

Michele:

So we're going to call our December 2020, Board of Trustees meeting to order. Welcome everybody. I hope everybody is staying safe and healthy and sane, as well as we can during this crazy COVID time, which I'm pretty sure is going to be added to the Lexicon of Webster's Dictionary at some point, phrase of the year. So just a quick note about the agenda, as you might have realized it's pretty light on the routine business, we don't have as much of that. We've got a few things we need to do, but the bulk of our meeting tonight is going to be an interactive presentation with Deb Hanmer from Breakthrough following up on the SWAT, the work that she's been doing on our behalf and to forward our discussion following up from our retreat earlier this year. So with that, I am going to turn it over to Shannon for our quick five minute greeting.

Shannon:

Yeah. So I think I wanted to selfishly share something. I'm going to try to do this, I wanted to share sound. Earlier today, we had a brief staff meeting and... Maybe I can't do it. Here we go. Here we go. Okay, we had a staff meeting and we always do sort of a celebrations thing. So I'd love to open it up to celebrations, but I'm going to start with one celebration that I just wanted to share briefly. Right now, of course, we're in remote learning and one of the celebrations was celebrating our TA, Theresa Fitzpatrick, who has just been doing a phenomenal job responding to student work through Seesaw. She has taken over a small segment of student writing, teaching student writing to third graders. And my daughter is someone who really struggles with writing, so Theresa wrote this back to her, not wrote, she spoke it back to her so I just wanted to play it for you. Just give me a thumbs up if you can hear it.

Theresa Fitzpatrick:

"Addie, I'm going to sing this song. Addie is a writer, I love the writer, Addie is... Addison, you've made me sing a song. I was so happy to see your writing. Addie is a writer. I'm so happy to see it."

Shannon:

So she keeps going on and on and then gives some specific feedback. And my son yesterday came running downstairs with this massive smile also getting a really lovely feedback from Theresa about his writing. And I just am so tickled that they're tickled, that even in remote learning teachers can reach kids. And my daughter who's very hard to reach through the computer, I'm just super proud and wanted to celebrate that. So I'll open the floor for other celebrations, or you can stick a celebration in the chat box and then we'll just collectively say good evening to each other after.

Becki Mason:

Okay. So I'll share the celebration that I shared at our staff meeting today. So in fifth grade, we're studying immigration and this is the expedition where we normally go to New York City. So, it's pretty sad because our kids lost out on Boston last year, and now they're losing out on New York city. And so my co-teacher and I decided that we were going to do all we could to bring New York City to them. So, along with Lisa O'Malley, we've scheduled a lot of virtual field studies and virtual guest speakers that we would normally meet with in New York City to come to us. So today we traveled to Lowell, Massachusetts.

Becki Mason:

I was really wondering how it would be because that field study in particular, when we go to Lowell, I like it but some parts can be a little dry, so I was worried how the Zoom would be. And it was the best zoom presentation I have ever seen. The kids were engaged the entire time. They made it fun. They actually put them as a mill girl and got them up working. And the one guy was yelling at them like an overseer, and they kept having to work. And then he'd say, "Okay, I'm going to take money." And then they'd sit down and he'd, "Get up again and work." And then they'd work again and at one point in the chat one of the little girls wrote, "This is one of the best field studies I've ever been on."

Becki Mason:

So it was just really exciting that even though they're missing that, they had that experience. And I actually, other than not being able to go in the weaving room, I sort of liked it better than going there. They really had it down, so it was good.

Shannon:

Other celebrations?

George:

Well, I can celebrate that my daughter and my two granddaughters are here from South Carolina for the whole month. And the celebration really is that my seven year old granddaughter has just started taking writing lessons. So now my daughter is starting down the same road we went down many years ago and the checkbook will be out, but we're happy that everybody is still well and safe.

Michele:

I'm going to call out a celebration. The impact that the folks I work with at Jordan Health, we're lifting mountains to try to reach the communities that we serve in the inner city in particular with testing and evaluation for COVID. And I have seen such an incredible spirit of staff volunteering, showing up on Sunday to go test elderly folks at an apartment where there was a cluster outbreak, and it's such hard times for folks. And to be able to celebrate the human spirit of people giving, people who are already exhausted and working harder than they've ever worked, it's just a wonderful celebration in a strange way but it's pretty exciting in that way.

Shannon:

Tracy has a great celebration around health and snow which was really beautiful today. I'll take any last celebrations through chat or voice.

Michele:

All right. Well, good evening everyone. And collectively shout that out. All right, so the next item just to move us along is the approval review. Well, hopefully you've already reviewed the November meeting minutes. Again, big giant thank you to Alice and Elizabeth. Wow, you guys are just rock it I got to say. The turnaround time is really great so big shout out that you've been able to turn that around. And those of us, Shannon, myself, and Marie we'll review them and get around quickly. So with that, I'm again reminding folks that everything is in the Google Drive. Thank you Shannon for sending the email, but everything is in the Google Drive as well, or should be in the Google Drive. So with that, I'll entertain a motion to approve the November 2020 minutes.

Traci:

I'll enter a motion to approve November 2020.

Michele:

Thanks Traci.

Tasha:

I'll second the motion.

Michele:

And where was that? Oh, Tasha. Okay. So all those in favor, please say I or thumbs up. I? Any opposed? Any abstentions? All right, motion carries. Thank you very much. And I still don't see Kevin, but I'm going to turn it over to Robin so she can start us out on the financial review. Keep her here [inaudible 00:08:57] .

Robin:

Okay. Good evening everyone. [crosstalk 00:09:05].

Shannon:

Do you want me to share my screen Robin? Or do you want to share-

Robin:

[inaudible 00:09:09] here Shannon, don't you?

Shannon:

Yep. I can share my screen. Just give me a minute but you can start talking.

Robin:

Okay. Well, happy holidays, everyone. I hope everyone's staying healthy and safe. So the financial statements I think weren't on the drives. You guys probably haven't had a chance to look at them. So Shannon's going to try to share the screen. I'm just going to start going over the budget review and just some brief notes. So really there hasn't been anything that exciting to report from the last meeting that is new and exciting, unfortunately, but I guess that's good news because we haven't had any exorbitant spending at all since the last meeting. Some of the variances that you're going to see on the next tab over the summary tab, for some reason I don't know where those reference errors are coming. It wasn't on my end Shannon, that's weird. Okay, let's go to the summary there and we can just go from there. Not really sure why that [inaudible 00:10:05]. Well, that's not good. Okay.

Michele:

Something you want to tell us Robin?

Robin:

No. I'm not really sure why that is the case. Shannon, can you let me share my screen?

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Shannon:

Yeah, I can. It should be set up, so you should just be able to press the share screen.

Robin:

Okay. Let me bring it up here. Make sure I'm bringing up something that doesn't have all errors first would be the proper thing. Because it's exactly what I just sent you and mine doesn't have errors. That's kind of strange. Okay, so if I just hit share here... Where do I do that?

Shannon:

There's a little green button.

Robin:

I get it. Okay. Oh, you don't want to say that. Okay, so we want to share... What do we want to share? Right here, share. Okay, good, guys can you see it?

Shannon:

Yeah.

Robin:

Okay. So we're going to go to the second tab here, which is what I normally go over first. Okay, so our revenue, we had reported on this last time that we have as of 10/31, we did have our full enrollment of 217. However, we did have some students that moved between districts from RCSD to some other districts, which is more of the suburban type districts.

Michele:

Robin, pardon my interruption. Any chance you can make it just a little bigger?

Robin:

Yeah, I think I can.

Michele:

I don't want to disrupt, but.

Robin:

I'm making it... Is that bigger here guys? Might be the resolution of my screen.

Michele:

Yeah. Nope. That's good. That's good enough.

Robin:

You want me to try to go a little bigger Michelle?

Michele:

Oh, no. It's all right. I can-

Robin:

Is it good? All right. So this new section show when the billings go out for RCSD, they do it based on head count. So it usually doesn't get caught up until the end of the year. However, the added districts will catch up and Maureen Milke is the one that does those billings. And she informed me that we probably won't see the catch-up for this negative \$25,000 until the January budget review, because those adjustments for the kids that move in between the districts is going to be reflected with the November budget review because that's when the November, December billing would have caught those moves off. Does that make sense? Any questions on that?

Robin:

So we're not really down on revenue, so to speak, we're just down in the fact that we had movement that hasn't been reflected in the billing chart is what... It's a timing issue primarily, so I don't want you to have a concern because we're showing that much less, we didn't have a enrollment issue. Okay, I'm going to go on to the next section, unless anyone had some questions on the revenue section. [inaudible 00:00:13:01]. Okay.

Robin:

All right, so our food services just kind of chug it along, it's not going to be as great this year due to COVID and the hybrid, now especially with the remote. We did have a problem with the child nutrition website. It was down for a long time, which is a lot of things in this state have been down lately or running behind. So we haven't really seen a tremendous amount of catch up for the free and reduced yet because we weren't able to submit on a timely basis but that should catch up. I talked with Michelle Henry that handles the food service and the reimbursement for food service through the state website, and she said it is fully back up and running, and that should level out more as we go further. However, it probably will not be as much from parents this year because of the hybrid schedule. Any questions on the food service program?

Robin:

Slight sum on field study, obviously we're not going to have much in that category this year. We did have one field study last month. I believe it was, or it might've been the month before for sixth grade, but I don't think there was any activity as of this particular budget during October for field studies.

Robin:

So then moving along, we'll go down to the administration and instruction piece. I don't really have anything that's showing a huge variance for these two sections right now. Any kind of variance that you see going to year to date actual last year at this time is primarily because of our change in timing for our salary schedules, payroll calendar changed moving everything one payroll period out. So any variance is not that we have different staff because pretty much we have a few additions that you guys were aware of, and then the rest of it is just the timing for the new payroll calendar, because salaries were flat except for the few additions that we had that you approved before the start of the year.

Robin:

So I don't really have anything to report on the administration or instruction base. So anyone have any questions about it? Okay. All right, so we always have supplies are a little bit higher at the beginning of the year and as the year goes on it levels out. This is a little bit different from the last time [inaudible 00:15:19] pulling this back to our profit and loss [inaudible 00:15:25].

Robin:

So we spent the money on the Chromebooks and we don't have to depreciate that anymore. So instead of the fear that we bought the Chromebooks, we might use them longer than a year but we're going to expense them completely on our P & O and the ESSER Cares funding is primarily going to pay for that expenditure. We just haven't received that yet, but that's the pot of money that we're going to be using to pay for that. So when we go a little bit further, I'll explain how that's affecting our bottom line.

Robin:

The operations is running along just as normal. We did get a refund from our insurance company. I think eventually as more bills come in that insurance line right here. I forget now I can actually use this and you guys will see me. This will probably be more reflective of what the budget would be, it's just the timing issues with bills that they haven't received from the net credit payment, nothing really else there.

Robin:

COVID expenditures haven't gone up since last time. It's just the cumulation of what it has been as per our spending from July through October. That's not really [inaudible 00:16:38] from last month. The rent [inaudible 00:16:45] and janitorial is the same. So as you can see here, we're a little bit lower than what we should be for our bottom line to budget, especially in a piece back in the \$25,000 that would bring us out. And if you add in the \$31,000 or the Chromebooks, do it for a year so for \$31,000 here to say, and then you add the \$25,000 that we're down in revenue and it's bringing in this rate right almost smack dab where we should be compared to the budget. So I'm really not concerned once the extra your funding comes in, and once the revenue is reflected at our moves, moving of students between districts, I think that's going to be pretty much right where we should be or where we thought we'd be at this particular point in time. So any questions on the profit and loss budget?

Jess:

Robin, could you just repeat the name of the, you said it was funding a pot of money. What's the name of that it cut out?

Robin:

ESSER Cares funding. It's federal grant money.

Jess:

Got you. Thank you.

Robin:

No problem. Anyone have any more questions on that? Shannon, did you get any more indication of when that's going to come through? Did you hear anything from anybody?

Shannon:

No, I have not.

Robin:

Okay. All right, so I'll move on to the balance sheet, if everyone's all set.

Shannon:

All right.

Robin:

So the balance sheet, our cash is still very strong. Our accounts receivable is right where it should be compared to last year at this time actually. We're doing a pretty good job on collecting from our districts. I think the only one that was giving us a little slow pay was Greece, but I'm pretty sure that that they've caught up as of now on December. Our prepaid expenses is primarily just the leasehold rent [inaudible 00:18:44] Fixed assets are pretty solid. They're pretty much just the same as they were last year, this time or last month this time because well we moved out the Chromebooks, as I said, they used to be an equipment. So you noticed if you were comparing last month's budget review equipment line, it's not that we returned equipment it's that we moved it over here to our COVID technology line.

Robin:

Accounts payable is just normal, crew payroll is there, summer spreaders, our accrued expenses is primarily the New York state local for our clerical workers, and then our New York state teacher's retirement. And it brings us at the bottom line of \$133. Our assets are pretty good compared to last year at this time, and our investment accounts are still doing very well. We did have that \$23,000 anonymous donation, which is why this is up higher from a fiscal year ending 6/30 but however, we're still showing a gain on our investments at this particular point in time. As of October, Fidelity comes out every month, Vanguard does quarterly statements so we won't see where Vanguard is until December. So any questions on that?

Robin:

Okay. So there really wasn't anything. I [inaudible 00:20:14] said everything on this. So I just wanted to mention again for people that might not have been at last month's meeting is that we would traditionally never go higher for summer stipends, but this year we did, but it ended up being kind of a wash because we just didn't go as high with... Trying to see where it is, where is it? Summer stipends here. So it went over in summer stipends this year, but we were under up here in professional development, so it's just where the categories went.

Robin:

And that was primarily as I noted over here, that it was the first time mainly because of the additional staffing training and some of the COVID meetings and such that we don't normally have, which is what [inaudible 00:21:00] and Shannon can answer any questions on there. So I'm all set, if anybody has questions then-

Michele:

All right, we're all done. So Shannon, you have to make me the host if you want me to-

Shannon:

Okay. Sorry, I got a little distracted. My internet is very spotty tonight, so I'm worried that the recording is not going to work very well or it's going to miss some things. So I'm going to pass the recording button to Michelle, or if there's somebody else that's savvy and knows how to send me the video after it's done, has anyone done it before and would like to be the recorder and doesn't have a dog?

Michele:

I'm happy to record. I've never done the emailing of the recording, but I'm happy to give it a go.

Mark:

So Shannon, your internet won't affect the quality of the recording.

Shannon:

It won't?

Mark:

No, cause it's not recording on your machine. It's recording in the cloud.

Shannon:

Okay.

Mark:

Just for your knowledge.

Shannon:

All right. Well then I'll just stay the course and if it gets really bad, then I'll see if I can relocate just for my own so I can hear better. Okay, carry on.

Michele:

All right. So we're going to do quick report out on advocacy and then we'll dive in. We'll just keep going, but I just want to quickly note and rejoined and just a quick note that Deb Hanmer is on the call as well, so welcome to Deb. We'll be getting her shortly. So Jess, do you want to give a quick two minute?

Jess:

Sure. So our advocacy or the community. And so those have been going really well and super exciting information, but we want to leave the floor for Deb tonight, but we'll definitely give you an update as we go. We have more meetings scheduled but it's rock the future, Adrian Hal, Doug Ackerley, and I think there was one other one but they've been going really great, so just wanted to let the group know.

Michele:

Thanks Jess. And as she said, we'll be covering more with Deb. Tracy, did you want to say a few things about diversity?

Traci:

I don't have much to say I'm here, I'm just eating spaghetti, which is not always pretty. So we have a meeting tomorrow. We haven't met since before Thanksgiving, so we'll meet tomorrow, but we did a survey within the group just to get perspectives related to multicultural anti-racist diversity. And so we're going to go through with the group tomorrow the results of that survey, and just kind of talk about figuring out how to possibly roll something out to the entire school community to get some perceptions. But I also am excited about Deb's work and the conversation tonight. So I'll leave it there.

Michele:

Thanks Tracy. [inaudible 00:24:41] report out. All right, so Shannon, well, let's see, my fearless timekeeper is here and I wanted to just, it's almost 6:00 so we want to give an update on remote learning. So I'm going to ask Anne Marie to give us 10 minutes and then we'll see where we're at with that, that sounds all right. So Shannon, I'll turn it over to you.

Shannon:

Okay. And let me know if you're, well, I'll try to know that I'm having trouble with internet if I'm stopping and freezing, but hopefully I won't be. So remote learning, we are in almost the end of week two or a week and a half of remote learning. Overall, the attendance is pretty strong. It's stronger in the upper grades than it is in the lower grades. However, the lower grades overall are doing well, so no class is really struggling.

Shannon:

But if you look at the scattering of partial days and that kind of thing, you're going to see more of them in the lower grades. Last week on Thursday, Stacey Antriligator, our school designer, and myself, and Lisa O'Malley did a virtual walkthrough and we jumped into different Zoom rooms, Zoom classrooms to see what was going on and told the teachers it wasn't a gotcha moment, it was more like just a chance for us to collectively see the ingenuity of our staff, and we certainly saw it. There was amazing engagement among the students and the ways that teachers are teaching right now is just it's noteworthy. And in fact, we have been asked by EL to take part in a video about remote instruction, and so the third grade team is going to help with that.

Shannon:

And so there'll be interviewed and we're going to reach out to parents, but there might be a portion that's recorded of our Zoom class. So overall it really looks good considering I understand that in-person is much better, but there's something about continuity that's happening, where we can have more synchronous learning across the whole school. And a lot of the instruction tends to be more personal, so teachers are not necessarily teaching to the whole class at once, they're teaching in small groups and they're really focused on meeting students where they are, so it seems to be overall a lot better.

Shannon:

Now there's certainly children who were thriving in the hybrid environment that are not thriving in this environment and vice versa. So children who weren't thriving or doing as well in the physical environment where they get distracted and that kind of thing, they're thriving in this environment where they have just this box to look at. So it's just interesting to see how everyone's taking that. And I have that information because of a few different ways. So not only the walkthrough, but the PD advisory committee met this morning, and so each of the teachers who are representative of the loops had a chance to share from their perspective how things are going overall.

Shannon:

We are putting a survey out at the end of this week for families and a different one for staff. That survey, well, is being developed by the reopening task force to figure out how things are going so far, but then where the comfort level is in the return date. So when I gave the messaging to the community, it was that we are making a plan for March, but we hope to come back around mid-January.

Shannon:

Along with that, we did meet with the reopening task force on Monday, and on Friday, we had another private and charter leader meeting with Dr. Mendoza and his team. And we got some good answers that helped us get a better sense as to what factors we're looking at in order to make a good determination for coming back into in-person instruction. And then we've also been communicating quite a bit with RMSC because they are a huge factor in returning as well.

Shannon:

So we have found out that transportation needs two weeks lead time. And right now, a lot of bus drivers that we had have even gone South. So they are... They've been sort of temporarily laid off in a way, so they'll need two weeks to bring everyone back and get everybody situated with bus routes. Nursing is not going to be an issue. I don't think they'll be able to come right back to it. Special education, I don't believe is going to be an issue they're working right alongside us right now. But things that we need to worry about is, do we have a maintenance staff to clean the building and our midnight-

PART 1 OF 4 ENDS [00:30:04]

Shannon:

Our midnight cleaner contract was temporary, and so it's running out. And we are working with RMSC to get a new contract, either going with them or changing over and having RMSC do all of our maintenance and cleaning. Another factor is, it went right out of my head. Oh, security. RMSC is reducing their hours now that we're in the orange zone. And if we go in the red zone, they are going to do a shut down. And so I talked with several RMSC stakeholders and said, "Well, what does that mean for us? Does that mean that we definitely also have to stay home?" And they said, "No, we will actually support you in whatever way we need to for you to come back." So that's good that even if we are in the red zone, we are able to come back.

Shannon:

Dr. Mendoza changed some, not he. The state changed regulations and around red and orange zone. We do not have to test a hundred percent anymore. We have to test 20% over a month for orange zone and 30% over a month for red zone. So it's much more feasible. And, becoming a certified testing site is looking a little better. Our re-opening task force has a pediatrician, a parent pediatrician, and we've been cleared that it is okay to have her be the overseer of us to be certified. And she has agreed. So now it's just a matter of getting the application approved. We have been also told that we can use the Monroe County Health Department's information until that happens. So things are looking good.

Shannon:

I think right now the big thing we're wondering about is, well, how are the teachers feeling about coming back and how are the families feeling about coming back into hybrid? And then, do we want to

come right back to the same model or something slightly different? Do we want to phase in? These are all kinds of conversations that we're having right now. Dr. Mendoza definitely gave strong recommendations that any family who travels, even to Batavia, should be quarantining for two weeks afterwards. So, realistically it feels like we shouldn't be coming back until after Martin Luther King Day, because that's two weeks after break. So the team has been talking about, okay, would that mean late January? Would it mean the beginning of February? So some of those questions are getting formulated for the survey as well. All right. I just spoke really fast. Can anyone say back everything I said? No. Do you have any questions for me? Or I want to talk more about this.

Tasha:

I have a question about travel during any breaks. Is there any way where we could survey parents and see if they're going to be doing any traveling to assess that?

Shannon:

Sure.

Traci:

And not even them traveling, but people from other towns coming to visit here. I don't know if that's too personal of a question. I had the question about liability for the parent pediatrician and the site, testing site.

Shannon:

Yeah. So we did check with George a bit. And George, go ahead and correct me if I'm wrong, but I'm pretty sure that we don't have to worry too much about liability. And Dr. Mendoza said they've looked into it, and this is going to be an okay thing to have a volunteer do this. The oversight is not extensive. You train people on campus, which we already have people trained, so they're doing the actual testing. The person who's overseeing is making sure the training's happening properly, and making sure that we are entering the data in properly, and then being available for questions. So it's not a huge undertaking. And there isn't a whole lot of liability there. But I do think we are going to want to drop some level of an agreement, when we get this going, so that it's really clear what her role is and how that works.

George:

I think that's a fair summary. I mean, it's not like you're treating somebody or issuing any affirmative opinions that they're well and whatever. It's a more generalized educational responsibility. I don't think the liability issue is huge, and it's being performed for a specific purpose. And I think, within the guidelines that are being given to follow, as long as you adhere to those guidelines, there really shouldn't be any major concern about that. Because again, you're not treating somebody. It's not as if what comes out of this is going to determine whether somebody gets the vaccine or not. There's not going to be that kind of consequence.

Michele:

Shannon, quick question. The recording. Are you being asked by the County to upload the results into the state database, which is known as ECLIA?

Shannon:

I was nodding. Did you see me? No?

Michele:

No.

Shannon:

Yes. So yes, in order to be a certified site, we have to have a CLIA number. Right now we are using the Monroe County Health Department CLIA number, by blessing of the department, and then entering the data through the ECLIA site. Yes.

Michele:

Okay. And you can keep doing it that way or do you have to get your own CLIA?

Shannon:

He wants everyone get their own CLIA. Someone sort of forced his hand to give us a deadline. And he said, "All right. Well, if you need a deadline, it's January 1st." But I think he would easily let us if we can't. If, for some reason, we were to come back early and need to use their number, I think it's possible. But he wanted to give us some sort of clarity around that.

Michele:

Just FYI. I'm pretty well versed in this whole area. So if you need a hand, I have an HCS account. We were in the process of doing the ECLIA's. So just reach out if you need anything, but I'm sure you're connected with the County book.

Shannon:

Thank you.

Becki Mason:

Yeah. I have just a couple of questions. One, you cut out when you were saying the thing about Michael Mendoza recommends something travel. And then you said that would be the reason why we wouldn't come back till after Martin Luther King Day. But couldn't we just, I don't know. You cut out. So I wasn't sure what you said. But is there a reason why everybody would have to wait that long? Why wouldn't it just be the people who traveled couldn't come back?

Shannon:

So, we could do that. We could just wait and just say, okay, on your honor. You only come back if you haven't traveled, or haven't had any visitors, to Tracy's point. I'm not sure. I think we have to decide, the re-opening task force or the board or whomever, are we going to trust that because it's completely the honor system?

Becki Mason:

I just think it's the honor system with all schools right now.

Shannon:

It is.

Becki Mason:

And it shows with the testing that it's not being transported, like it's not being given to each other in school. And school is the safest place right now. So, that's what my question is about, the end of January, why it would be that long if we're able to get everything in order before then?

Shannon:

I'll tell you that all the charters are having the same conversation, and are coming to the same conclusions of giving it a few weeks. It's also been in the news of how January is going to be one of the highest numbered months. So it might not be up to us too. I think we're also aware that there could be a New York pause and then we don't have a choice. So all reasons why we want to get a strong sense of the staff and the families to figure out where the comfort level is.

Becki Mason:

Conferences for the [inaudible 00:38:32]. And I would say is our fifth grade parents, about two-thirds of them brought it up to us, and want to be back, and were asking us like, "Why aren't we back?" And we just directed them to you, to check in with you. But I think that hearing from parents, a lot of parents are struggling right now and are frustrated. And my wondering is with the staff comfort level. I wanted to know how, and this is going to come out wrong, but I just feel like there's many staff that don't feel comfortable coming back. And I'm not sure it should be up to the staff. It's our job. And if you tell us to come back, we come back. And I just don't know. I don't feel like other schools, the staff get to decide. It's based on what New York State says, and what administration tells them to do. So I just wondered how much that will come into play, what the staff feels, because it is our job.

Shannon:

It is our job. But it is a tricky situation too. So if I have staff who are refusing to come back, what do I do then? And how do I make decisions? So, I think it has to be a factor in the decision. It doesn't have to be the reason why we do or don't come back, but I think it does have to be a factor, as well as the families.

Ivelisse:

This is Ivelisse, if I may. I just want to say that, as you know, I've worked with IBERO, but I work with the school as well. So I have received questionnaires. And the staff have been giving out their input, whether or not we go back to the office at IBERO and the office back at the school. So a lot of organizations are asking the staff, what are their opinions and how do they feel about going back to their offices and to the building. So, for what I've been able to see, it's happening out there. It's the norm of what's going on right now.

Becki Mason:

I don't think that's the norm at schools though. I don't think Webster School District is asking their teachers if they'd rather be remote right now.

Ivelisse:

It did happen with Monroe. It did happen with Monroe. That's what I'm saying that after receiving all the information from IBERO, but I also received the information from Monroe and East, because I also collaborate with East.

Michele:

So other input, I clearly know this isn't obviously something we're going to be deciding on in the moment. Any other input? I'm also aware of the time. Wanting to make sure that we stay on track for the SWOT analysis, it's all.

Jess:

I'm just asking. So the follow-up, we originally said Shannon would wait until January board meeting, and we were going to have a discussion, right? Is that what originally was said? It was going to be the reopening task force and the board having a discussion in January? But does that seem like we have to up that sooner, or is that still the plan?

Shannon:

I don't think there's any reason to up it. I really can't imagine us coming back the week after break. I think that's just. I know that there's some disagreement there, but I don't think that's smart. So yes, I think our next board meeting is that week right after the December break. So I think we can certainly have that discussion then. But I also know that the re-opening task force is meeting next week. I'm sorry, not next week. It's the Monday of whatever that is, the 21st of December. So, we want to be starting to prep to return as soon as possible. So we want to get this survey data back very quickly and start to make some recommendations, or at least set up a course of a plan.

Michele:

Yeah. Just to jump in, and then maybe we can get ourselves moving along. I think the critical thing is we need to be ready to re-open. I think you said it well, as quickly as possible. And the board is certainly tasking you, as you're continuing to do Shannon, to work with the re-opening task force to keep doing that work, knowing that we all want people to return as quickly as possible under the safest conditions we can have. So unless anyone disagrees, I think that the board directive is the same as it has been, please move along in that direction so that we can get our kids back safely and as quickly as possible.

Ivelisse:

Just so everybody knows what's going on around, because we are a school. And so what's going on around other schools in the city. The city school district is planning to go back full time and in building by February 22nd. That was a decision that was made based on the questionnaires and the staff feedback. We are planning to go back after that February break.

Michele:

Thanks, Ivelisse. We appreciate that. All right. I'm going to move us along. Unless there's somebody who has a burning need to say something, I want to get us moving along. So I'm noticing on the agenda, Shannon, before we get to Deb, there's a five minute data privacy policy approval. Is that something we need to do?

Shannon:

Yes, we need to do it. But I think I put five minutes after.

Michele:

Right. But I'm wondering if we should just get that out of the way.

Shannon:

Sure.

Michele:

Then we can just keep going with Deb and we're not going to have to change gears because I imagine that's going to be a [inaudible 00:14:34]. Is that all right with you, Deb, hang with us here for five more minutes? I'm thinking about Mark. Mark is always like, "Let's get the business done. Let's get the stuff done that we can get done and be more efficient."

Shannon:

All right. I'm going to try to give a quick summary. And Maureen Milke I was hoping we'd get here by now. Of course, she has late hours because we have a late pickup time for materials and food on Wednesdays, which I forgot to share. But I will speak for her. She is our data privacy officer. It was a person we needed to name. The state asked us, or asked all schools, to name a data privacy officer last spring. And Maureen is a guru of School Tool and whatnot. So she's our person. And she is in charge of helping us stay compliant with student and staff, well, mainly student data privacy. So that means that information that is about a student is only shared with the parties that be, and the parties that be, like for instance, School Tool have named an agreement of what they're going to do and not do with the student data that they have access to.

Shannon:

i-Ready is another good one. Seesaw. Some of these online pieces, which is probably why this came out. So we have a policy that was in the folder, and also sort of like a handbook that also was in the folder. They both are. I'm sorry. One is named Page Four. So that's the handbook. And Paige, are you there? We okay? Page four is the page that has the different things that Maureen is looking with me on, to get done. The other thing, the policy is the Parents' Bill of Rights for Data Privacy and Security. It's a template that she made work for GCCS. So we need to approve it so we can put it on the website. I know, usually we try to do this ahead of time, but this was one of those like, ah, we have to get it done. Here comes Maureen. Perfect timing. So, does anyone have any questions that I may or may not be able to answer, but maybe Maureen can, as she's settling in here.

Maureen:

My mouth is full.

Shannon:

That's okay. We were talking about the policy. But you don't have to say a thing. We're just going to see if anyone has any questions.

Maureen:

Okay.

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Michele:

It certainly seems pretty straight forward, standard data privacy security as I'm looking at it here.

Allison:

Are we approving the whole policy, or just that Parents' Bill of Rights portion, or the whole full one?

Shannon:

We're approving that document, the Parent Bill of Rights Data Privacy and Security Policy. There will probably be, I think, Maureen, there's a few other things that we're going to do down the road. But this is the first one towards getting ourselves into the new compliance.

Michele:

You broke up a little bit. But I think you said, just so Alison and Elizabeth can get the language, I'll put forward a motion to approve the data security and privacy policy and Parent Bill of Rights. George, is that sufficient? You're muted.

Shannon:

You're muted, George.

George:

Yes. I agree with that. I was trying to look at it on another screen.

Mark:

I second the motion.

Michele:

Thank you, Mark. All those in favor of the motion, please signify by aye. Any opposed? Any abstentions? All right. Motion carries. There you are, Maureen. All set on that. All right. And with that, I am going to invite all of us to welcome Deb Hanmer back in this crazy little Zoom format that we're making work. She's been doing some great work on our behalf, again, as we asked her to do in this engagement process, with strategic planning, really looking at some of those hard questions that have come out of our renewal process. And so, I'm excited for her to walk us through the SWOT, and to have a really engaging conversation. So with that, Deb, the floor is yours.

Deb:

Awesome. Thank you. Can somebody give me share screen abilities so I can share this PowerPoint?

Shannon:

It should be on.

Deb:

Okay. Let's see. So thank you everyone. I'm excited to be here. A big conversation, but I think one that we knew we were going to be having at this time and place. So, I'm going to start just by taking us back to January, when we last met to have this strategic conversation. And wow, this has been quite a year

since January. We don't even need to talk about that. But our goal for the time here is really about a couple, I think, strategic directions that the school is going into, right. This isn't defining everything about GCCS, but aligned to a couple of the priorities that, when we met in January, you noted as two at the top. The expansion conversation and the diversity conversation. So, based on that push in January, and of course, resources is on there because resources matter is connected to everything.

Deb:

But based on January, what we decided to embark on was this SWOT analysis to make sure we had good information to make decisions on. We had lots of thoughts, reflections, ideas. We're really wanting to make sure we could speak into the space. Some boots on the ground information about the school, about what key stakeholders are thinking about, and understanding about the school, as well as what community partners, how it's being viewed and positioned. So, for the SWOT, basically we engage with current students, staff, alumni, teachers, I said staff already, community partners, and to the folks that just started bringing up some potential future, some desired community partners like Adrian Hella, chamber of commerce, some folks at Rock the Future, Doug Ackley, who's a teen empowerment head and former parent. Just really using this opportunity to not only engage with folks who the school already does good work with, but think about, as we're thinking about some of these topics and issues, who the school might want to be partnered with. Star Bridge Foundation, which is an organization that focuses on special ed education in the city.

Deb:

So it's been a bunch of times just talking, listening, understanding the last few of those potential community partners, the advocacy committee joined for those meetings. Basically, we're at this point here, right? We got a lot of information in, you got some of that SWOT summary as a pre-work. Hopefully everyone had a chance to give it a good look. But you're at this 20 year Mark, right, and really these big questions that are not new questions. I think that was clear in January. These are not new questions about how the school wants to engage with the question around diversity of the student population, and who it should be serving. And also thinking [inaudible 00:53:35] the school should be [inaudible 00:53:45] more students. The idea of a bigger footprint in the city and what that could look like.

Deb:

So, a number of things that changed over the course of 20 years, but arguably the biggest factor that might be weighing on some of your minds tonight is the charter renewal, right? So that three-year charter renewal versus the five-year charter renewal, and the political landscape that GCCS is now in, but also the charter schools in New York and more broadly. So this is a summary of the SWOT. And we're going to really start just diving into and thinking about some of the reflections that you might have that came up. Our goal tonight is to make, I like to call it some draft decisions, meaning details and the sort might evolve. And certainly, how we get to that vision of the decision, there's more detail to that process. But before we can work those details out, we need clarity from the board about what the direction is you want to go. So we can't make the plan and address a number of the issues unless we can walk out and say, here's where we want to go. So that is our goal this evening to try to get to that point.

Deb:

Okay. So the question is as plainly stated as I could. When we boil down a lot of different things that we want to be able to say tonight is, should GCCS open more seats to students in Rochester and Monroe

County? That's the expansion question. Again, how that looks, we can talk about all those different options, but that's the big question. The second big question is related to diversity, equity inclusion, which is, does GCCS want to serve a more racially and socio-economically diverse student population than it currently does? So those are the big questions to keep in the back of your mind, the same ones you saw in the pre-work. So now I'm going to slow down there. Now we're going to talk about some of those things that did come out of the SWOT. You have a little more detail in that pre-work table. So we're just going to start by asking some of the basics of, what do you see? What stands out? What questions do you have? Well, let's just acclimate with questions at this point from folks. And if anyone needs [inaudible 00:26:44], we can [inaudible 00:56:44] of it in the chat.

Maggie:

This is just a making sure I understood question. In the threats section of the first row, there was WL as initials for something.

Deb:

Wait list.

Maggie:

Wait list. Thank you.

Maureen:

Can you put the table in the chat?

Traci:

I have a question about misinformation. What is it? And I don't know if we just have an example of one, if there are many. What is-

Deb:

You're talking about the comment, the note that says misinformation about the school.

Traci:

Yeah. Under the threats.

Deb:

And Shannon or Michelle, could you drop the table on the chat? I would have to do a number of logistics with my screen right now.

Shannon:

Done. I think I already did it.

Deb:

Thank you. Okay. So, misinformation about the school that you need you need to perform, this is some of the old policies, you need to perform a certain amount of hours or volunteer service for your child to attend. The only way to get in is if your child is at the pre-school. Another way to say it is like rumors.

Just the things that are factually untrue that people commonly repeat about GCCS, and quite common. Like when people are going to challenge me that it's a fact, like quite common misconceptions.

Maggie:

I had a related question. I wondered also, it sounds like those kinds of things, things we know are just blatantly untrue. That's about communicating. I wondered, are there any that maybe are more reflective of a misunderstanding about something that's true that would be more nuanced and potentially challenging to correct or disseminate?

Deb:

If I'm understanding your question, more things that are, you mean more like things like perception is reality.

Becki Mason:

Yes.

Deb:

The best way to answer that, I think a number of the things [inaudible 00:59:39] with Shannon about along the way. Some are about things that the school used to do that maybe you guys haven't done in a number of years, especially related to maybe like the way the lottery process that folks-

PART 2 OF 4 ENDS [01:00:04]

Deb:

that folks still believe, because there's still a little something there. But the misinformation, like blatantly incorrect, and the things where perception or reality, I can't that cleanly say cut that way. I think people, some of the things that were like in that perception is reality bucket we're like, "There's only rich white kids at GCCS. Those are the only kids who can get into that school," sort of thing. Right? So, I can show... which I did, the demographic breakdown. But it's like, that's not perception is reality because someone's looking at the factual numbers. But it's like, "No. This is how it feels, this is what I understand. This is what folks are saying in the community."

Deb:

So I think that's why I've had to like word it as misinformation, because even in the face of a factual pushback the perception of some of those things are so strong and emotionally charged for folks in the community that... Yeah. In doing something like this it's not my role to, get into arguments with folks, always my role to kind of like present factual data when someone's saying an incorrect statement. But convincing someone of the spirit of something is... Yeah. Unless you're really kind of getting into a kind of a deeper conversation like that, hard to do. But a lot of it was certainly just like, "I believe this to be true, because this is my lived experience with the school." Or "Based on what's discussed in the community. This is what I am a hundred percent certain is happening." Even in the face of hard numbers that say the opposite.

Jess:

Deb, I have a question about the location. So the location is the strength, but it's also a threat under the diverse by design piece?

Deb:

Yep.

Jess:

I know we've spoken about this before as a group, that it's super important for EL, it's been great partnership. So I'm just I guess, confused how... or not really confused, but that it's a strength and a threat, right?

Deb:

Yep. No it's a good noticing. So basically the location is so appealing for all the reasons the neighborhood, the science museum is... great neighborhood, culturally rich, feels and perceived as very safe in the city, et cetera, et cetera. All those reasons. Great access, walkable, lovely. But that same kind of space from a whole nother group, there's a perception of tucked in. I use the word tucked in but the more negative one is kind of like hiding, right? Like the school hides in the museum. Like an intentionality about why it's tucked in that space, I think is why it kind of falls into both of those things. Again, that goes back to Maggie's thing where it's like, I'm sure I could have presented... I don't know the full history.

Deb:

I'm sure I could have presented 100 reasons why the location was where it is. But the perception in the community is that it's tucked away. "It's hidden away from me, or who needs it. Or again from different community partners, from like the folks who need access to it." So it kind of falls into both of that threats. It's a definitely a strength and an asset, but definitely a threat, and thinking about exposure and access to other communities.

Ryan:

Deb, one thing along a similar route is that is the small school as a strength, but then weakness is too few seats. So was there an expansion of what around small school was a strength-

Deb:

Yep.

Ryan:

... [crosstalk 01:04:27] those two relate?

Deb:

The small school strength one definitely I think most resonated with the key of the key of the key stakeholders. Like the students, staff members, and parents. Lots of like, "My child can get within me, the feeling of like individualized support. The feeling of if my child is going through something, there are one, two, three adults there to help and crediting that to the small school environment." The kids, which was the best part [inaudible 01:05:05] the focus group with the students. Though, they didn't have all the language to make the connection that was their kind of like how their teachers kind of look out for

them, and care about them, and help them when they're like... You know what I mean? Like the attention that they get. So all of that kind of falls into the strength category. A.

Deb:

The threats again, the small seat is just like... For a number of folks at the individual community level, and then some of the organizations and partners is just like, it doesn't even seem to matter. Because there's never anything not relevant, really relevant. Because like no one can get in, so in responds to questions about, "How do you see GCCCS fitting into the larger Rochester educational story and experience, et cetera?" Out of the same mouth of some of the people who said this was just like a clear acknowledgement of the sort of awesome things that are happening at the school, but that there are so few seats for students to receive it, that it kind of feels like why are we having this conversation kind of thing? So, yeah.

Ivelisse:

I apologize if this information was already presented and I missed it, but for the threats, it, this lack of trust in larger Black and Brown communities in Rochester? How do you collect this data? How did you got to this conclusion?

Deb:

Yeah. So again, talking to as part of the SWOT, talked to community partners, other charter leaders, folks who sort of like work in and interact with kind of families in need of educational choice in the city. Just really connected to that last question, the thought I'm thinking of if the school wants to, or is interested in being more engaged in the community, it should just be more engaged in the community. But that starts with building trust that's not there yet. Because of who, again perception-wise is primarily being served. Again, these are perceptions, right? This isn't like a social science study where it's like, right, these are people's opinions about kind of like what's going on in the school. So I would say that jumped out mostly from the community partners, from some of our other charter leaders and community partners. That would fall kind of like organizations, foundations, all, all that sort of grouping, [crosstalk 01:08:03] think about kind of educational choice in the city.

Ivelisse:

So it was basically all our community organizations, but not necessarily families themselves in the community?

Deb:

Oh Okay. That's what you're asking. I did not hear the lack of trusting from students, families. No.

Ivelisse:

Okay.

Deb:

I heard a little of it from a few staff members, but the large theme was definitely from more the folks working in educational choice folks were in the community with families overall kind of a lane. Not from students, certainly not from students and no, not from any kind of family.

Ivelisse:

Okay.

Traci:

That doesn't necessarily surprise me. I think that once we're in, we're in. So the idea of people, families who attend the school currently, or children who attend the school currently don't trust. So I just am not surprised that it would not come out from that particular sample population, if you will.

Deb:

I don't have to tell anyone on the call is yeah, the families are highly satisfied with the school, the families who are enrolled are highly satisfied, right? Like, yes. So other questions, reflections, or thoughts?

Michele:

I just wanted to jump in and add my... Many of the things folks have said, I echo. What really was the big noticing for me is the opportunities. I can take issue with some of the sort of misinformation, what I really feel myself focused on are the growth, the question about replication, and trailblazing. This time, particularly in, in history right now in Rochester, it feels very much like an opportunity that we could seize. I don't mean we're going to do something overnight. So I'm really struck by the opportunities.

Traci:

Yeah. The piece under threats with parent perception, the uncertainty on how committed folks would be to diversity efforts, if there were substantial changes. One of the things that I have been thinking about is I think that we have an easier time talking about diversity than we do talking about equity and inclusion. So when we talk about diversity as difference, and representation of difference, yeah, sure we got that.

Traci:

But when we talk about things like under the weaknesses where it has the curriculum lacks cultural awareness, and what would it take to shift some of that? What would be gained and what would be lost? Because in stuff like this, something has to be lost. So that parent perception under the threats really resonates with me because it's beyond the diversity discussion, it really is more about, "Okay, we have difference here, and now what?"

Maggie:

May I jump off of that and add on Traci? So I was really tuned into what you're saying, because I think I am connecting to this from... [crosstalk 01:12:16] sent lots of different kids my way I am for it. What I wonder about is how do we change what we're doing to make sure that, they're not just with us, that we're serving them? And that it's enriching the school experience for everyone? I agree with some of the challenges we're facing that we have practices that lean towards White and affluent families. We have not very much diversity of literally appearance on our staff. We're missing some ingredients, I think, to be able to do that really well. We know that the EL model can be extremely successful in a huge array of school makeups. So we have, I think really great examples we can look to, to start to explore what we can change and what we can hold on to, to do that.

Maggie:

It's just like, that is a big process. I like to be set up for success and feel prepared. I'm curious what that would feel like for us, and if it would be... Like, you're having that other side of it of, "What will that be like as a parent? Will you lose something in the school that you wanted that was why you were here?" So that's, yeah. That's how I'm connecting to that. Thank you for sharing that.

Traci:

Even Maggie to your point, it's I think for me, part of the reason why, when I see the two questions that we're going to grapple with, is it the diversity inclusion track that we're going? Is it the expansion track? I think either track some internal work has to be done. So that, to Maggie, your point of are we serving the people that we have? Because if we go out and get more people, and yet some of our policy and practice doesn't necessarily shift, then I don't know, we may be having this conversation in another year, or two, or three.

Tasha:

I think just to echo what Tracy said, I think my focus is really looking at the culture at the school because... Or even if a parent of color tours the school, they should be able to see that they're welcomed without verbally having to go through meetings. They should be able to see like, "Oh, this is where my kid can go. This teacher is going to look at..." To see more representatives. So they know that they're welcome there.

Shannon:

I'm just going to say that it feels like it all sort of has to be happening at the same time. So our enrollment demographics we've talked about are changing, and along with it, we all have to sort of change culture, policy, curriculum all at the same time. I don't know what I'm trying to say. I think what I'm trying to say is, you can't just separate them and just do one thing and then say, "Okay, now we're ready." Then be ready to do something. So I guess what I'm saying is, is it feels like naturally, and systematically, some things are starting to change.

Shannon:

The diversity and racial equity group is like a good example of something where it's been evolving as we have started to get clear about what we're hoping to see and sort of like the future vision. So I don't know. I guess it's like parents are not going to see themselves at the school until we have more people representing. Staff are not going to... it's not going to be a diverse staff until we have more staff in. But then the children aren't going to see themselves and their staff until they... I don't know. Okay. I'm [crosstalk 01:17:08] my conversation but you follow me?

Traci:

It makes sense, it makes sense to me.

Shannon:

[crosstalk 01:17:14] Yes. Yes. It's all, it's all interwoven. It can't, it's not like we can just say, this is the key ingredient. It's like all it has to come together.

Deb:

It is all interwoven. Based on where you guys come to at the end of the night it's also not... This isn't something like, "Oh, let's have a team over the summer work on a plan." You know what I mean? This is a strategic... that's why this is like a board conversation. Meaning yes, there are of course some short term things, but there are some long-term things, right? Like in anything like this, anytime you're at this level of kind of conversation discussion. So that might help someone take one deep breath, right? Regardless of where you end, any things like this are kind of like long range. Near term and longterm work needs to happen.

Deb:

I definitely would love to hear more reflections about the opportunities if folks have any of those. It's like with everything it's easy to get stuck on the things that might sting a little bit, right? Like you as guys love GCCCS, and I have grown even more to understand why you went through this process. So there are some... maybe scary, say that as a slash, opportunities. If any reflections on those?

Jess:

So I tend to sometimes get stuck in detail so I apologize in advance, but I think for me, I think, yes, I completely agree with Shannon that they're multi-layers and everybody has to do what they have to do to make it work together. But I think there's just little things that we can do. Maybe this is where the diversity and [inaudible 01:19:12] group comes in. Is like the pie thing. We shouldn't say "That the people have to have 20 pies, the networking of fundraising." We have to look at how we're going to welcome families. That don't work the same way. Right? And how does that look? So those kinds of things can be quickly changed, right? I mean, we can make decisions quickly about something like that or who notices those.

Jess:

Because we can't all just work in a bubble. Right? So I might notice something, Traci is going to know something, Tasha's going to know something. Then Maggie and Becky and Shannon are going to notice something different and how it's all working. But I think we don't right now have a place to have those kinds of conversations, necessarily. They can't all just get filtered through Shannon. Shannon's already wearing 20 million hats. Right? So how do those kinds of conversations and opportunities so that we can be more welcome? Yes, we know it's going to be difficult to get our staff diverse when we have the retention rate, we do. We know it's a slow process to get more kids in the building. It's a long process to get another location, if that's what we decide to do. But there are things we can do so I just-

Michele:

Deb, I wanted to just jump in and ask from a time perspective, if you wanted any assistance with facilitation at all? Annmarie and I are kind of watching time in the background. I don't want to... If you got it, you got it. We've got about sort of 40 minutes left total of the meeting-

Deb:

Yep. Nope. I think I got it. I just want to make sure that [crosstalk 01:20:47] this is the time because we're going to push kind of quickly into getting to a decision point.

Michele:

Yep. It's all good.

Deb:

I just want to make sure I'm leaving lots of space... This is a short PowerPoint, lots of space for folks to raise questions. We don't want to get to the point of decision and then, "Oh, I have [crosstalk 00:21:07]" Right? This is the time, my questions, reflections, thoughts to get those. I appreciate the timestamp though, thank you.

Allison:

Excuse me, this is Allison coming into this from the RMSC perspective and as a partner with you guys in that, I feel like there're both strengths and weaknesses involved in our relationship and even in the location. I feel like creating opportunities with however we move forward and supportive really to each other, I think could help bring about some of these changes. I know the museum is beginning some DEI efforts on their own, but I feel like how do we break down the barriers where their perception of the school is tucked behind the museum? How do we break down that the museum is also a welcoming place? So I feel like there's potential for more positive collaboration is the angle I see this start from.

Traci:

Yeah. With the opportunities I'm looking particularly at the DEI work at GCCCS, the Diversity Racial Equity committee is trying to find our way. There are engaged parents and staff who want to be doing something. So we're, this is just trying to figure out what that something is. I think there are so many somethings, so we got to find like just right something, but anything that comes out of this, and Deb you coming back to a meeting could be helpful too. Just saying.

Deb:

Just saying? I enjoyed that meeting, it was actually really interesting. So listening to different folks that are reflecting. I know anytime you're talking about change... and we've had lots of practice this year on change and flexibility as a society. But anytime you're talking about things changing, shifting, there are rightful concerns, fears pop up. Right? Things sound good, right? It's like, "This sounds good. This is what we be doing." But then when you get down to the details there are those fears and concerns. Are any of those coming up for folks now? Lets sort of get at it those. What are the concerns or fears that you might be sitting on listening to some of this? Let's take a few minutes in that.

Maggie:

I'm real good at fears. I saw and I always feel sad about the fact that one of our weaknesses is our special education services and serving students with unique needs. That is something that I don't want... If our resources are stretched, I don't want that to get worse. I want anything that we're pursuing and deciding on to leave that either if it has to be the same, or ideally to improve that. To make sure that education, and providing access to that high quality education for students who our current model is difficult for. I see opportunity here to create space for... If we're expanding to create different classroom sizes, or offer like tweaks to our programming. I fear not planning for that and ending up having to turn kids away, which will make the perception problems worse.

Deb:

Yeah. Maggie that's what that trailblazing bucket is definitely about. The special ed specifically came up actually from a number of the community partners and for from some staff, but really subgroups, SPED, racial minorities. But I think that most recent conversation we had with Star Rich Foundation, which is

the organization focusing on special education and just listening to their reflection about your school based on the model. How they saw it is so uniquely positioned to kind of like, "Be a real asset for a special ed student." Is not panacea, but just in listening it's all in kind of sometimes how you're seeing and conceiving of it. So I think that definitely goes into that trailblazing bucket. Of really thinking about what it is that GCCCS could teach the sector, could learn from kind of like investment with this model, with different suburbs. Other fears, concerns, things just like that. Thank you, Maggie.

Tasha:

I think my concern is what expansion looks like. Is it our footprint? Are we partnering with other schools? Or is it we're having another location, like a GCCS II, close to us where we're taking on more students? What would that look like? Is that expanding just 7th and 8th grade? Or is that another elementary school?

Ryan:

Piggybacking on that too, would be just ensure that goes back to that small school feel, making sure that everything that's currently being implemented, that's positive about the one-on-ones and the amount of attention that each student is getting carried over the positives from the current culture are getting carried over to any sort of expand.

Deb:

I'm going to give a very... because I of course can't answer. That's what you guys are kind of in some ways say, not at that level of detail tonight, of course. But expansion how should, could look all of those ways. Right? That's why the question is kind of worded about number of seats. Right? It can look a variety of different ways. There are pluses, minuses, pros, cons to a variety of different options. That would be part of, kind of like the next steps out of here. It's sort of like, if the answer is, "Yes, we want to serve more students", based on not only your internal thinking, but some of this conversation and work that we're doing with some of these future and potential community partners.

Deb:

As well as we have kind of like the authorizers, right? It's like really thinking about what is the best option to get to kind of that goal. But committing first to that is what you want to do. There's all sorts of ways to do it, so we could get information for... We could be talking about this two years from now, three years from now, and still getting different options.

Deb:

But it's like if you want to do it, there's definitely a pathway to do it. Then you have to figure out which best aligns to the school you want to be. Kind of like in that pre-work question in 2040, what do you want people to be saying about what GCCCS looks like, sounds like, feels like? Okay, any other sort of fears or concerns. I got positives from the current culture, caring over other points there.

Mark:

I feel like the conversation is so broad and there are so many different things coming into it. I personally am having a really hard time sort of sorting out almost what it is that we're discussing, to be honest. It's like so broad. I'm like "over here".

PART 3 OF 4 ENDS [01:30:04]

Mark:

Blessing, to be honest. It's so broad. I'm like, "Oh, over here, over here, over, oh-oh." And there's really... I'm having a hard time... If you said I have to make a decision in 20 minutes and tell you what our next direction is going to be, I'd be like, "No idea."

Deb:

So, do you have specific questions about... The two points we're discussing tonight are around diversity, equity inclusion and who you want to be serving in the County and then the second point being about expansion, if you want to be serving [inaudible 01:30:46]

Deb:

To sum it up, all these bits of information are things that we collected to help inform that. Those two points, which were the same two points from January.

Mark:

Understood. I personally, I'm having trouble pulling it all together. So, I'm basically just saying those are my concerns. Maybe I would be working on, looking what our current mission is, and then trying to pull in how we want the current mission to change, maybe to serve some of these things, diversity and inclusion and equity. And then, letting that new mission figure out, how do we enact that? How do we make that happen? Yeah, sorry. That's just where I'm at.

Deb:

No, no, no, no. That's more than fair. I appreciate you saying that. Yeah?

Jess:

See, and I guess I am on the opposite side of Mark, because I think in my viewpoint, it's pretty simple. Of course we should expand, we're successful. Why would we not want to share that with more children in our community? Yes, it's lots of details and lots of figuring out, I think to Deb's point, but why would we not want to? It doesn't mean it's going to be tomorrow, but why would we not want to? Why would we not want to be more socially impactful? And have a broader base of representation? Why would we not want those things?

Deb:

Any other-

Mark:

Yeah, I don't see that as the opposite of what I was saying, at all. Of course, we do. But, I guess it's still too broad for me. But in any case, I didn't see that as opposite.

Maureen:

Yep. The thing that crosses my mind every once in a while is, I would love to be able to expand. I love our school, our families are wonderful, our kids are wonderful, our teachers are wonderful, I think we

should really consider expanding. I just wonder though, if we have the original location and possibly a second location, and be mindful that we're still one school and not compete with each other. And I don't know what that would look like, but I'd hate for a family to say, "Well, I couldn't get into school A, but I did get into school B" or they want to be first and couldn't get into A, and I just want to make sure that we're still one entity, we're just another building. [Inaudible 01:34:02] Who values the same [inaudible 01:34:08], the same... With the same ideas, whatever those are.

Becki Mason:

And Maureen, along with that, one thing that always scares me when I hear about expanding, is that our staff crew is so tight. I feel, we have a very strong bond and I worry if we expand, half of us would have to go to the new school and the other half would stay at GCCS, and how that would feel to just be broken up. I don't know, that worries me.

Maureen:

See, that doesn't worry me and I think that's what I'm trying to say. We're still one entity, we might be in a different building. Maybe we can rotate, we can get all kinds of creative if we really put our mind to it. I think, I don't know.

Deb:

Okay.

Deb:

It's funny you say that, "We can get creative with it." Naming fears is always good, right? Because, sometimes it gets to that place of... In someone's mind right now, it has to look a certain way. And that's why these things are processes, right? It's not like you have to figure it out, you have to think about it, connect it to the mission and who you want to be. I think the hard part is, with anything that changes, there's change and change is hard, right? So, there is no change that's ever happened with anything where everything stays the same, right? And I think that's one thing that we can be clear. There are some things that folks will name, these are non-negotiables. This is core to who we are, right? And that must persist. Those things are different, but some of the logistical, small and big things, right? That's what change brings. Okay. Like I said... And I appreciate [inaudible 01:36:23]

Deb:

But, I'm going to go back to what I said at the beginning, which this is a draft decision, right? It's an activity to push this team to put a stake in the ground. So, what I will say is when we met in January, right? Your charge to me was to get more information, to come back. We could talk all night about everything I heard and learned. I could pull 79 documents out with notes and notes that will... Right? It'll just say a summary of what I just said, right? So, the information is there, right? Related to these two big buckets that you were talking about in January and they're based on what you said in January, you've been talking about much longer than that, right? And so, the idea now is that we come to a point of saying, "Here is what we would like to do."

Deb:

And then, so it's a little bit backwards, I'll name that, right? But, it's backwards for a point. And then, we're going to work out the details. But, it is impossible to start figuring out the details and do it in an

efficient way, because we do have somewhat of a timeframe here, right? Because there is another renewal cycle, they're working with them, right? We're not going to rush and do something that doesn't honor the amazing history and hard work of the staff, the families, everything that has made the school what it is today. So, we're not going to do that, rush and put something together, if it doesn't make sense. But, there is some urgency, right? So, once we can say, "This is where we would like to go." You guys then will have equal opportunity to put input into the details, with some framing-up help from me, right? To put some things in front of you to say, "Here are the variety of options that could get you to this decision. Now, based on who GCCS is, this is how we want it to look for us and our school community."

Deb:

Okay. So, going back to these big questions here, right? So, we can do this in one or two ways, depending on what makes sense, right? We could do a little jury polling, right? We could do a Yes/ No, or I have significant-questions-kind-of-vote. That's cool, I have a little mentimeter set up, if we want to do that little visual survey. So, everyone can just take a quick, silent vote. We can do that and see what we still need to discuss. If we have general consensus... Again, you're not committing to the details tonight, you're committing to a direction so that we can work the details out, right? And some of you, it's like, "You know what Deb? Way too much, way too fast, way too late at night." And that's fair. But, we want to see where the group is. I think let's do the vote, because it'll just help us see what we're talking about here. Okay, so I'm going to... Give me two seconds here. I'm going to send you guys links. And while I'm finding this, if anyone has any additional questions-

Shannon:

I have a question. [crosstalk 01:39:40]

Maureen:

Is this just for the board members? [crosstalk 01:39:44]

Deb:

I don't know how that works. This isn't an official vote. This isn't an official board vote. This is a vote to help us decide if we're having more discussion or we're not, if that helps. So, you guys tell me, I don't want to mess up Robert's rules

Shannon:

Then-

Mark:

I think-

Shannon:

Yeah, go ahead.

Mark:

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I was going to say, "This would be the perfect time for all of the people that are on the Educational Governance Council to be having a say, and not a say, but their opinion to be known, because it's not a legitimate vote. Correct, George?"

George:

Absolutely. I'm the only one that really doesn't get a vote.

Shannon:

Well, I don't know. I feel like you should too.

Deb:

Why not? [crosstalk 01:40:36]

Michele:

Why not weigh in? We're not going to [inaudible 01:40:46] with this.

Deb:

No, no, we're not.

Deb:

It's in the chat, if you didn't see. Now I have to find it.

Shannon:

So, that only had the first question? Is that right?

Deb:

Should have two questions. It only had one?

Michele:

It just had one.

Shannon:

It had the racially diverse question.

Deb:

Hmm, my Mentimeter's failing me today. Are there two separate links? No, I'm getting... Interesting, I'm getting-

Michele:

You know what? I just clicked on the link again and the next question popped up.

Deb:

Oh, okay. Okay. Huh, that's... Yeah. Sorry about that, I don't know why it did that. So, maybe everyone try that, just click it again. And I'm going to share my screen.

Deb:

Okay. So, does GCCS want to serve a more racially and socioeconomically diverse student population? 12 yeses, one no, one significant questions and then, four [inaudible 00:01:42:31]. Question to GCCS. Open more seats to students in Rochester and Monroe County? 10 yeses, two noes and one significant questions. All right. So, again, in the spirit of, this is for conversation, that's a pretty clear majority in yeses to both of those. But, I definitely want to... I'm looking at the time, you guys wrap up 7:30. I definitely want to honor the significant questions, right? Because that's different than some questions and I'm hopeful that the significant questions, if they can't be answered this evening, part of the feedback at the end is... Because sitting right here tonight and I feel like we've been discussing this for a while, I've been discussing it with some of you for a while, you've been discussing internally, for a while. There are of course significant questions, but if there are significant questions I need answered to even process this, I think let's try to verbally walk those out.

Deb:

At least elevate them into the space. And then, I see a couple of nos as well, for the more seats. And again, we don't have to have a hundred percent agreement, but I want to make sure we can understand, not to try to convince or strong arm, but to make sure those questions are being thought about and reflected on, as we go. So, if anyone... The only way I know how to do this, right? This is always been a great forum, is for folks to just speak out into the space, what questions are or a rationale that they might have to help the rest process and think about it. So, maybe let's start with the "Should GCCS open more seats to students in Rochester & Monroe County?" What questions are floating about there?

Deb:

Or concerns.

Deb:

One thing I will say is, another way we can do this is, when I framed up the problem originally in January, based on the conversation we had, right? I'm going to state some of the problems and that's the only... The [inaudible 01:45:30] going off of, right? And some of them were, right? The school has very few seats each year in the lottery. There's a need for high quality seats in Rochester. The school is co-located in a building that makes growth prohibitive. It's unclear if demand was there. Again, this is the stuff that came out of January, related to this question of expansion. Unclear if the demand is there, if folks want more GCCS in Rochester. And then, unclear if there is political support for growth or expansion. So, those were some of the things we were trying to dig for in the SWOT.

Deb:

I think the last two, being the ones that there were most questions, that I felt like based on the SWOT, I can answer pretty clearly, which is, "Yes, there is demand for GCCS." There is a clear demand and desire from even some of the participants in the SWOT that I spoke to, who had not the kindest words. In the same breath, we're like, "But, more kids need access to an education just like the one at the school." That was unanimous across the board. And from the parent perspective, all right, demand is definitely there. The numbers and the good schools rock application pool, bare that out for those who need that concrete number, right? And then, the political support, right? That is one where community-partner-

wise, I think there is support and definitely building support in some new avenues that, I think, especially folks on the advocacy committee could speak to, that there's certainly interest.

Deb:

So, those are things that are there. The other things like there being a need for high quality seats in Rochester, those were just things that folks brought up. So, maybe that helps some of the nos or significant questions. Not trying to put anyone on the spot and there will be an opportunity for feedback, or you can write what your significant questions are. I'm going to go to the second question if no one has anything that they would like to elevate into the space or on this one. Okay. So then, the second one around diversity... Let me see if I can get the screen back to that one.

Deb:

The second one about diversity, no significant question. I'm going to just reframe again, what some of the things are that we talked about and that area that the school serves a different racial and SES population [inaudible 01:48:31] in Rochester where it's located, that was the big frame-up of it. The school has staff that is predominantly white, the charter was written and formulated under different charter law and political landscape, right? So, it's that outside context changing on you. And then, the school has not been clear about what diversity looks like at GCCS, right? This is summer where we talked about it that hybrid retreat at the end of the summer, right?

Deb:

Really getting clear and passionate about what this diversity by design model is. And that is part of this work going forward. So, that is where the bigger question came out. It's like, "Who do you want to be serving within the diverse by design model?" Because I think that, as we've talked about this, that was one of the things that you want to remain and carry over, but to Shannon's point about why it's all interrelated, right? Expansion plays into that, how you get there plays into that.

Deb:

The last thing I'm going to say to just offer into the space, and this goes back actually to the expansion one, was just giving a few more of the dynamics or the structures, the options for expansion. So, there is replication, which is like the practice for more schools that are each based on the same model. For example, it's your Rochester prints, right? You know what I mean? The multitude of campuses that they might have, that idea of wanting to just increase seats for a model that's working well, right? Now expansion, right? You could grow up, meaning all of a sudden you're in seventh and eighth grade... People laugh anytime I even suggest going down, like it's early childhood, right? But, that's always an option, right? You could have GCCS High, right?

Deb:

A number of current parents would be happy to see that and they're like, "Oh, are they getting a high school?" Right? So, those are all examples. You could do what might just be generally called the seed expansion, right? If you currently have one grade, one classroom per grade level, you have two classrooms per grade level, right? And we understand and are clear that that means something about building footprint and need for space, right? So, that's understood. But, those are a number of different ways that you could get it, that idea of more seats.

Deb:

So, I don't know how folks are feeling. And in my mind, there's a clear desire based on the numbers. Again, this is not a vote to put a stake in the ground on both the, "Serving a more racially and socioeconomically diverse student population than the school currently does." And on expansion. I want to toss it back to maybe Michelle though, to see if there's something else, mining-wise, that you would like to ask from the board before we talk about and think about next steps, to see how all of this would look.

Michele:

Yep. So, thank you, Deb. I was really thinking along those same lines that the straw poll, if you will, that we've done, really pretty strongly indicates a direction that is a draft direction, if you will. And what I would like to ask in terms of mining of more data, I really understand and I feel compassion for anybody who's sitting there thinking, "I have significant questions, but I don't really know what they are." So, I think it's important to okay the space, just like the teachers do with the kids. We might need a Share The Air 2.0, an electronic version per se, or maybe some people are better with writing. So, I would invite the board members, if you have a significant question... Middle of the night, you wake up, you have a significant question, I would like to ask that those questions go to Deb, in the interest of people feeling they can ask whatever they want to ask and Deb would continue to be the collector of that information. Deb, does that make sense?

Deb:

That's totally fine. I'm happy to answer anything and I will be super transparent.

Michele:

Yup. And I really feel like respects the boundaries that we have asked Deb to hold us accountable. Not just so long, and keep the guardrails on the process, so we're not hijacking it in any way, shape or form. So, I would invite [inaudible 01:53:52]. In terms of mining, if you have significant questions, please get them out. And then, next steps. Deb, if you're game and you could actually hang on the call for a few minutes, Ann-Marie and Shannon, and I usually come together to talk about what we have to do after the meeting. And we can talk about any concrete things.

Deb:

Yeah, no, that'd be great. I'm putting my email in the chat and I'll just reiterate before you close up. This is clearly your process, my role is exactly what Michelle said, but what I will say is, "At least the type of thinker I am, the questions are usually the things that get us to the best process, right?" Please do not sit on questions, fears, concerns, worries. Because that might be the thing that gets this directed in the absolute right way. It's not feeling like you're being negative or none of that. The questions, those fears are the things that help to make sure we are thinking about all these different elements. As much as I've learned about your school, I don't know as much as you know about the internal heartbeat, so I'm just going to really encourage the reach out in the conversation. This information is only in this group, right? So, whatever questions or thoughts or reflections you're having please feel free to share.

Michele:

And I want to just cap off to let folks know that Shannon and I are in conversation with Susan Givens, our Charter School Authorizer, in response to just checking in on the cap, as well as where are we at with... She's asking about weighted lottery and my response to her was, "Hey, we are in a pretty robust process with Deb and I have put the offer on the table with her to schedule a meeting." Deb, you don't

know this yet, but to invite Deb to join a conversation, a phone call, whatever, with Susan, David, Shannon, myself and frankly, anybody who wanted to join, but to really demonstrate our commitment to this process and the authenticity of it. So, I just want to put that out there as well.

Michele:

So, is there anyone who has a strong feeling about a next step that they want to [inaudible 01:56:25]. If you do, you can put it in the chat box. Again, feel free to email Deb. But, we'll work offline. Shannon, myself, Ann-Marie to just get a little bit of, I guess, framework around what we do next, with Deb really leading us in that direction of concrete next steps. Everybody good with that? Okay. So, I want to just very quickly open up the floor for public comment, open forum.

Michele:

Okay. And not hearing any. I did see, Shannon, thank you for your note. Mark's wondering about looking at the mission as part of our next step. So, why don't we talk about that? And we can figure that out and what our next steps will be. So with that, just a quick reminder, we'll be meeting again in January. We'll certainly be looking at the reopening. We will have communication coming out of this meeting, relative to this work we're doing with Deb. And I want to just really thank the board. Thank you for showing up the way that you show up. The staff, Shannon, what you do for our community, for our kids, is just tremendous. And Deb, you're just fantastic in this process. I really like the way you were shepherding us through this, authentically. So, thank you.

Deb:

Thank you.

Michele:

And with that, I will entertain a motion to adjourn the meeting. Oh, do we need to... Oh, wait, Alison or Elizabeth? We don't have any actions, right?

Jess:

Nope.

Michele:

Okay. All right. I'll entertain a motion to adjourn?

Michele:

Wow, everyone wants to stay. [crosstalk 01:58:30] That's never happened. Mark, thank you.

Mark:

I will second the motion.

Jess:

I'll second.

Michele:

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And was that Jess?

Becki Mason:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Michele:

All right, all those in favor of adjourning, say "I", or raise your hand or all those post abstentions. Everybody stay safe, have a wonderful holiday. Ann-Marie, Deb, myself, we'll stay on for a few minutes. Take good care.

PART 4 OF 4 ENDS [01:58:53]