

**Woodlands School
Board of Trustees Meeting**

Woodlands School Mission

Creating the character of the community through diverse education.

Vision External

The best of what an urban education can be.

Minutes

November 17, 2020

Attending:	<p>Officers: Chair – Peter Richardson – Y Vice Chair – Keesha Sutton – Y Treasurer – Qasim Khan – Y Secretary – LaTae Mitchell – Y</p> <p>Trustees: Adams, Kenge – Y Claypool, Krista – Y Gladney, Alandria – Y Parsons, Don – Y Richards, Jon – Y Tackes, Margaret – Y Tate-Techtmann, Margaret – Y</p> <p>Ex-Officio – Ms. Vickie Brown-Gurley Executive Director</p> <p>Staff Appointees – Rosalie Gazanna, Bluemound Campus Appointee; Ode Osbourne, State Street Campus Appointee</p> <p>Staff – Mr. Michael Pointer Mace, Bluemound Principal; Ms. Amy Fare, State Street Principal</p>
1. Approval of the Meeting Minutes from October 27, 2020	<p>Mr. Richardson called the meeting to order and submitted a draft of the minutes that Mrs. LaTae Mitchell prepared from October 27, 2020.</p> <p>Mr. Richardson asked for the approval of the Woodlands School meeting minutes from October 27, 2020.</p> <p>Motion: To approve the meeting minutes from the October 27, 2020 Woodlands School Board Meeting, by Ms. Tate-Techtmann, seconded by Mr. Parsons motion approved unanimously.</p>

Mrs. Mitchell introduced the Board of Trustees and Mrs. Sutton explained the responsibilities of the Board. Mr. Richardson also stated we are not responsible for the day to day operation of the school. Ms. Vickie Brown-Gurley, Mr. Pointer Mace and Ms. Amy Fare are responsible for those duties.

Mr. Richardson recapped some of the accomplishments in the previous year.

- Process of interviewing candidates that led to the hiring of Ms. Vickie Brown-Gurley as the Executive Director of Woodlands School. It's one of the primary roles as the Board, choosing who the executive director is and overseeing that person. We completed that process in February and she started in May.
- Gaps in technology capabilities between the campuses, we authorize the funding of some steps to close those gaps, devices to the students and upgrades to the internet.
- Report from Garth Larson from First Education Resources who conducted an evaluation of the two campuses when we were going through our leadership transition, which pointed out that there were a number of issues with the equity, differences in how the school operated inside the buildings. We addressed the issues related to the fact that there were differences. We heard from parents from both campuses, that we wanted to have a Woodlands experience to be the same as much as possible to reflect Woodlands as an organization. We formed a Cross Campus Collaboration Committee in December, meeting on a regular basis, asking for reports from staff about matters of where the campuses are working together, and reinforcing to the staff the importance of collaboration between campuses.
- Learning and Return to School: in August we reviewed and approved the plan that the school has in place currently for online learning and to return to school.
- Recruited a new board member Kenge Adams, she replaced some of the board members that has left. Notable departures were Dennis Griffin, Jason Schulze, Milika Miller and Erin Stenum all who we thank for their service.

Goals for the board in the year to come; continue to exercise our roles in the oversight of the decisions related to online learning versus in-person learning. Our role is oversight of recommendations that are made by the administration. Second, on a regular basis is the oversight of plans for how we achieve our academic goals. It's particularly challenging in this year, where the goals are being set with the new assessment methods, but we have a role to make sure we are academic achieving the goals and aligned with the

	<p>expectations of the chartering authority. Last, we continue to encourage collaboration between the campuses and reinforcing the importance to all people in the organization that we are one between the two schools.</p>
<p>2. Finance Committee Report—Qasim Khan</p>	<p>Mr. Khan provided an update from the last fiscal year ending June 30, 2020 which is the school year 2019-20. Our charter school revenues were \$6.7M, increase from previous year by \$300,000 or so. As a unique year, our revenues were negatively impacted by unanticipated and large short-term expenses that we incurred. All of the expenses are non-reoccurring and will dissipate over the coming years. One was a significant investment in technology both in terms of getting chrome for each student across both campuses and the infrastructure of State Street campus for connectivity.</p> <p>Changes at the administration level; interim executive director, other resources brought in from administration and educational standpoint to meet the needs of the organization. All that coupled together, we had a net loss, this is as it stands, these are not audited numbers, for fiscal year, roughly \$65,000. This a near final number, the audit is almost done and should have financials at the next board meeting for approval.</p> <p>Cash-in terms for enrollment, at Bluemound campus was 350 students which is consist from previous years and State Street campus was 342 students which is an increase from the previous fiscal year of 310 students.</p> <p>Cash balance as of June 30, 2020 was \$1.9M and our outstanding debt was \$350,000 and that was reduced by roughly \$30,000 from the previous fiscal year.</p> <p>As of today, our enrollment for the current fiscal year is below budget at both campuses. Our budget was developed pre-pandemic, we are in the process of reevaluating and reforecasting our budget. There are a significant number of headwinds that we will be facing due to the pandemic that we are working through.</p> <p>We are working on hiring a business manager, qualified candidates have been interviewed and Ms. Vicki Brown-Gurly will make the final decision.</p>

<p>3. Cross Campus Cohesion Committee — Ms. Maggie Tate-Techtmann</p>	<p>Ms. Tate-Techtmann discussed some of the recommendation received from Garth Larson and First Educational Resources, for leadership restructuring and reorganization last fall. The committee’s role is to support the organization, ensuring collaboration and cohesion across the two campuses with equal opportunities for students, teachers, and faculty.</p> <p>Supporting the organization and ensuring the delivery of the Woodlands Way and continue now and into the future across both campuses.</p> <p>The committee is comprised of teachers, staff, admin from both campuses along with board members. In the future, we may look at adding community members and parents.</p> <p>The first committee meeting a couple weeks before the pandemic and discussed the transition to virtual learning. Which it wasn’t the committee’s work but the organization’s work to get it done. The ability to work cross campus increased tremendously.</p> <p>Working with Ms. Vicki Brown-Gurly and supporting her with work group committee, little families, report cards, parent-teacher conferences, virtual learning as well culturally relevant teaching and community practices.</p> <p>In 2021, will work with conducting some focus groups within the organization as well as community stake holders around the Woodlands way and really look for what the community want from the school and future leaders. We will also talk about some data points around some of the cross-campus work group committees.</p>
<p>4. Staff Report/ Ms. Vickie Brown-Gurley, Mr. Michael Pointer Mace, Bluemound Principal; Ms. Amy Fare, State Street Principal</p>	<p>Ms. Vickie Brown-Gurley shared some highlights from the 2019-20 school year. Mr. Michael Pointer Mace shared a picture of the first day of school and stated it was his first day as the Principal. There had been some vandalism to the playground at the Bluemound campus and had to close due to safety. The whole organization and the Board worked on raising funds to fix it however, we were able to have a ribbon cutting in September.</p> <p>Across campus we had a high school fair held at Bluemound, installed a new floor, and uninvents. State Street- wireless network to improve conductivity for our devices and making sure we had 1:1 device at both campuses, how to fortuitous that was, we would never anticipate moving to a virtual school. As well as raising funds in our community with a food drive for the House of Peace.</p>

	<p>Bluemound has a new music teacher. Addition to the State Street campus only was the Black History Quiz Bowl two years before the first cross campus participation. The first time out, State Street had a WIN.</p> <p>Mr. Pointer Mace discussed the transition to online learning. He stated the staff rose to the challenge and the shift to virtual learning. Woodland School organization did an incredible job. We recognized the need to thank our teachers and the significance of our community where our parents expressed how they felt about our teachers by making signs and putting them on the fence.</p> <p>Reinvented how to do 8th grade graduation online. We had a successful graduation for both campuses and photographs were taken in a safe way.</p> <p>Woodlands 2020-the year that will go down in history as many different things. We focus on 2020 from a vision standpoint because our direction is trying to be the best an urban education can be. We want to have clear vision; clear on where we're headed, the work we need to do and this school year we have spent time making sure are focused.</p> <p>Goals as an organization has grown with the experience we have had from last Spring into this Fall and recognizing we had goals that maybe were not thought of prior to the pandemic but are relevant goals to help us move from 2020 and beyond.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To make sure we are implementing virtual or hybrid learning at the level were the students are engaged in learning.• Providing the professional learning support that staff need to be effective in their roles. We learned there were some needs for adjusting individuals' roles and even growing some new roles like the Technology Support Specialist that we added to the staff. We must make sure the individuals in their roles have the professional learning development, support and growth they need to be highly effective. Which includes our teacher assistants, office staff, to the technology supervisor. Every Friday we focus on professional learning opportunities. We've gotten coaching and support for our teachers to help them utilize the materials that we brought forward to really making sure we have high quality learning experiences for our students.• Selecting and hiring qualified staff to fill all open positions in the organization. One was making sure we had a principal for our State Street school. We were fortunate enough to have Ms. Amy Fare to join us and has been a huge asset to our
--	--

	<p>organization. We also needed an Operations Manager and was able to get Mr. Nicholas Earl. The third position is a Business Manager. We have a strong candidate pool and plan to have someone by next month.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuing to build the cross-campus culture of collaboration to make sure the learning experiences that children and families have are consistent across the organization. • Make sure we maintain high student attendance levels as well as growth and student achievement.
<p>5. Return to School Committee Update- Ms. Vickie Brown-Gurley</p>	<p>Ms. Vickie Brown-Gurley shared information on our Return to School Committee. In the month of July 2020, we brought together a group of individuals; board members, parents, some community members, staff, administration, and teachers that’s part of the committee. The intent was to have an opportunity to have conversations about the DPI guidelines and recommendations. We proposed was a hybrid model that we will return to school. We recognized the number of cases and metrics the health dept was looking at that probably wouldn’t allow for us to return in the Fall to a fulltime face to face status. Parents/Teachers were given a survey at the end of June and the proposed model was shared and gathered feedback on how well they felt that model would be to move forward. We worked as a team to talk about what has been put out on the table, talk about the ideas our stakeholders have given us as well look at some of the research that is out there that pertains to moving forward in returning to school for Fall 2020. The committee had the opportunity to meet twice. The first time we talked in July 2020 about some of the areas and mirrored some of our sub-committees from the document DPI developed for schools as a guidance document, discussed an overall plan for Woodlands based on a recommendation of a hybrid model, emergency closure, and Learn at Home.</p> <p>The five Subcommittees gave a report and shared out some of the recommendations and strategies that were brought forward (see report): 1. Infection Control and Mitigation- Mr. Michael Pointer Mace, 2. Social-Emotional/Mental Health- Mary Jane LaTona, Expectations for Instructional Programming- Amy Fare, Facilities Plan-Rosalie Gazzana, and Technology Access- LaTae Mitchell and Keesha Jones-Sutton.</p>
<p>6. Public Comments/Questions</p>	<p>Many parents addressed their concerns about returning to school. Mr. Richardson shared his thoughts on the Global Pandemic and stated we have a way to go. Mr. Richardson thanked everybody who contributed tonight.</p>
<p>7. Adjourn</p>	<p>Mr. Richardson asked for a motion to adjourn. Mrs. Mitchell moved to adjourn, seconded by Ms. Gladney, the motion passed unanimously.</p>

	The next Board Meeting is scheduled on January 26, 2021.
--	---

Prepared by: LaTae Mitchell