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Achievement House Cyber Charter School Board of Trustees

Public Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, October 17, 2017

The Executive Session commenced at 6:00 p.m. and continued until approximately 7:20 p.m.

- I. Pledge of Allegiance
- II. Roll Call
Mrs. Marilou Strangarity (President)
Mr. Jim Bowers (Vice President)
Mrs. Kristin Chettle (Treasurer)
Mr. Don Fraatz (Secretary)
Dr. Bob Maranto
Lisabeth Sweeney
- 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 personal and finance matters.
- V. Approval of Minutes from 9/19/2017 Board Meeting
A. M. Strangarity called for a motion to approve the minutes from the 9/19/2017 board meeting.
 1. Motion to approve the minutes from the 9/19/2017 board meeting by Don Fraatz Seconded by Kristin Chettle. Unanimous.
- VI. Special Presentation
A. Science teacher, Bruce Williamson, gave a demonstration to the board to show how he engages his Chemistry students.
- VII. Finance/Business Report
A. Ryan Schumm provided the monthly Treasurer's Report. He stated that AHCCS is currently 25% of the way through the fiscal year and that this is the second month in a row where cash is virtually unchanged – what is going out is about the same as what's coming in. He mentioned that July and August invoices do not include new summer enrollees; the September invoices were the first to capture new students this year, driving up total billings and also receivables compared to July/August. He added that about \$80K of last year's receivables have been collected. Finally, he mentioned that, last month, the PDE released 2017-2018 charter school tuition rates for districts that have completed the PDE-363 form. With a due date of July 31, 2017, only 201 of the 500 school districts completed form 363. The 60% of school districts that have not completed the PDE-363 have put charters at a significant disadvantage when projecting revenues and planning annual budgets. The rate release provides some insight regarding the trend for 2018 rates:
 1. The average general education rate increased by 4.6%
 2. The average special education rate increased by 4.7%
 3. 147 districts (73%) had an increase in both general and special education rates
 4. 17 districts (8.5%) had a decrease in both general and special education rates

- B. M. Strangarity called for a motion to approve the written Treasurer's Report.
 - 1. Motion to approve the written Treasurer's Report by Lisabeth Sweeney. Seconded by K. Chettle. Unanimous.
- VIII. Discussion of Academic Video Report
 - A. M. Strangarity asked if there were any questions or comments about the Academic Video Report.
 - B. M. Strangarity asked what the general feel was for the how the start of the school year went.
 - 1. Don Asplen replied that he believes this was the second-best start to the school year since he started at AHCCS in 2010.
 - C. Bob Maranto asked why turnover is down some.
 - 1. D. Asplen credited the drop in turnover to the fact that there were no major changes that effected the student and parent experience made prior to the start of the school year. Additionally, he believes the new marketing is really working. He added that, in addition to the drop in turnover rates, attendance has gone up noteably.
 - D. B. Maranto asked if the number of grade levels students are behind has decreased at all with new enrollees.
 - 1. D. Asplen reported that the MAPs screeners data shows a slight increase in student performance. He added that, this year, students appear to be more motivated.
- IX. Discussion of SPED Video Report.
 - A. M. Strangarity asked if there were any questions or comments about the SPED Video Report.
 - B. D. Asplen stated that AHCCS continues to enroll Special Education students with larger needs. Currently, costs are outpacing revenues and, though this is not a good financial trend, it does show that AHCCS cares about the education it provides to its SPED program students. He added that the school has issued about 25 Permission to Evaluate forms, due to Child Find questions that arose during the school's Cyclical Monitoring.
- X. Discussion Enrollment/Marketing Video Report
 - A. M. Strangarity asked if there were any questions or comments about the Enrollment/Marketing Video Report.
 - B. Alane Butler shared that there are 464 students enrolled in AHCCS. Currently, the Orientation team is experiencing a high influx of calls from 8th graders from Mastery Charter School – they only go to 8th grade and have asked the 8th graders to complete a project which requires them to research various options for 9-12th grade schooling. Additionally, A. Butler will be heading to Chester Community Charter School next week as a guest in their high school fair – they only go to 8th grade as well. A. Butler also briefly discussed the Girls World Expo event that was held in Harrisburg on Sunday, October 15th. Bob Worn, Timothy Callahan, Veronica Farr, Jennifer Vargas, and Jennifer Vargas' mother staffed the AHCCS table and helped students create "wearable tech" – a flower with an LED through the middle of it. The craft was a hit and provided lots of positive exposure for AHCCS.
 - C. M. Strangarity asked A. Butler if the Orientation team has been pushing the Innovation Academy to inquiring students/families. A. Butler stated that every call that comes in is unique – students inquire about attending AHCCS for all different reasons and each inquiring student/family gets to talk with A. Butler or a member of the Orientation team to understand the needs being sought. Those students who are seeking unique courses/opportunities are told about the Innovation Academy. M. Strangarity thanked A. Butler for her hard work and dedication to her job.
- XI. Discussion of Guidance Video Report
 - A. M. Strangarity asked if there were any questions or comments about the Guidance Video Report.

- B. D. Asplen informed the board that the Guidance department is swamped trying to get all of the incoming students placed in courses. They have also started double checking placements 3-4 weeks after a student is placed in their courses to ensure that students are in the correct levels and to make adjustments if necessary.
 - C. M. Strangarity asked if the Guidance department was in need of additional help.
 - 1. D. Asplen replied that they did hire a temp for a few weeks to assist with collecting records when the volume of incoming students was at its highest.
- XII. Discussion CEO Video Report
 - A. M. Strangarity asked if there were any questions or comments about the CEO Video Report.
 - B. M. Strangarity asked D. Asplen how he plans to engage new legislators.
 - 1. D. Asplen replied that he can now attend their fundraisers, so he attended one big one and two smaller ones. Additionally, he's in Harrisburg every other week and he's making calls regularly.
- XIII. Personnel
 - A. New Hires:
 - 1. Timothy Callahan, Computer Science Teacher, \$55,000
 - 2. Justina Kwapy, Special Education Teacher, \$55,000
 - 3. Sarah Cardosi, Part-time Reading Specialist, \$18,750
 - 4. M. Strangarity called for a motion to approve the new hires at the salaries specified.
 - a. Motion to approve the new hires at the salaries specified by D. Fraatz. Seconded by L. Sweeney. Unanimous.
 - B. Separations
 - 1. Kim Chicchi, Computer Science Teacher
 - 2. Sharie Neal, CEO Executive Assistant and Parent Involvement Coordinator
 - 3. M. Strangarity called for a motion to accept the separations.
 - a. Motion to accept the separations by D. Fraatz. Seconded by L. Sweeney. Unanimous.
 - C. CEO Raise and Bonus
 - 1. M. Strangarity called for a motion to approve a bonus for the CEO for meeting 4 out of 4 of the bonus criteria set forth in his employment agreement and approves a raise for the CEO commensurate with the terms and conditions of his employment agreement.
 - a. Motion to approve a bonus and raise for the CEO by D. Fraatz. Seconded by K. Chettle. Unanimous.
- XIV. Governance
 - A. Comprehensive Plan
 - 1. D. Asplen asked the board to approve the initial draft of the Comprehensive Plan so it can be posted on the AHCCS website for its 28-day review. He stated that there a few questions about the Comprehensive Plan that were discussed during the Private Session and that there are a couple of edits to typos that will be made prior to being posted.
 - 2. Bob Worn gave new Principal Neal Thomas credit for engaging his academic administrative team in helping to complete this Comprehensive Plan.
 - 3. M. Strangarity called for a motion to approve the publication of the Comprehensive Plan for public review.
 - a. Motion to approve the publication of the Comprehensive Plan for public review by D. Fraatz. Seconded by L. Sweeney. Unanimous.
 - B. Adoption of MacMain Law as Legal Counsel

1. D. Asplen asked the board to adopt MacMain Law as Legal Counsel/official representation of AHCCS in an effort to consolidate and gain some efficiencies in terms of time and money. Brian Leinhauser will be the lead attorney for labor relations and charter issues and Nicole Freiler will be the new special education attorney
 2. M. Strangarity called for a motion to adopt MacMain Law as Legal Counsel.
 - a. Motion to adopt MacMain Law as Legal Counsel by L. Sweeney. Seconded by D. Fraatz. Unanimous.
 - C. Virtual Pilot
 1. D. Asplen asked to postpone this item to the next board meeting.
 - XV. New Business
 - A. M. Strangarity asked if there was any new business, but there was none.
 - XVI. Public Comment
 - XVII. M. Strangarity opened the floor to public comment.
 - A. B. Williamson shared with the board that he recently attended the educator's training for Minecraft in Education where he learned a lot about how this program could be incorporated into every subject area. He's still trying to figure out a best use for courses he teaches (Chemistry and Physics), but he did share excellent uses that encouraged close reading in English, as well as a deep understanding of cellular structure in Biology and cultures in Social Studies.
 - XVIII. Adjournment
 - A. M. Strangarity called for a motion to adjourn the board meeting.
 1. Motion to adjourn by D. Fraatz. Seconded by K. Chettle. Unanimous.