members when feasible

#### **VI. Health and Welfare of Staff and Students (Jackie Green)**

Jackie Green Director of Family Engagement, joined the meeting and welcomed the new board members. She started in the 2008-09 school year and she had two daughters who attended Center City PCS. Jackie oversaw Operations prior to Russ’ arrival and has worked with families since 2015.

- We have always worked for and built a tight community, but due to COVID-19, we are working even harder for students, families and staff.

- As noted earlier, we have worked in partnership with Empower K-12 to conduct Student Well-Being Surveys that [153/441 potential middle school students participated in the fall; 286 students participated in the winter survey which just closed]
  - From the fall, there was a strong sense of belonging and most students were having a relatively positive experience. We are excited to see what the winter data will show us
- We have expanded our partnership with our counseling team and the Psychological Assessment Solutions (PAS). Normally, they would provide assistance to our SPED population. We are now able to expand this and offer services to our entire Center City PCS community. We have a referral process at each campus where the counselors lead this work.
- With the unexpected loss of a teacher that we endured with the recent death of Ms. Sanguenetti, the Wendt Center provided counseling and guidance to our Trinidad community. Our lead counselor and one additional counselor on the team will be a part of their 20-21 cohort in grief and trauma training which will help support other staff across campuses. Due to some additional grant funding, all of the counseling team members will have the opportunity to participate in a one day workshop through July.
- Along with Hannah Groff, our Language Support Specialist, Jackie facilitated a session last Friday around equity and social emotional learning.
- We are now able to provide the following supports to the Center City community:
  - Social Emotional Supports
    - wellness checks with students/families; referrals to outside counselors/therapists
  - Educational Supports
    - early childhood literacy classes; English classes through Carlos Rosario
  - Language Supports
    - translation of required documents; interpretation of meetings, conferences, events
  - Campus Family Engagement Supports
    - academic partnering; relationship building visits (home or virtual)
  - Food Access
    - Preferred Foods meal kits - breakfast/lunch/milk; fresh vegetables/fruit boxes from USDA farmers
- We are working hard to meet people at their place of need because we understand that one-size does not fit all. This COVID-19 experience has highlighted the spaces where we need to step up, step in or step back.

**ACTION:** J. Green will share the results of the survey and the questions with the full board when it's complete.

- We have not seen requests to translate material into many languages, other than Spanish and Amharic; if there are other languages needed, Hannah Groff [Language Family Support] works to get a translator.
- Through our morning meetings, and using the Second Step Social Emotional Curriculum we coach the students through issues they may experience.
- Fear of the vaccine has not been a huge issue with families; the apprehension of coming into the building is a huge hurdle that we need to overcome.
- Sourcing outside counselors happens at the campus level with the individual campus counselors. They all have relationships with community organizations and they ensure the community partner has been vetted.

**ACTION:** J. Green will reach out to C. Fadirepo to share how the vetting process works with the community partnerships and receive additional resources for families.

- We need more language-fluid supports, especially in the counseling realm.
- With additional students and staff coming back to school this spring, we plan to collect data on in-person support and what the transition will look like as we add more people into the building.
- Additional supports moving forward will include 3 social workers, a school psychologist, and we'll hire a behavioral analyst for our SPED Team. We will use the ESSER II funds to cover these roles.

## **VII. Committee Updates**

### **Academic Committee** - Margaret Horn, Chair

The Academic Committee has been meeting regularly and the topics covered in today's board meeting - attendance, truancy, student engagement, how we will support teachers and students when they return to the classroom - has been our primary concern. We want to ensure everyone is focused on grade-level learning and make sure the teachers have all the resources they will need, especially financial resources. Learning is happening and there are wonderful teachers all over the country, and especially at Center City, doing heroic things to make sure students are learning. There are also heroic parents working hard to make sure their students are learning. We are dialed in on the conversations about assessment and accountability.

Question: Have there been conversations about the upside to all of this virtual learning that students are getting more facile with computers that they may not have access to if they were in class? A lot of the parents in middle school know that they need to ensure they watch the kids so that they stay on task. There has been more technical growth for students and staff.



Development Committee - Art Moran, Chair (Russ gave report in his absence)

The committee did a campaign back in January to raise funds to get food to families. We have connected with BreadCoin where they provide coins to local establishments where families can choose to purchase foods. We are looking to kick-off a program in April. Another fundraising opportunity, the TRI media lab will be put on hold until the fall. Remember that there is a goal for all members to make a contribution to Center City this school year for something that is important to you.

Finance Committee - JD. Wilde, Chair

Since the mayor's budget will not come out until April, we are not sure how the funding will impact UPSFF next school year. We were (preliminarily) awarded an ESSER II grant for 2.8M for FY 21-22 and FY 22-23 to help with recovery and reopening. Looking at the financial report, we are on target on the key performance indicators that we track on a monthly basis.

Governance Committee - Neville Waters, Chair

Neville shared that we have brought on 5 new board members in the past year and we are at full capacity with 15 board members. He expressed his excitement in having a guest at today's meeting, thanked Clarice for her administrative assistance in getting materials out to the members and items uploaded to the website, praised Lydia for all of her assistance in making sure we adhere to the Open Meetings Act (OMA) and ensure that we stay in compliance.

**VIII. Executive Session** - there was not an executive session today.

Meeting adjourned