

The Genesee Community Charter School
Board of Trustees
Education Governance Council
Final Meeting Minutes
December 9, 2020
Virtual Meeting via Zoom (Due to COVID-19)

Board Members Present: **Ivelisse Gonzalez (joined at 6:05pm)**, Michele Hannagan, Ryan O'Malley, **Elizabeth Pietrzykowski**, Mark Schiesser, Allison Shultes, Tasha Stevens, Traci Terrance, Jess Wanner, Annemarie Wess, Lukas Wilson
(Bold: BOT non-voting)

Board Members Absent: **Cheryl Moeller**, Nolica Murray-Fields, Kevin Sutherland
(Bold: BOT non-voting)

Educational Governance Council Members Present: **Maggie Deutschbein, Becki Mason, Shannon Hillman (Bold: BOT non-voting)**

Educational Governance Council Members Absent:

Guests: **Maureen Milke, Robin Blew, Deb Hamner (Breakthrough Leadership Consulting)**
Legal Counsel Present: **George DesMarteau**

1. Welcome, Call to Order, Agenda Overview

Meeting called to order by Michele Hannagan at 5:32pm.

Quorum is present.

Welcome to everybody. Reminder to the group that the agenda is in the Google Drive and that the zoom links and documents for the meeting are available there.

Tonights' agenda was reviewed and it was noted that it is light on "routine" business and updated and that the majority of the meeting will be a presentation from Deb Hamner with Breakthrough Leadership Inc.

2. Greeting--Shannon Hillman

Shannon led the group in the greeting and the sharing of celebrations. Celebrations were shared across the group and included: the joys of connecting with students in remote learning, the virtual NYC trip with students learning through amazing virtual presentations and field trips; family visiting for holidays and shared hobbies and pastimes, health in the COVID chaos, the human spirit and giving, yay for snow today!

3. Teacher Presentation and/or Sabbatical Share

None

4. Review & Approve Monthly Minutes

Review and Approve November 2020 Meeting Minutes

Motion 201209.1

Upon motion of Traci Terrance, and duly seconded by Tasha Stevens, RESOLVED, that the minutes of November 11, 2020 be approved.

Voting in the affirmative: Michele Hannagan, Ryan O'Malley, Mark Schiesser, Allison Shultes, Tasha Stevens, Traci Terrance, Jess Wanner, Annemarie Wess, Lukas Wilson

Voting in the negative: None

Abstaining: None

Motion 201209.1 passed: 9 to 0

5. Finance Review/Budget Review - Kevin & Robin

Robin reported on the budget review as of October 31, 2020. The review covered topics that were discussed at previous meetings and included few new updates as there were very little expenses or variances out of the ordinary.

- Budget to actual report as of October 31, 2020:
 - Revenue: Still at full enrollment despite some students moving between districts. We won't see the catch-up in the billings until the January budget review.
 - Food Service: Food services is on track but not as strong as previous years due to hybrid and remote instruction models. As reported last month, the state's child nutrition website was down and running behind due to COVID challenges. GCCS should be reimbursed as we move through the end of the year.
 - Field Study: Nothing to report.
 - Instruction: No huge variance for this year, though summer stipends did go over, but professional development was under budget.
 - Supplies: As per usual, it was reported that supplies expenses are a bit higher than budgeted given it is still the beginning of the year. New update on the purchase of the Chromebooks and that that expense (~\$25K) will no longer be depreciated, but will be covered under the ESSER CARES (federal grant) funding. That funding has still not come in.
 - Operations: Running along as normal. Did get a refund from the insurance company and as bills come in, the insurance line will be reflective of the budget.
 - Expenditure: Nothing to report.
- Overall, the review reports that the current actuals are lower than budgeted due to timing with billing.
- Balance Sheet Review:
 - Cash on hand: Cash is strong, accounts receivable is where it should be compared to last year.
 - Assets: Good, they were similar this time last year.
- Investments: Still doing very well; \$23K anonymous donation from earlier this fall is reflected in investment accounts
 - Vanguard: Next quarterly statement will be in December.
 - Fidelity: Still showing a gain this month.

6. Committee Updates

a. Advocacy (Jessica Wanner)

Updates: Continued meeting with community partners and have more meetings scheduled with Roc the Future, Adrian Hale with Chamber of Commerce, and Doug Ackeley, the Head of Teen Empowerment.

b. **Discipline (Nolica Murray-Fields)**

Updates: None

c. **Nominating (Annemarie Wess)**

Updates: None

d. **Personnel (Michele/Shannon):**

Breakthrough Leadership Proposal: None

e. ***Safety: (Shannon)**

District Safety Plan Approval: None

f. ***Diversity & Equity: (Traci Terrance)**

Updates: Meeting is scheduled for tomorrow, the last meeting occurred prior to Thanksgiving. The group completed an internal survey to gain perspective on their own multicultural, anti-racist, and diverse inputs and will review the survey tomorrow and work together to make a plan for rolling that out to the school community.

7. School Leader Update: Remote Learning

Shannon reported that at almost the end of the second week of fully remote learning student attendance is stronger in the upper grades than the lower grades, but overall is doing well. Last week the school designer, Shannon, and Lisa O'Malley did a virtual "walkthrough" to see what was going on in order to collectively see the ingenuity of the staff. GCCS has been asked by EL to take part in a video about remote instruction and the 3rd grade will help with that. While in person instruction is always preferred, they are seeing more synchronous learning and more personal instruction with the remote instruction. The PD advisory group met and each of the teachers shared their perspectives.

Surveys are being developed by the Reopening Taskforce to go out at the end of this week to families and staff to gauge the current situation and comfort level with the return date for hybrid instruction. The school community has been informed that the Taskforce is making a plan for March, but hope to come back mid-January. Factors for return are bringing back bus drivers, RMSC operations, cleaning contracts, and COVID testing protocol. The RMSC will support GCCS regardless of a potential shutdown and the cleaning contract could be renewed or turned over to the RMSC. Nursing and special education shouldn't be an issue for returning to the hybrid model. New York State has changed regulations regarding testing protocols and the reopening task force has been working with a local pediatrician who can serve as oversight for certification as a testing site. The next steps are to determine how the teachers and families are feeling about coming back into a hybrid model and determining whether or not to come back in the same hybrid model or different version. In a conference all with private and charter schools, Dr. Mendoza, the Commissioner of Public Health for Monroe County Health, strongly suggested families quarantine for two weeks after traveling.

The Board had a lengthy discussion with many questions regarding the timeline, testing, staff input and feelings. The results of the surveys will help to continue the conversation, but many charters are also having these conversations as well. New York on Pause could change this timeline if it goes into effect. This will be discussed at the next board meeting.

Outstanding Business:

8. None

New Business:

9. *Data Privacy Policy Approval*

Maureen Milke is GCCS's Data Privacy Officer as named by the State last spring. In that role she is in charge of keeping GCCS compliant with student data privacy and agreements with online engagement platforms such as iReady, Seesaw, etc., about what they can and can't do with data. A policy and handbook has been created for GCCS and included in the policy is a Parents Bill of Rights. The Data Privacy and Security Policy, and it's Parents Bill of Rights need to approve it and be shared on the internet.

Motion 201209.2

Upon motion of Michele Hannagan, and duly seconded by Mark Schiesser, RESOLVED, that the Data Privacy and Security Policy and the Parent Bill of Rights be approved.

Voting in the affirmative: Michele Hannagan, Ryan O'Malley, Mark Schiesser, Allison Shultes, Tasha Stevens, Traci Terrance, Jess Wanner, Annemarie Wess, Lukas Wilson

Voting in the negative: None

Abstaining: None

Motion 201209.2 passed: 9 to 0

10. *Deb Hamner: Strategic Planning Update (SWOT Analysis)*

Welcome Deb Hamner back.

Objective: Board members will make decisions about the strategic direction for the school based on the SWOT findings. Decisions made today will be based on discussions ahead at the Board retreat discussions held in January 2020. Top priorities identified at the January retreat were: resources, diversity, expansion. Since that meeting a lot of information has been gathered through talking, listening and engaging with other community groups that GCCS has relationships with and those that the school might want to partner with down the road.

Over the course of the school's 20 year history, factors may change or sway decisions about the future such as the recent three year charter renewal and political landscape that GCCS and charter school across New York State are in. Tonight's goal is to get clarity from the Board about the school's direction and make "draft" decisions about the school's future. The Big Questions that were discussed include:

- Expansion: Should GCCS open more seats to students in Rochester & Monroe County?
- Diversity: Does GCCS want to serve a more racially and socioeconomically diverse student population than it currently does?

The Board engaged in a discussion about the SWOT analysis results and began discussing the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats around the following questions: *What do you see? What stands out? What questions do you have?* Board members asked many questions and a robust discussion was had around a few main themes with particular emphasis on the communication of misinformation, traits/characteristics that fall in multiple categories and how some strengths (i.e location, small school, etc.) can also be weaknesses or threats. Also discussed was where the data and information was collected from, the potential impacts of diversity, equity and inclusion work, and the work to be done with either “track” of diversifying the school community or expanding it. Discussion was had on the timing of these efforts—and that they will likely happen simultaneously. Current DEI efforts are already evolving and both efforts are interwoven and support each other. It was acknowledged that these are both short and long term strategic decisions and that efforts can be made in the immediate future to engage in meaningful conversations at the board, parent and staff levels.

Deb continued the discussion focusing on the group’s fears associated with making these decisions or the potential of these opportunities. Fears and concerns shared and reflected on included special education services, logistics surrounding expansion (new building, moving, more grades or more students in same grade, etc.), maintaining strengths and positives with the current school model and culture should expansion happen, potential threats of being divided between multiple buildings, and competing mindsets and team divisions. Concerns were raised about how to focus on one direction as both big questions contain so many facets and moving pieces. With any changes there are cultural components that will persist and many logistical pieces that will need to be coordinated.

Deb continued to lead the group in a “draft decision” making activity to push the Board towards taking the first step in committing to actions, knowing that the group is committing to a direction, not details. While final decisions weren’t made tonight, the Board was reminded that there is a sense of urgency to the process given the current, and shorter, timeline of the charter renewal period.

The Board then took a short survey to gauge feedback on the big questions. Discussion was then had on those survey results and around any significant questions or concerns. A significant majority of the Board indicated on the survey that they are in favor of expansion and diversity efforts. Deb re-shared relevant discussion points from when the group met back in January. Michele brought the group back together to invite Board members to share any questions that they may still have with Deb in an effort to create a space to raise them and support the forward motion of the process. Deb’s email was shared with the group to facilitate the sharing of those questions.

Open Forum

11. Future Agenda Topics and/or Public Comment

7:29pm—Michele Hannagan opened up the meeting to public comment. No comments were made.

Executive Session

12. Executive Session was not called during this meeting.

Meeting Wrap-Up

13. Review Actions and Agreements

None to review.

Motion 201209.3

Upon motion of Mark Schiesser, and duly seconded by Jessica Wanner, RESOLVED, that the Board adjourn the December 9, 2020 meeting at 7:30pm.

Voting in the affirmative: Michele Hannagan, Ryan O'Malley, Mark Schiesser, Allison Shultes, Tasha Stevens, Jess Wanner, Annemarie Wess, Lukas Wilson

Voting in the negative: None

Abstaining: None

Motion 201209.3 passed: 8 to 0

Respectfully Submitted,
Allison Shultes
Secretary of GCCS Board of Trustees
GCCS Board Minutes/ December 9, 2020