

Shannon:

Here we go.

Michele:

Good evening, everybody. We're going to call our January 2021 meeting to order. First meeting of the new year, welcome everyone. And we do have a quorum, so we're going to go ahead and get started. As usual, we have a full agenda. So thank you very much all for being here and we'll plow ahead. You probably saw there's lots of attachments, lots of stuff to talk about tonight. So we'll dive right in and I'm going to turn it over to Becky for the greeting, Shannon?

Shannon:

Do you want to Becky? You want to lead it?

Becki:

I can sure. So this was not my idea. So third grade today did the greeting, or second grade. The teachers did the greeting and they did this greeting. So I'm going to share my screen. Let's hope it works. Can you guys see the whole picture?

Michele:

Yeah.

Becki:

Okay. So it's basically like 20 questions. So you can ask me only yes or no questions and they have to have an adjective. It has to be about the object. So for instance, you could say something to describe, but it has to be a yes or no question. And then you're trying to rule out what object I'm thinking of. So I'm looking at the screen and I'm choosing an object and you're trying to figure out which one I'm thinking of.

Shannon:

So I can start to model if that would help. And then the way the greeting goes is that after I ask my one question then you just say good evening, and then we move on to someone who wants to go next. Okay.

Michele:

So you don't call on anybody. We're just going to do it popcorn style.

Shannon:

I think we could do it popcorn or like you could raise your blue hand if you've got an idea and Becky can call on you. We'll try to get through everybody before we get to the final answer.

Michele:

Okay.

Shannon:

So Becky, is the object that you're thinking of rounded?

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Becki:

Yes, it is rounded. Good morning or good afternoon, good evening Shannon.

Becki:

And I don't see anybody's blue hands up.

Michele:

I don't know how to do the blue hands.

Becki:

Okay. That's okay.

Traci:

It's Michelle going?

Shannon:

No, you can go ahead.

Traci:

Okay.

Michele:

Go ahead Tracy.

Traci:

Does the rounded object have a number on it?

Becki:

No, there is no number.

Shannon:

Good evening Traci.

Becki:

Good evening Traci.

Michele:

Thanks for the ongoing modeling. Shannon.

Elizabeth:

I can go. Does the rounded object have any holes in it?

Becki:

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Yes, it does have holes in.

Shannon:

Good evening Elizabeth.

Becki:

Good evening.

Elizabeth:

Good evening.

Jess:

Does the rounded object have the color of an orange?

Becki:

Yes, it is the color of an orange.

Shannon:

Good evening Jessie.

Becki:

Good evening Jessie.

Jess:

Good evening everyone.

Becki:

And Shannon, if someone wants to guess they can guess, right?

Shannon:

I think so. And then we could just have another mystery object or we could just say good evening to everybody else.

Becki:

Okay.

Jess:

Is it the orange button?

Becki:

It is. Wow. You guys were quick.

Shannon:

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I know.

Michele:

Apparently we paid attention in third grade.

Becki:

Shannon, do you want to think of one?

Shannon:

I'll do one. Yep. I'll do, I have an object in mind, so somebody wants to give it a go they can.

Michele:

I'll go. Is it an insect?

Shannon:

It is not an insect. Good evening Michelle.

Becki:

Good evening Shannon.

George:

Is it an arachnid?

Shannon:

No, it's not an arachnid.

Michele:

Who said that? [crosstalk 00:04:19].

Shannon:

Good evening George.

Michele:

Nobody likes to show off George.

Ryan:

Can the object move on its own?

Shannon:

If it... Oh, how do I... The object could move on its own if it were alive. I don't know if I can say that or not.

Michele:

Good evening Ryan.

Shannon:

Good Evening Ryan.

Nolica:

I can go. It's Nolica. Would you find the object under the sea or in the sea?

Shannon:

No you would not. Good evening Nolica.

Nolica:

Good Evening.

Shannon:

I think Maggie had her hand raised up.

Nolica:

Oh. Or Ivelisse.

Ivelisse:

Oh she can go.

Maggie:

Does the object have a single color?

Shannon:

No. Good Evening Maggie.

Michele:

Good evening. Maggie.

Ivelisse:

I could go. Does the object, you mentioned if it was alive, could it fly if it was alive?

Shannon:

It could not fly if it were alive.

George:

Could the object hop?

Shannon:

Good evening Ivelisse. George, you want another question huh? Has everyone had a chance? Let's see.

Tasha:

I haven't gone. The object, an animal that can go in trees?

Shannon:

Yes. I believe it is an animal that can go in trees. Good evening Tasha.

Becki:

I can guess. Is the object the monkey?

Shannon:

No, it's not the monkey. It's not, I don't even see the monkey. Oh, I do see the monkey. It's not the monkey.

Elizabeth:

Is the object the frog?

Shannon:

A dog?

Elizabeth:

The frog.

Shannon:

The frog. Yes. It's the frog. It's the big blue and yellow frog.

Michele:

All Right.

Shannon:

And I think I'm not sure if Allison went, but good evening Allison. Robin, good evening Robin.

Allison:

But hi guys. It's hard for me. I'm typing on a separate computer than my Zoom. So it's hard for me to switch back and forth.

Shannon:

That's okay. Thanks Becki.

Michele:

It's all good. Thanks for that greeting. Okay, everybody. So we're going to just jump right to approving of the December minutes and just a quick reminder. Everything is in the... and Luke, we missed Luke.

Shannon:

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Luke didn't guess.

Michele:

Luke very quiet going under the radar. Thank you Jess.

Michele:

That you know all the items are in the drive, the Google drive. So hopefully everybody had a chance to look at those and I will entertain a motion to approve the December 2020 minutes.

Traci:

I'll make a motion to approve December 2020.

Michele:

Tracy thank you.

Nolica:

I'll second the motion.

Michele:

And we have a second. All those in favor, please say, aye, or raise your blue hand. And all those opposed? Abstentions? All right, that carries. Thank you. And then we're going to go right into the financial report and turn it over to Robin. Robin you're muted just so you know and you actually look like...

Robin:

Good evening everyone.

Michele:

Good evening.

Robin:

[inaudible 00:08:05] Do you want to bring them up on the screen or is everybody just going to look at them on their own?

Shannon:

I think I can bring them up, just one moment.

Robin:

That was my little blurb. That sound good?

Shannon:

Yep. Yep. Okay. There we go.

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Robin:

So this is the budget to actual [inaudible 00:08:38] exactly. Oh, it's coming up with errors, I don't know why that is.

Shannon:

Yeah.

Michele:

Yeah. When I went in and had errors too.

Robin:

That's okay. I don't know. It's just not, it's not populating. Let's look at the second screen and just make sure that is the second tab.

Shannon:

It's all errors.

Robin:

I can tell you to type it in, actually, if you want it.

Shannon:

It's all errors Robin. I'm going to stop sharing because it's all errors. Do you have your document that we can just look at? Yeah. It's all errors.

Robin:

And you want to make me be able to host then?

Shannon:

Yeah. Yeah. I don't need to make you the host. I think I made it so you can share. If you just share your screen, it should be good.

Robin:

[inaudible 00:09:36] bring it up guys. Hold on. I didn't have it up because I thought that... Hold on a second, I'll get it. Can you hold on, I'm sorry about that.

Michele:

Do you want us to come back to you in a minute Robin? We could do a committee update, it's up to you.

Robin:

I think I got it now. I just got to figure out how to share it, but I think I [crosstalk 00:10:23]

Michele:

Bottom of the screen, it says share screen. There's a little green icon.



Robin:

Okay. I got it. Okay. Share screen, I think we got it. Okay. Everybody see that okay? Is that good?

Shannon:

Hold on.

Michele:

It's dark. So far it just says, "Robin has started screen-sharing."

Robin:

I have, "You are screen-sharing."

Shannon:

I think we're seeing, here we go. It just came up, you're set Robin. If you want to zoom in though so it's a little bit easier to see. It's really, really far away.

Robin:

Okay. Is that better?

Shannon:

That's good right there. Yep.

Robin:

Okay. So our expenditures and revenue to budget total to actual year to date is running along just fine. I don't have any huge variances to report. I do have some things that I do want to mention. [inaudible 00:11:35] Don't really have any new variances from our last review, which would have been reviewing July through October. There really wasn't anything new to report since our December meeting. All of these types of things here, the Chromebooks we knew we had already purchased. We knew that we had these expenditures that were going to be higher at the beginning of the year.

Robin:

We knew that we were going to have a summer stipend that was going to come in lower, but positional staffing based on professional development go higher. I'm just kind of reviewing this for some other board members that might not have made the last few meetings, because this is pretty much been standard for the last several board meetings. So I'm just going to switch on to the summary list. Unless anybody had any questions about that particular note sheet?

Michele:

No.

Robin:

Okay. This is the [inaudible 00:12:25] November 30th budget review for July through now. This is the column that has our budget that would be through July through November. And this is our year to date

actual for that same period. And we always compare to last year at this particular time to date. And then we always show what we ended up coming in for the entire year here.

Robin:

So this is the sheet that I'm going to go over now. We did have some things to report on the per pupil revenue. We had been running a higher variance. I'm sure some of you might remember. I think I was reporting at the last two board meetings, because we had some movement between children and students for the suburban to some urban districts and they moved around and to catch up on that billing, takes a little while to figure out what exactly the FTE was and all of that. So Maureen had indicated to us that the November, December billing, which our third out of the six payments that, or bills that we send out to all districts every year, would probably smooth that variance out. However, our enrollment has been fluctuating between 214 and 217 on for most of the year, due to the same thing of losing a kid or adding a kid or waiting lists and things like that.

Robin:

So we're still down \$10,000 to where we were supposed to be according for our budget. And we may actually stay that way for the duration of the year. And that's replaced one spot that we lost from a sixth grader. So, but it definitely was better, the last one's variance I believe is around 20 or 25,000. So this is definitely eased it out a little bit. And I think that Maureen Milke and the coordinators collaboration's and Shannon and I discussed this at great length after the finance committee and we hammered it all out. Shannon, do you have anything you wanted to add to that?

Shannon:

I just want to say for the record that even though we've lost some families, we have this massive waitlist. So it's very quick to have a new family come in, but there will be some truing up that happens at the end of the year and throughout the year as things move forward. So it's just something to know. Am I breaking up or can you hear me okay?

Michele:

[inaudible 00:14:46] Okay.

Shannon:

Okay. I just wanted to make sure. So it's something we're going to be battling with I think a little bit. Reasons for leaving are all parent choice, mostly it's that the family is feeling, "Well, this is a good opportunity for me to go to the suburban district that we're located in and they're offering something different right now in the middle of COVID and that's better for our family." So, and then there was another situation where it was a child that we knew needed to eventually transition into a school that had a particular special education accommodation for them. And they were just sort of playing the timing and they decided that this was a better timing rather than waiting till the end of the year. So that's been some of the general reasons for the changes. And I'm happy to answer more questions about that if needed.

Robin:

Okay. So everyone's good with that and I'll just continue down the sheet here. I made a little bit bigger, so hopefully that helps you guys. So the title I and II, and IV actually I probably should add the four over

there. We're running just fine with that. We did just find out that we had some additional carry over money that would probably be reflected in the December or January budget review. There's a little holdup on some of our approvals of the title monies. Shannon got an email in December stating that those funds have now been released as well as the Esser funds as well. So we should be seeing some of that back, that hitting on our bank probably either end of this month or January. I just got a notification saying my Internet's unstable. It went off earlier today when I on a another Zoom. So I apologize if I all of a sudden disappear. Hopefully I can get it back again.

Robin:

So anybody have any other questions about this particular section of the income? Are we okay?

Nolica:

I'm good.

Robin:

Okay, so let's go on to the food service now. [inaudible 00:16:58] Food services been running a little bit differently this year, mainly because of the COVID. So we don't have as much parental food service purchase as we used to. Mainly I think because of the remote learning and when we were on hybrid before. So that's why you're going to see a little bit of a difference here because we don't have as many people buying. And we originally did our budget based on the fact that we were going to have more parental purchase. So and field study, obviously I think that's self- explanatory.

Robin:

As for the administrative section, there really isn't any new variants to reports. We always have been a little bit heavier on the budget line for administrative benefits because we have some part-time people [inaudible 00:17:43] don't get benefits, but there's nothing to report there. Instructional salaries, we always give a little bit of a cushion. And then we also had one of our teachers out on disability. I don't think that was completely reflected here. I think there was a partial, in this particular month, but you'll see the complete withdrawal of that employee in the December review. Professional development again was low because of summer stipend was higher, those balance each other out. Instructional supplies are always higher at beginning of the year, but they're not continuing to increase as we go further. The COVID technology expenditures are part of those Chromebooks and we will be getting funding, probably hitting our bank statement, our big account rather in January. So that'll be reflected up here in some of this income up here. We'll be getting that money in to offset this. And we don't really see anything major.

Robin:

This was a little bit high only because we had some annual types of subscriptions or a few things that were just very small and I didn't bother to divide them out over 10 or 12 months. So that's nothing to be concerned about. Printing and copying was high. I think we discussed that last month. I'm sorry to take good enough notes when Maureen and Shannon chimed in on that. So you want to refresh my memory, but I think it was a little bit higher last month, but now it's only \$3,000 over. So I don't think that's that significant [inaudible 00:19:19].

Shannon:

Yeah. I think it's just the release of when a lot of materials needed to get out in the beginning of the year. I think it'll even itself out throughout time.

Robin:

I think it already has Shannon, because I think this was like four or five last month. So I think it's already started even out.

Shannon:

Yeah.

Robin:

[inaudible 00:19:36] report on them on the facility portion. And so we're coming into the grand total expenditures of \$1,132,519. So we're a little over, but I think it's because mainly of the COVID and the Esser type of funding, which we're going to get offset. So that won't be the case. And then the revenue we just talked about before that not just the 10,000 for the [inaudible 00:20:04] people, but it's also some of those other title allocations that we haven't gotten yet. And I think that will balance itself out. It's more of a timing issue and that [inaudible 00:20:15] under revenue by \$20,000, it's more just around 10. So we're coming in at \$129,533 in the black, last year at this particular time, even some additional grant money that we had leftover on [inaudible 00:20:27] you're at \$130,000. So I think with the Esser, I think we're actually going to be showing probably next month better than where we were last year at this time. Any questions?

Michele:

Yeah. It's Michele, just real quick, you kind of answered it. I guess I'm just thinking about the COVID expenses and if you or Shannon, or Maureen, if you've had a conversation about how we're tracking and forecasting a bit. Do we think those expenses are going to continue? Do we need to be concerned from a budgetary standpoint?

Shannon:

So I can speak to that or you can Robin, or I can start, because I actually have the breakdown in front of me.

Robin:

On a mechanical level, let me just let you know, Michelle, that we set up a specific class in QuickBooks that is named those two different things. So we're tracking everything separately. So we don't have it mingled in with everything else that will really help us with planning our budget now and [inaudible 00:21:23] again.

Michele:

Yeah. So I just generally, how does it look that forecasting or sort of tracking? Are we ballooning? Are we where you expected to be Shannon?

Shannon:

Well, I don't think anyone could have expected what we were going to need to spend our money on. So. [crosstalk 00:21:43] But the majority of the expenses were upfront expenses. So I'm just going to name

some of them because they're right in front of me. Things like a Chromebook cases and tripods. And tripods for the iPads, signage, face masks that are reusable face masks, mesh laundry bags, to like make, dehumidifiers. Things that we will buy and be able to keep for actually quite a long time. There are some disposable items like gloves and that kind of thing. But a lot of it we got from the state and I think we are able to get replenished. So to your question, I think a lot of it was upfront and it won't be like a continual huge cost across time.

Michele:

Okay. Thanks. That's good.

Shannon:

Okay.

Michele:

Thanks.

Shannon:

Yep.

Allison:

Robin, can you clarify the number? You had said something about facilities and then one point something million. I just couldn't hear the last bit of that.

Robin:

I didn't really have anything to report for this section here. And then I just went right down to that this is where expenditures are at showing that we're a little bit higher with expenditures, but that is mainly because of our additional COVID and Esser expenditures. That if it weren't for those, we wouldn't be over budget, so to speak. So because those weren't even the things that we had per se budgeted. So that's primarily why. We budgeted very little for COVID expenditures, only \$3000. So we didn't have anything for the Esser/Care. So that's why there's a variance here. I'm just trying to let you know that, but that's the reason why, and that timing issue wise, and it's not going to really change this variance, but the revenues are going to go up for the Esser and Care funding.

Robin:

So that should help reduce this and which will help offset that. So that's what I meant that I'm saying that right now, we're at \$\$129 in the black, last year at this time we were at 130, we had some additional leftover grant money that was helping, bump that up. But you know, this year I think the additional Esser money and here is going to help us as well. So I'm predicting that we're going to be in maybe better shape is what all I was just trying to say. Even with our \$10,000 possible revenue reduction that we weren't really anticipating depending on how things go with the [inaudible 00:24:27] for the rest of the year. Okay? Does that answer that Allison?

Allison:

I think I just missed a middle piece and I was a little confused. We're there.

Robin:

Okay. All right. Then I'm going continue on to the balance sheet then, which we went over during the finance committee. I didn't look to see, I don't think Kevin's on tonight. Right? He didn't come.

Shannon:

He's not here yet.

Robin:

Kevin, just made a comment during our finance committee that we had a very nice balance sheet. Which I don't know how often you guys look at balance sheets, but I look at a lot of balance sheets and we have a very nice balance sheet. We have very little in liabilities, which is very nice. And what we do have, are just primarily our payroll liabilities, which is the teacher spread for summer spread and our retirement expenses for [NYSTRS 00:25:15] and New York state local doesn't get paid until the fall, three months after our fiscal year ended. So we have hardly any liabilities, this is just the December portion of our revenue for our school districts and our cash flow is very good. Our investments are still doing well. And our accounts receivable is lower than last year, so Maureen's doing a great job in getting collections.

Robin:

Most of the prepaid expenditures are primarily just our lease hold improvement for that HVAC renovation that we had. We haven't really added anything to equipment because we did raise our capitalization threshold, to I think \$5,000. So we're not putting a lot in there anymore, which is good. And so coming in, again, it's on other sheet, it's \$129,000, our net assets, and aren't moving around that much, but it's not going down which is great. And our investments are doing well. I don't have the newest, latest and greatest Vanguard. That's a quarterly, so I won't have that until December. And then the Fidelity, most recent is \$705. So at the end of June, we had \$1,094,833, and now we have \$1,171,538. We did have, I think it happened in, that \$25,000 or \$20,000 private donation that did get added to Fidelity. But regardless, we're still have a gain on our assets, or our investments rather. So any questions there?

Michele:

Nope. Good.

Robin:

This is great cash flow. All the bills are paid on time. Accounts payable is extremely low, as you can see the previous year it was low too. That's a very, very good balance sheet. Any bank would just love us to death if they needed to, so... Any other questions guys, or you want me to stop sharing then? Or somebody [crosstalk 00:27:23]

Michele:

I think we're good. Does anybody have any other questions for Robin then? And if not, Robin all set. [inaudible 00:27:37] All right. All right. Thank you very much, Robin. Appreciate that. And we'll let you, if you need to scoot off, you can feel free. We'll release you and then we're going to go ahead into the committee updates. So I'm not sure, I don't know if anyone has heard from, I'm not sure we're [AnnMarie 00:27:56] is, she's supposed to be here. So the first report out was supposed to be nominating.

PART 1 OF 4 ENDS [00:28:04]

Michele:

The first report out was supposed to be nominating.

Shannon:

I can share for her, if that would make sense.

Michele:

That'd be great.

Shannon:

Okay. So I think the only update that we had was... And now I'm trying to get back into my own notes here... Is that we do have an open board position. Cheryl Mueller, who is a board member, decided that there were a lot of things going on personally and professionally, and she just was feeling too stretched. So she is stepping down, so we are looking for a new board member and looking for suggestions for who we might want to talk to and pursue. I think we're interested in considering someone who... Cheryl was representing the Catholic Family Services and the refugee community, and we would really like to find someone who is connected to that community if possible, but we are also, I think, looking for someone who's got a good finance background. So that might be the same person, might be different people. So if you have ideas of some possibilities, please let Anne Marie know, and the committee will take those ideas and start to reach out.

Michele:

Does anybody have anybody they know in the English language learner community, or refugee community, that come to mind that we can just sort of put out there now? If you do, I'll sort of open that... Sometimes people know somebody and they want to get it out there. If you think of someone or have an idea and you want to put it in the chat box, feel free. We can capture that and get to get it to Anne Marie and the committee. Thanks, Shannon. We're just going to move on. There is a tweak to the staff handbook. And I'll turn that over to Shannon now. So she can, [crosstalk 00:30:16]

Shannon:

So the updated handbook is in the folder, and... First of all, I should say, does anyone need help getting into the folder before we go much further? Because there's lots of things that we're going to be jumping into, and I could drop the link and it may work if you are assigned into your DCC school account. Does anyone need help with that? No? Okay.

Michele:

Looks like everybody's good.

Shannon:

Okay. Well feel free to interrupt if you're stuck. We don't want you to be stuck.

Michele:

Yeah, no shame in saying you can't get in. I've been there.

Shannon:

So the new section, it's in that section four, it starts on page 37. I'm going to try to give you the exact number. I actually think I put the number in the agenda at the top. Maybe somebody could just say it out loud to me. I feel like it was 41 or something. So there's a new...

Michele:

40 to 42, Shannon.

Shannon:

Thank you so much. So there's a new section that had to be added. Our HR company that we contract with called us and said that there was a new law going into effect that we needed to make sure that we were adhering to, and that law, I'm trying to get the exact name, is Safe and... I always get the wrong... Safe and something... Come on, 40... Anybody there?

Michele:

Yeah. I'm looking at it.

Shannon:

I'm trying to see if... Come on, what is it called?

Shannon:

Sick and Safe Leave. I always get the sick part. Sick and Safe Leave is something new that is a mandate for all employers to make sure that they're adhering to. The good news is that it all comes down to how much PTO or professional time off that you are... Or paid. Sorry, paid time off, that you are allowing your employees when they are first hired, and we already had that in place. We already had the 10 days of absence days that are given to our employees at the minute of hire, which is not true for all employers. So she was confirming, really, what our policies already were, and found that they are fully in alignment, if not better than, what the new law states. However, she wanted to make sure that it was very clear that we are adhering to the Sick and Safe Leave. So now there's this whole section that's placed into our handbook specific around that, and just kind of is even more pointed to how you ask for time off and that kind of thing.

Shannon:

So it really doesn't change anything globally. It doesn't change our absence days or policy, really. It just very specifically names this law. And George, if I'm flubbing anything and you know more and you want to chime in, you're welcome to, but I wanted to make sure that we had that handbook and that we could approve that revision.

George:

No, I think that's fine, but I think it actually starts on page 39. That's a really small point, but if anybody's trying to find it, I think it's actually starts on 39 and not 40.

Shannon:



Thank you so much. You are correct. It is 39. So I put the wrong page there.

Michele:

So I would like to put forth a motion to approve the staff handbook updates, related specifically to the New York Safe and Sick Leave Act, and...

Jess:

I'll second. [crosstalk 00:06:13].

Michele:

All right. Thank you, Jess. All those in favor of approving that, say aye. Any opposed? Any abstentions? All right, motion carries. Thank you. And then we're going to move over to Traci with some updates from the diversity committee.

Traci:

Oh, good evening, everyone. Not many updates. Our first meeting of 2021 is tomorrow, but before the break, we met... The co-facilitator and I, Kyle, met with Shannon just to kind of firm up what the purpose of the group is, and different things that we would like to start to be thinking about and working on. So it was a good meeting with Shannon. We're, at this point, kind of surveying the group to see what skills each person kind of brings to the table, to see where they want to focus their energy over these next five months. So some of the areas, we have opportunities in community circle to highlight diversity and equity in some way. Talking about doing, possibly facilitating, a couple of circles. Whether it's talking or listening circles, or trying to do some sort of restorative practice one-on-one for families in the school community, and a couple of other things that we're thinking about at this point. So it's a good time and looking forward to meeting with people tomorrow.

Michele:

Great. Thanks, Traci. I have to say, I am so excited, because what we're doing with Deb, and breakthrough, and the diversity committee and discipline, and it's just really cool to hear what we're all doing. So thank you. And

Jess:

Just a little shout out, if you didn't get a chance to see community circle today, Erica Dooley did it with the diversity committee, and it was amazing. She did such a cute job. She did a really good job. It was about MLK and equality versus equity. It was great.

Michele:

Oh, cool. Thanks Jess. Any other questions for Traci? No comments? Okay.

Michele:

Shannon, you want to move into the school leader update and the final product promotion?

Shannon:

Yes. I wanted to give a little commercial. So in your folder, there is something called Digital Final Products, it's a link, and I'm hoping that it was accessible for everyone. I see people popping in, that's good news. So this is a document that looks pretty boring, but I'm going to actually share my screen and just give you a little sneak peek as to what you could see, if you dig further. This document is something that our staff created at the end... After exhibition night in the fall, to capture all of the amazing final products that were completed in the fall expedition. So right now we're in the middle expeditions, or the winter expedition. So then, the final day before break, we had a little bit of a celebration and each team just had a chance to highlight their final product and share it with the whole staff, and then the staff kind of shared stars, glows, and the chat box, it sort of lit up with all these amazing things, because each team really did an amazing job. Maggie, do you mind if I share yours? You can even talk about it, if that's okay?

Maggie:

Please do, I'd love to talk about it.

Shannon:

Okay. I just click this thing? Right.

Maggie:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Shannon:

Okay, go ahead. Maggie, why don't you just share a little bit about this final product as it's loading?

Maggie:

First grade and kindergarten had very similar final products. We planned together, and this expedition was about how we are so much more. Our class is called the Wonder Watchers. So we called our directory, the Wonder Watchers Directory. It was inspired by looking at one of Rochester's early directories. So we looked at city directories and looked at who was there and what kind of information it gave. As you can see, this information is very simple in basic text with not a lot of ornamentation, because that's what it would've looked like in the old Rochester directory. We have their job, that they're a first grader, and their location, just like the real city directory would. But if you click on them, you can see that the first graders are so much more. We were able to link to their Seesaw work in a way that was still able to be private. So you can see information about each child. They each have four elements of identity that they shared.

Maggie:

This is Kaya.

Shannon:

Can I... I have to go back, yeah.

Maggie:

You don't have to, but we did make it so that you can click on the links and you can click on her picture to go back to the main page. Will you go to her one that says, "I am a storyteller"?

Shannon:

Sure.

Maggie:

Thank you. I remember this one. And that one has her voice. So one of them has a recording for each child, so you can hear them speaking. [inaudible 00:12:07].

Shannon:

Great. So it was a wonderful directory and kindergarten did a similar directory with a different take. So Maggie, thank you so much for sharing your product. Becki, should we talk about yours since it's not since it was more of a live piece?

Becki:

Sure. So we were learning about slavery and women's rights and civil rights. So our kids took on the role of a character. So there was a choice of seven characters and they were throughout time. So it could be someone like Frederick Douglass or someone like Martin Luther King, in different eras, and they researched those characters, and then we actually found a bunch of costumes in our costume bin, and were able to like dress up as the characters, and they practiced just having conversations. It wasn't a scripted conversation. They had a script to introduce their character, which was a few sentences just to introduce their character, and then they started with this conversation, and the nice thing about it was, it kind of was different every time they did it. We got them tea cups from Goodwill and they were having tea over Zoom, which was neat.

Becki:

And then we also had them pick a famous quote from that person, and we recorded them in front of a green screen saying the quote dressed as the character. Which that might be more interesting to watch a little bit of, I don't know, Shannon. The tea party is kind of long [crosstalk 00:41:46] exhibition night, we went into breakout rooms and we had parents hide their videos. So you could just see the five people, and they had conversations over Zoom drinking their tea. This is the quote video that they recorded in front of the green screen.

Shannon:

It's in there. Or is it?

Becki:

I think it's the top, Famous Quote video, yeah.

Shannon:

Maybe just like a minute or...

Becki:

Yeah.

Shannon:

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Hopefully this sound comes through.

Becki:

Those were the characters that we chose, and the kids got to choose which one they wanted to be, and then we put them in crews.

Speaker 2:

"If there's no struggle, there's no progress." Frederick Douglass

Speaker 3:

"Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere." Martin Luther King.

Speaker 4:

"Men, their rights and nothing more; woman their rights, and nothing less." Susan B. Anthony.

Becki:

And he was one of our remote learners. So we couldn't do it a green screen. [crosstalk 00:15:03].

Speaker 5:

"Only one death to die, and I will die fighting for this cause." John Brown.

Speaker 6:

"I have only one wish, Mr. President, and that is to see women vote." Susan B. Anthony.

Speaker 7:

"Independence is happiness." Harriet Tubman.

Speaker 8:

"Death is better than slavery." Harriet Jacobs.

Speaker 9:

"What, to the slave, is the 4th of July?" Frederick Douglass.

Speaker 10:

"I only have one wish, Mr. President, to give women the right to vote." Susan B. Anthony.

Speaker 11:

"Let us see to it that we give fair play and free opportunity for all people." Martin Luther King, Jr.

Shannon:

I'll stop it there.

Becki:

They definitely took really... It was just interesting to hear the conversations, and then, at exhibition night after their conversation, parents asked questions and they stayed in character and answered the questions. So they really needed to know their character, but they also needed to know all the other characters to have that conversation. It was neat.

Shannon:

Thank you, Becki. So each of the grades are highlighted here in this column that I was clicking from. It's the column of the product that the teachers really spent most of their time on, and then the products on the side are dance, music, and art links that also were part of the final product. So it's a really great document that has wonderful highlights of our final products, and I believe I made it so that you can comment. So if you want to give a little love to a team, you could highlight it and add a comment and then, tell them how great they are. From a board member, I'm sure they would really love to see that. And it will go to teachers, but teachers can certainly share it to students too. So hopefully that's...

Michele:

I want to build on what Shannon's saying and jump in... as the board president, this is one of the things that certainly SED asks us to do. And I think that we often forget about our responsibility to really enjoy the kids and what they're doing, the students. So I think it would be great if we each took an opportunity to go into the links and put some comments there. I certainly remember what it was like when Jack was there, and how much it meant to hear from the board, and they've worked hard. I think this is a fantastic format and I just love, Becky, what you were able to do. I remember when Jack's class did the sharing and they were in character in person, and it's remarkable that you were able to do something like that in this remote world. So just well done.

Shannon:

I'm going to move into the next part. If you're digging around that's okay. I wanted to just give you a brief update on remote learning and where we are with the reopening task force. So the task force met on Monday evening and we looked at our numbers. We sent a survey out to all families to get a better sense, as far as how they were going to commit to our instructional program on February 1st, which is when we're making a shift to hybrid and in-person learning. The majority of the families... I told the staff, I think it was 98 families said that they would like to go back to hybrid. 20 families would like to remain remote. That is families. That's not students. So we are still working on the numbers of exactly how many students will be remote versus exactly how many will be hybrid.

Shannon:

But it's definitely looking like it's going to be similar, if not more, in-person learners on February first than it was in the fall. So today we took a first crack with the staff at just starting to get a sense, as far as if we wanted to make some adjustments. And I proposed that the biggest adjustment would be to have more of a five day schedule that is more synchronous so that they're getting new lessons every day. Whereas, in the fall, it was repeated lessons. So whatever the kids were getting on Monday, Tuesday, the Cohort B kids would get on Thursday, Friday, and it would repeat. And that became very difficult to manage for teachers and for families too. So we're starting to get a sense as to what it would look like if we were to do a five day kind of schedule.

Shannon:

So they think that'll be the biggest shift, which is hard to get our heads around, as it is every time we make a shift. So I think it was a first crack and we'll continue to work on it next week and the week after and so on. And we are still talking about the ideas of bringing everyone back in the spring. There's still a lot of logistics to work out. So it's a daily conversation and we're just trying to get really solid before we present the final plan to the staff so that we don't present something that's haphazard, and then we have to shift back around again. We want to make sure that it's really in a good place, and we've thought through where the weaknesses are and where the strengths are of that. So that's the update overall. Any questions about remote or anything else?

Michele:

Let's give folks a minute, if anybody has anything they want to ask.

Michele:

So I just want to say thank you, and I can't imagine others wouldn't chime in as well to the entire staff. Becki, Maggie, if you could relay this back to the faculty, Shannon as well, just thank you for how hard you've been working to meet the needs of the students in all different ways. Remote and hybrid, and trying to figure out how to get kids back. Really greatly appreciated.

Michele:

Okay. So with that, then we're going to move into one of the things that we have to talk about, which was, we had some conversation about... Folks know about this, is we did receive a letter from SED and... Or an email, really, telling us what we had to do. We had to give some updates on the corrective action plan. There were some questions that we had, related to that. I'm going to call it the surprise bill. The surprise email. And we did have a conversation with Shannon. Well, yeah, Shannon was there. Shannon, myself, Anne Marie, Susan, David, from the state to get some clarification, and particularly around the buried line about... That was in a Board of Regents memo, if you will, that we're supposed to be looking at weighting our lottery. And with that, I'll let Shannon take it from there, but we have the letter, it's ready to go. There's been a lot of discussion about that, and we need to vote on that. Shannon, I'll let you... If there's anything you want to add to that particular topic.

Shannon:

Nope. The letter was in the folder and it was called GCCS response to 2021 renewal condition. It's a pretty extensive letter that we discussed with David and Susan. So they are very well... In fact, they asked us to write this letter and to put the information that we presented to them verbally from our meeting into this letter. So that's what we've done, and we also received confirmation from them that our suggestion to weight our lottery for just ELL students would be sufficient for this year. We will certainly need to keep exploring that as we look at our numbers. They seem to be just fine with that. So they wanted us to take action on it, and then we'll send it off to them tomorrow in an email to say that it was approved by the board. There was another document in there too, that is the updated enrollment and admissions policy.

Shannon:

So it just has a small blurb explaining the weighted lottery for ELL students. It's in red so that you could see that as well. And that is included with the three... There's three optional questions that are in our Good Schools Rock application right now, each of them asking a question about each of the demographics that the Regents are concerned about, wanting to make sure that we are representative

of. Again, they're optional. So you do not have to report, but it says this in the letter, and I'll just say it again, out loud that, from the families that reported last year, it is extremely likely that a family would report that they are economically disadvantaged or that they qualify for free and reduced meals. And then it was not as likely that someone would report that they spoke a language other than English at home. However, if they checked that box, then they more likely checked the qualified for free and reduced box.

Shannon:

So that was our reasoning for weighting for the ELL population, because they don't have as much of a chance of getting in as someone who qualifies for free and reduced lunch, and so we wanted to boost that chance by giving them a two ticket chance, if that makes sense. Their name, will go in twice, into the lottery. So I just want [crosstalk 00:53:12]

Michele:

I just want to do a really solid pause to make sure really everybody understands the weighting we're doing, as Shannon said, is essentially putting two tickets in for someone who is an English language learner, as opposed to other, other groups. We still are going to maintain the same sibling preference, the same that we have. We're adding this two ticket weight, if you will, to really try to impact our ELL and economically disadvantaged. So is everyone really clear on that? Because that's really important.

Jess:

Will that be listed, so that they know they're weighted more when they're applying?

Shannon:

In the application itself, right above the optional questions, there's this disclaimer that was written by SchoolMint that says something like, "The following are optional questions. However, your school may be weighting for one of these things, and so just be aware that if you're checking this, that could actually help you in the lottery." So that's how they took it. I might ask, just point blank, Susan and David about that now that we're going to be moving this through, and get clarification if they want me to be explicit somewhere. I was looking on other schools' websites and I can't see that they are explicit about their weightings. So I want to find out what's standard.

Michele:

I think that's a great idea. One of the things I thought about, Jess, when you said that, it made me think of it, there might be... Who knows if people have potentially an aversion to reporting that their English is limited. Maybe they think that will be a barrier, when actually quite the opposite is true. We really want to be able to attract English language learners. So if there's a way, even we could highlight it in the application process.

Shannon:

Yeah. I'll find out what the guidance is.

Ivelisse:

If I may, I agree. I think that if it's highlighted, more people will be willing to apply, because I remember when I got here, and I point blank, was very discouraged to apply for anything other than the city school

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district. Everybody told me, just stay in the city school district. Any type of other schooling, private or charter schools... Everybody told me to stay away from them. That they were not targeting people...

PART 2 OF 4 ENDS [00:56:04]

Ivelisse:

... They were not targeting people that didn't understand the language.

Michele:

Yes.

Ivelisse:

So, [crosstalk 00:56:08].

Michele:

I'm more [inaudible 00:56:08] [Evaliese 00:56:10] why, how important it is that you're here and why going back to the open board position, we really need, I think, to increase our visibility in the English language learner world, in refugee populations or people, not necessarily refugees, but where English is not the primary language spoken at home. I'm so glad you shared that, Ivelisse

Ivelisse:

Yeah, no problem.

Michele:

Yeah. Okay. Other feedback on that as we... Everybody's good on that. So then, I will entertain a motion to approve the corrective action plan. I do. Do we need to do the policy separate? The-

Shannon:

I think it would be good. I would call it a motion to approve the response to the condition upon renewal, or to the renewal condition. And then a second one to approve... And before we do that, George, are we okay with the way it's written as far as the admissions policy goes?

George:

Yes, I think you're fine.

Shannon:

Okay.

George:

I would approve them separately, because you're basically, one is your actual plan, the other is your argument that you're making with [crosstalk 00:01:31].

Shannon:

That's right. Yeah.



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Michele:

Okay, so then we need a motion to approve the response to the renewal...

Shannon:

Renewal condition.

Michele:

Condition. all right. So I'll entertain a motion to approve the response to the renewal condition.

Traci:

I'll enter a motion.

Michele:

Thank you, Tracy.

Tasha:

I'll second that [crosstalk 00:57:53].

Michele:

I think Tasha went first. All right. So thank you. All those in favor of approving, please signify with aye, or hand. Any opposed? Any abstentions? That motion carries. Thank you.

Michele:

And I'll entertain a motion to approve the actual corrective action plan-

Shannon:

It's not the corrective action plan. It's the enrollment and admissions policy.

Michele:

Thank you.

Shannon:

It's okay.

Michele:

Thank you. Enrollment and admissions policy.

Jess:

I make the motion to approve the enrollment and admissions policy.

Michele:

Thank you, Jess.

Ryan:

I second that.

Michele:

Thank you, Ryan. Moved and seconded. All those in favor, say aye. Opposed? Abstentions? Oh, look at Nolica using the hand. I've got to figure out how to use that hand feature. All right. That motion carries as well. Thank you very much. So this leads us into-

Allison:

Can I ask a quick question for the minutes? Is that a new plan, or a revision to the plan?

Shannon:

The enrollment... Neither of them. It was a follow-up from the-

Allison:

Policy [crosstalk 00:59:07].

Shannon:

Yeah. The policy is a revised policy for the enrollment and admissions policy. It's revised.

Allison:

Okay. Yep. Thank you.

Shannon:

Yep.

Michele:

Thanks, Allison. Keeping us honest on the minutes. I appreciate that. So the bulk of our meeting tonight involves the next topic, which is really following up on the work we've been doing continuing from our December meeting, but beyond that.

Michele:

So just as a really quick level-set to what we've been doing as a board, certainly for the last two to three years with this renewal, or even before that, we had been really doing a lot of self-examination looking at identity. We've had a couple of retreats now where we've been focusing on strategic planning. We have heard loud and clear that we need to be looking at how to expand or replicate. These are all things that have been coming to us from community. We've been hearing it certainly from our charter school authorizers, all within the context of, "This school is doing amazing things and how can we replicate or bring this to the rest of the world?"

Michele:

And I really liked the way that Deb and Breakthrough, they've been working so well with us to have us ask ourselves the hard questions around identity and thinking about strategy. And so that leads us perfectly into this pretty big discussion, because we have quite an opportunity that's been presented to

us, or as Shannon has said, "The stars seem to be aligning." And I'm going to actually flip over to let Shannon talk a little bit more about this. But this is a pretty big opportunity for us and a short window in which to consider how we might want to continue the work that we're doing in a real action-oriented way.

Shannon:

So yes, the stars have been aligning in all different ways. We all knew for quite a long time, as Michelle said that growth was something that we were really interested in. We're 20 years in now and we have a really good model that is only open to some because we're such a small school and we have only so many seats. And so it felt like this could be the right time, even though we're in the middle of a pandemic, even though there are many, many other things that we are juggling, it feels actually even more urgent. It feels more urgent to be considering replication now, when we know that our country is divided, we know that our city is divided in education opportunities and it feels like we should get going and get ourselves in a good place for considering replication.

Shannon:

So, I know that Deb was taking an informal straw poll back in December. That really was what it was. But then there happened to be these meetings. I happened to have a check-in conversation with our president of the museum and was talking about like, "What would it take for us to fully come back in the spring?" and, "Is there space?" Then we just started talking and she mentioned that she's really making some big changes in her own mind about mission for the museum. So I said, "Gosh, we are also talking about growth. We should continue to talk." So there was this one star align and there were several other meetings where it felt like, "Hmm, I wonder if we should start really moving?" So we looked into the possibility of what a request for proposal would be through SUNY. We know that they have an amazing portfolio of schools, many of which are diverse by design.

Shannon:

Their schools are also extremely successful and they have a really strong, transparent model. And so we wanted to look to see what it would take for that to happen. So we did some research through their website to find out their RFP timeline. The document that I'm sure many of you are looking at, or maybe some of you, is the GCCS Replication Growth Plan Model. And we'll talk about STEAM in a minute. This is a one-pager that I put together for you. It has a timeline of the cycle through SUNY to apply. That timeline is tight, but it might be the best opportunity to do it now. They often have two cycles to apply. There's one now and then there's one in the spring. The one in the spring was canceled last year due to the pandemic and we are worried that it could cancel again.

Shannon:

So, our thought was, let's get this going. Let's start the conversations with SUNY. If for some reason this RFP for whatever reason, cancels or changes or whatever, and we need to push it onto the spring cycle, and that one's a go, then great. We've got the work done and ready for us, but let's jump on this now. The application would be due February 16th of this year. The intent to apply form is due February 2nd. They would go through a proposal review and notify us in March. These dates are final by the way. At the time, I was not sure they are, but they now are. Then we would be finding out if we were approved by probably the beginning of the fall of this coming school year 21-22. And we could open as early as the fall 2022.

Shannon:

So, I want to talk a little bit about what this would look like, and then I'm going to just pause and let you digest. This would be called a true replication. The reason for replicating in a true fashion is we already have a strong model and we can take that model and pretty much package it up and get it ready for another K through six school. It would start K through two, and we were thinking that it would be slightly smaller than the current one. We have found over time that 30 to 32 students is just a little too high for even just with the amount of adults we have in the classroom. It's just a lot of sensory overload. So we're thinking more like 26 to 28 students in a classroom.

Shannon:

We had thought about the idea of making it stand on its own and having STEAM be an added value to the school. But since we have started to play around with that idea, we've been given some advice that that might not be such a good idea because then it doesn't make the initial, our GCCS stand on its own two feet. And so it might like create competition that we don't want to create. It also wouldn't be a true replication because then we would have to put STEAM into our key design element. We'd have to figure out what kind of curriculum would change, what we'd have to give up. And there's also a lot of STEM schools that either got approved recently or are already started in Rochester. So we thought there aren't very many arts integrated schools and there aren't many schools that focus on the humanities or local history at all. So we should just really hone in on that.

Shannon:

That's why I crossed that out, because I wanted to explain why we've been making that adjustment. However, in talking with Hillary, the president, she is very interested in talking more about some additional programming that would be separate from our educational program. So perhaps it might be something that's from the one to three o'clock on Wednesdays, when we know that's been a tricky time anyway, for families that would be focused on, perhaps STEM and science, but something that the museum is doing in collaboration with us to support our students after school. So it would not be something that we would have to get in writing and get it all set up before the application, but we could definitely make sure that it's a part of the application to say that we're really hopeful this is going to strengthen our partnership with museum.

Shannon:

In addition, it is looking like there could potentially be facilities available right on campus. And so if anything, we would really like to start with K through two on campus to really help the transition and replicate well. If we end up moving to another facility across time, that's okay. But I think we want to really think about the feasibility of staying on campus. And it sounds like there is space available. I actually don't want to go too much further without just like pausing and letting people digest this. And then we can talk more at length about this. Is that an okay place to pause for now? Yeah.

Michele:

Yeah. I think that's good.

Shannon:

Okay.

Michele:

What do you think?

Jess:

I think it's great. I'm very excited. Shannon's been doing a lot of work and there's a lot to be done. So it's a little overwhelming at times when I'm really thinking about it. But I'm super, super excited about sharing the opportunities for other cities' kids to have the same opportunities that my children have. And I think that that is 20 years in the making, and it's great timing in that sense. It's overwhelming, but amazing and we have to seize the moment. So, super important. Thank you, Shannon.

Maggie:

I just had a clarifying question that occurred to me earlier. What was the reason for not expanding instead of replicating?

Shannon:

Great question, Maggie. So if we were to expand, there's a few things. One, it would automatically increase our classrooms and we'd have to figure out for sure, how we were going to get those classrooms in close proximity. So it would have to stay on campus. That's a given to make sure that it's all part of the same school. Or we'd have to move if we didn't have space. Right? So there's that.

Shannon:

But secondly, and more importantly, there's something really brilliant about having our small community. We talk about it all the time that it feels like family, and we really can get to know one another by name. I'm proud to say that I know pretty much every student's name and most of the families too. So you wouldn't get that if you had an expanded school or it's less likely. So if we had two small communities, hopefully, eventually being under the same umbrella, you're still going to have your own small family, but then we're going to have this opportunity to have a sister school to really collaborate with, if that makes sense.

Maggie:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Luke:

When I was looking through all of the documents in the folder, I got really excited. When I saw the reputation, I was like, "Oh my gosh. Oh my gosh. Oh my gosh." Because I was also looking at the stats for the ELA grades, and then the math grades, and all the demographics and how they're comparable to what's happening in the suburbs. Why wouldn't this be replicated? The same kids, mostly coming from the city school district are performing just as well as the kids in the surrounding areas. So it's not a color thing. It's not a poverty thing. Sometimes it is. But it's just showing that whatever is happening here, it's working. So you got to duplicate a good thing. So I was really excited. I got the little butterflies going in my stomach. "Oh my God, this is good." So I was really excited to see it.

Michele:

Yeah. And I just want to build on what exactly what Luke said. That's exactly what you just said. We have a great thing and we've been talking about wanting to share that, and there's so many kids who need it. So I totally echo what you said, Luke.

Tasha:

I just remember being a mom and searching for schools, and the frantic way I was searching for schools. Because I'm like, "Oh, I can't go to the Rochester City District. I have to do private." I didn't really want to do private because the inequity in private schools is just the same as the suburbs. So this actually offers more diversity opportunities for children and it gives a solution to parents. And I think, I mean, with 900 applicants, the need is there. Everybody wants us to expand, and this is the smartest way to do it. So thank you, Shannon.

Shannon:

Tasha.

Michele:

Thanks, Tasha.

Ryan:

It's also exciting because we've been working towards this and talking about it for, at least since I've been on the board, it's been one of the major ticket items and now to actually have the opportunity to move steps forward. I don't know. It feels kind of cool.

Michele:

Yeah. And I've been looking, as we thought more and looked at the... The SUNY portfolio is pretty impressive and what they've got to say. So I'm definitely intrigued and interested in this and glad we have this opportunity to look at that.

Shannon:

Can I talk a little bit more about timeline and then a few things that we're going to need to make some decisions on? For timeline, I think Deb's original plan was to really be getting us set up for this conversation in a more serious way, but later, like another several months from now. One of the big things she wanted to do that Jess knows all about was engaging with the community. We now need to get the word out quickly and engage with the community quickly so that they can put some input into this school as well. We know that it's mostly going to be a replication, but of course we need to hear if there's some ideas or tweaks that we can make that are from the community, how wonderful would that be? I don't just mean our school, but I mean the Rochester area.

Shannon:

There are some dates that are at the bottom of this one-pager that just got decided. I haven't put it out publicly yet. If you notice something where it's a holiday or we should not do that date, please let me know. I'm happy to make the change. But what those dates are, they're under the community information sessions, they would be virtual, all one Zoom link that you could just come into in any of those. They'd be about 45 minutes. The first 20 or so, maybe a little less, I would do a presentation about just what are our hopes are, what our school currently is, and so what we hope it to be, and then

to take some input from whoever's on about this idea. I would love it if you could commit yourself to one of those, at least, if not a couple, to be on with me and to be able to speak from your own perspective about the school and our model.

Shannon:

I think that would just speak wonders to that. Along with it, we need to show that there's interest in people applying a few years from now. So that intent to apply form is a Google form that families would fill out. I will promote it. We're going to promote it in all sorts of ways, but families can fill it out, even on the community forum to say, "Yes, I have someone who would be kindergarten eligible by the fall of 2022. I'm a city resident. Yes, we would intend to apply." Or they might not answer any of those, but then there's a final thing of what are your hopes for this school? They can just write comments about that. We'll be collecting all of that data over the next month or so, and trying to gather that and then share it with SUNY that we have begun to engage with the community. And of course we are still going to continue that engagement, if we get approved, through next year as our planning year to get up and running. So...

Michele:

I've got a question, Shannon.

Shannon:

Yes.

Michele:

This is going back to what Ivelisse said. How can we reach out in these sessions to our English language learner groups through, I don't know, Evaliese if you have thoughts about, I'm thinking, what about Spanish speaking folks? How can we include folks in those populations?

Shannon:

Yeah, that's a great idea. I think, Ivelisse, feel free to speak up or anyone else who's got ideas around this. I think one, we're definitely going to promote to the daycare centers and Head Starts, and some of those kinds of centers that are in the area with this information and with the dates. So just getting people interested is one. We can certainly translate the form.

Michele:

Well, I'm thinking, and I don't mean to be bold Ivelisse, and I certainly don't mean to put you on the spot, but I think you're in a particularly great position to be able to bring... Who do you know who in any of the communities, any of the folks you serve and maybe we could highlight one of the sessions as there'll be somebody from our board, who's Spanish-speaking, who could come to the session, who could speak about the school as an option, again, as a way to try to open a door that maybe somebody thought would be closed.

Ivelisse:

Yeah. Yeah. That could be a possibility. We could also talk with Jewel at IBERO, the radio station. That's another way to reach out folks in the community. And Shannon, you mentioned talking directly to daycare centers. We have a huge, not a huge, but a big daycare center at IBERO, and that's something

that could put you in contact with the director there. And maybe you guys could come up with the ways to try to talk to the parents, or do a presentation, or have... I could help any way I can as well.

Michele:

Are you talking about Podere?

Ivelisse:

Yes.

Michele:

Is that right? Did I say that right?

Ivelisse:

Yes, you did. Podere.

Michele:

Well, then I should know that, I was on it once for Jordan, but I know it was great. But I know that that it's better if there's someone who speaks Spanish rather than I went on, and someone had to interpret for me because I don't speak Spanish.

Ivelisse:

Yeah.

Michele:

So what do you think about... Would you think there'd be... It'd be great to be able to highlight something where we're actually reaching out to the Spanish.... I mean, the Spanish population is the biggest in Rochester in terms of non-native English speakers.

Ivelisse:

Yes. If you're asking if I'm willing to speak...

Michele:

I am.

Ivelisse:

I am. I am. And I also know someone that has connections with the other, because there's two Spanish speakers' radio stations, and I know someone that has connection with the other one, which is kind of our competition.

Ivelisse:

So we could put it out there in both radio stations, just FYI.

Michele:



Yeah. That would be great.

Shannon:

I think so, too. Ivelisse, we should definitely talk if you're willing, about how we could make that happen. The press release is getting finalized tonight and tomorrow, and we plan to put that out tomorrow. We can use that as a way to get that to radio stations and whatnot as well. Then we have an advocate that is very well connected in the refugee community, and I haven't of course, because we haven't gone public with this, I haven't shared with her yet. But I'm pretty positive she's going to be very excited to help us promote this to [crosstalk 01:21:39] communities.

Michele:

Chojy?

Shannon:

Yeah, Chojy.

Michele:

Yeah, great.

Shannon:

Luke?

Michele:

Luke.

Luke:

What other ways are you planning on advertising? Are you just doing radio stations? Are you going to do social media, or flyers, or things that are-

Shannon:

Yeah.

Luke:

Because I was thinking about the church community and how I could distribute that amongst those people. Because I have places in mind where I could distribute that. Because there are some people who are still a little bit old-fashioned and they're not on social media. They like the papers and things like that. So I wasn't sure how you want to do that.

Shannon:

Yeah.

Ivelisse:

Yeah, that is a great idea. The churches. I have a ton of connections with the Hispanic churches in Rochester.

Shannon:

Okay.

Ivelisse:

I could distribute information like that, too.

Shannon:

Okay. Yes, flyers was definitely a plan. I was thinking more digital because I knew I wasn't positive how physical everyone was these days with COVID. So, yes, we're setting up a new Facebook page that's specific to the new school, and a new Twitter feed. But they'll both be linked to our current Facebook page, our current Twitter feed, our current website so that you can easily get there. We'll promote it that way way. And we're going to boost the posts through Facebook.

Shannon:

And then I have a staff member who's our resident tweeter, so I think we're going to have him have like a tweet bank to just constantly be tweeting out facts about us. But then also say, "For more information go here." That's our plan for that. It's also recruitment season in general. So I want to balance the boat with just recruiting for our school in general, and then that hopefully will draw people to the website, and then draw them to this new idea, too. We usually advertise through the radio and through TV, through WXXI, but I'm open to ideas. If you've got them, I will take them.

Shannon:

Then the other thought I had was, we've been working pretty closely... We have several new families who are part of the ASL community-

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Shannon:

the deaf community, and so we are getting a good relationship with ASL interpreters. And so I'm thinking one of the sessions should be ASL focused as well, which would be great.

Michele:

Yeah.

Shannon:

So anyway, yeah. Keep it coming. Yeah.

Michele:

Yeah. So you could even, whatever you get in terms of hard copy, we could email it to Luke or others and anybody else who wants to share it. At least we can get that going that way and can always drive people to Twitter and Facebook. I'm sort of chuckling because I don't do either of those very well. So I'd probably be the flyer girl.

Shannon:

Yep. Okay. So things that we need to talk about, so at the time that we get this, if and when, we have this new school, we will need to have... This board can manage that school, but we almost need to have a subset of the board, approximately five members. We can have more than that, but those members need to be definitely a part of each meeting, voting members and of those members, we need to have our four officer positions. So for a time, we are going to likely have a meeting where it'll be a gavel in, gavel out, two-part meeting, one meeting that deals with the new school business and one meeting that deals with the current school. But it can all happen kind of in the same space.

Shannon:

So we need to talk a bit about that. And I would recommend that we have a portion of the board that's very interested in being part of the task force and those people would also be part of those sub group members.

Michele:

Yeah. I think there's no question in my mind that we, given the tight time line and that ties to the next thing, which I know we're going to talk about is who can assist you as the lead in this in terms of writing the proposal.

Shannon:

I have that. I have recommendation of [crosstalk 00:02:17]. Yep.

Michele:

Yeah. And that was a letter in there, but I think we need to really leave this meeting with a task force named anyway, and that group would need to be prepared to commit to be walking side by side with Shannon, and if we elect to get some help from Empire or another organization to help write this, to be able to work as real-time as possible to get the proposal in.

Michele:

So Shannon did do, and this is also in there as well, there's the letter recommending-

Shannon:

Oh.

Michele:

Do you want to go to that?

Shannon:

Yeah. So it is a short timeline and it is a lot to undertake when I'm doing other things as well. So I did reach out to Empire Charter associates that we worked with them. Well they've been working with us on and off for a long time. It's sort of written in my letter that's below the one pager that you received. And so I feel like it would be really valuable for us to have Empire Charter consulting with us through the process. But of course I want to we want to be the owners of the application. So we would be doing the bulk of the work, but they would be supporting us along the way. They've lived it. They know how it works. They know SUNY well. And so it feels like it would be a really good investment to work with them.

Michele:

And I'll just piggyback on what Shannon said that last week, the officers met to kind of preview this discussion and talk this through. And one of my key concerns was how in the world are you going to have the bandwidth to do this in this short window? And you guys are super people with your super powers and proposals and things that you write that amaze me, final products and all. And that's when I said I think you need some help. And so that would be, from my standpoint, being able to move forward with a proposal is very much conditional on Shannon having some support with that. So I just sort of put that out there.

Michele:

And the officers, when we met, there was discussion around that as well. So there is a proposal given by Empire that... I hope I'm not moving too fast. I realize I've had time to talk with Shannon about this. So I am moving to the, yes, we do have to take a vote and all of that, but I'm going to keep us moving if that's all right. If somebody really has strong reservations and thinks, it's a terrible idea to replicate. Why in the world would we do that? You know, certainly speak up, but I'm going to keep us moving in the, "yeah, I think we really want to pursue a proposal" direction.

Michele:

And there is a proposal from Empire, and if you haven't had a chance to look at that, there is an MOU that we would want to be able to vote on. And you can see in there that, as Shannon said, they would be walking quite tightly with Shannon. And I think Lisa O'Malley is also going to spend quite a bit of time on this now she has bandwidth to do that and getting the proposal ready, the original content as needed. Certainly there'll be a lot that we would pull from.

Michele:

We would be responsible for generating, creating the budget, which again, I'm looping back to then the task force question. I think we need a task force, we need sort of a budget budget expertise. I've already talked with Mark [Cheeser 00:06:17], who's not on because he has the most longevity with regard to the lease and facilities. And he has said that he would be willing to assist and be on a task force to kind of help with that part of it. So we need to get that bit of work in there, too, in terms of what the school would have to do.

Michele:

So, as you can see, the service fee agreement is a \$15,000, all-inclusive, with \$7,500 due upon signature, \$7,500 due upon submission to the authorizer. And I certainly, after meeting with Jill and Andrea and their background with writing proposals, particularly their experience with SUNY proposals, I have quite a bit of confidence. And I frankly think the, the, the price is quite reasonable considering what we're asked and the timeline.

Michele:

So I sort of summarize a lot there. We need a sort of task force and to really take a look at that proposal from Empire, as well as the decision to go ahead and go forward and do the full RFP.

Michele:

Shannon, did I miss anything?

Shannon:

No. I am wondering if we want to be... So first we should probably just take some volunteers, but if we want to be strategic about who is on this task force so that we're making sure that we're representative of our typical board makeup. So for instance, I'm wondering if we would like to make sure that we have a family representative, an RMSC representative, a community representative, just so that we're making sure that that makes sense.

Michele:

I think that makes sense.

Jess:

I'll go first. Since I'm on Advocacy and Sharing, I think it's important if I'm going to be advocating for both schools that I know what's going on. So I'll volunteer to be on the task force for advocacy and I can do the parents side, I guess, too. I don't want to overextend. Shannon knows that on many things I'm on, so I just want to make sure that I'm doing this, maybe I come off of some of the things I'm not as involved in. we can talk offline on that.

Shannon:

Okay.

Michele:

Jess, thank you. And I did already mention that Mark had said he would be willing to participate in terms of facilities and certainly historical perspective, GCCS.

Shannon:

He also used to be the treasurer, so he might have the finance side of things represented as well.

Michele:

And I'm assuming, Shannon, that we could call upon Robin as needed if we needed budgets or spreadsheets or that that would be part of something we could ask her to do.

Shannon:

Yes.

Ryan:

I'd say I could help out, but definitely Robin is more... I'm still soaking in things on the finance committee. So that side of things, I don't know exactly how in-depth I could go, but definitely willing.

Michele:

Thanks, Ryan. And I also think, Ryan, frankly, your perspective as an alum would be really valuable.

Becki:

Shannon, do you need a teacher rep?

Shannon:

Well, I think we certainly could have a teacher rep. You're not going to be a voting member, but certainly another staff perspective who is a perspective on the board. You know what I mean? I think that would make sense. You just couldn't be counted as one of the five, I don't think.

Becki:

Okay.

Shannon:

But, yeah.

Becki:

We'll help if you need a staff.

Shannon:

Okay.

Michele:

I'm writing Becki's name down.

Shannon:

Yeah, me, too.

Michele:

I think that, again, historical perspective, a teacher is very valuable.

Maggie:

I'm also super excited about this. So if you need me for anything, call upon me.

Shannon:

Okay. Thanks, Maggie.

Michele:

Thanks, Maggie.

Maureen Milke:

You can count on me to support somehow, however, whatever you need.

Shannon:

Oh, you're already counted on.

Michele:

Yeah. We've got you in the "already been recruited" camp.

Maureen Milke:

Oh. Thanks for letting me know.

Michele:

Kidding. Yeah.

Speaker 16:

I think you can count on an RMSC person being there. I think Elizabeth and Shannon and I need to figure out who makes the most sense. I know my bandwidth right now is next to none, and Elizabeth also just took on a new role, so I want to make sure we're smart about who we put forward. And we can chat about that. I'll shoot you an email, Shannon.

Shannon:

Okay. Sounds good. Thank you.

Michele:

We need definitely at least one more. We've got Jess from advocacy/parent. Mark, kind of facilities, finance, and history. Ryan, alum, also finance committee. Becky, in terms of, I know non-voting, but still a teacher perspective. RMSC, there'll be conversation offline about that, which I think is critical to have RMSC involved.

Shannon:

So I've been private chatting with Luke. I think he would be an excellent member of this task force if he's willing. Are you willing, Luke?

Luke:

Yes, ma'am. I don't know exactly what perspectives you would like me to bring, but I guess I can be the community guy if you want me to.

Shannon:

I think you could be so many things, also wearing the arts hats and being through a school process and being a teacher through RCSD. I just think there's so many ways that you can help provide support. So if you're willing, we'd love to have you. Okay.

Michele:

That'd be great. Thanks, Luke. So we've got Jess, Mark, Ryan, Becky, and RMSC TBD, and Luke. Anyone else? We've got five voting folks. Shannon?

Shannon:

Ann Marie is coming in. Ann Marie is joining.

Michele:

All right.

Shannon:

Okay. So I think that was that. I'll tell you that our biggest grapple is a name. We really don't want to lose our name, but on the other hand, it's hard to speak about one over the other. So we can't just call them both Genesee Community Charter School without having some sort of definition.

Shannon:

We don't have to necessarily decide that, but if you have ideas of a name or the name of whatever the facility is going to be, we could name that part. I I'm thinking we might be engaging the community in talking about a name. So right now it's just GCCS2, which is lame. So we're looking for ideas for that.

Shannon:

And I also just wanted to kind of say out loud that we are likely going to be tweaking the mission and the key design elements, not in a big way, but just enough so that they both have been living the 20 year life and especially the mission, as you all know, it's pretty wordy. So we'd like to bring it down to a more accessible mission. So we're going to be working a bit on that as well to present that to in our proposal. Same thing with key design elements, doing some combining right now, like EL education is separate from field work and it feels like that should be together, so just kind of tweaking some of those things. So just wanted to keep that in mind.

Michele:

And so from just sort of a timing... This is mostly to test my own understanding here. So the letter of intent is due February 2nd. And then we have a board meeting on the 10th, at which time, if the board approves this tonight, we would, I presume, review and that the task force could potentially sort of present to the full board, "This is what we're looking at," because then the full proposal is due in by the 16th. Correct? The following week. Do I have my dates right there, Shannon?

Shannon:

Yep.

Michele:

Okay. So just sort of wanting to... We will come together as an entire board once before the proposal is due and certainly the task force, Shannon and her team, will be doing the bulk of the work. Empire, if we approve that, would be assisting with that. And we would talk about it in more in depth.

Michele:

So what we're looking for tonight, and again, I don't want to rush if people have more conversation or more questions, please, please ask or raise your hand if you've figured out how to do that, which apparently is in the reactions button.

Michele:

So, number one, we would like to ask for a vote to approve a letter of intent to pursue on RFP, the RFP process, a letter of intent, for this SUNY RFP. So what's the correct language we need for that, George or Shannon? Just for Alison and Elizabeth doing the minutes.

Shannon:



So a motion to approve the intent to apply for replication. I think that's really what we're approving.

Michele:

Yep. George-

George:

I was thinking in terms of approval, in concept, the application for a charter school to replicate, I'm thinking concept should be in there somewhere.

Shannon:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Michele:

And so, just to be clear, George, in terms of the vote, that is, is that...?

George:

It would be a motion to approve the concept of moving forward with an application to form a charter school replication should be in there, right? I'm better at a keyboard.

Michele:

Yeah. I'm thinking that we would be tonight, correct me if I'm wrong, we would be voting to approve not just the letter of intent, but the actual application or approving the decision to replicate and to submit an application for replication.

George:

Well, I think it's probably two step, but you're going to approve the concept of moving forward with an application for replication and the formation of a task force to implement the concept.

Michele:

That's exactly what I'm thinking.

Shannon:

Yeah.

Michele:

Okay. So I would like to make a motion to approve the concept of replicating Genesee Community Charter School and-

George:

And the formation of a task force-

Michele:

The formation of a task force.

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George:

-To implement the application.

Michele:

To implement the application. Alison and Elizabeth, do you need that repeated?

Speaker 17:

Looks like she's got it.

Shannon:

I think I got it on that last time. There's a lot of words that end in T-I-O-N on my screen right now. But I think I got it.

Shannon:

I'm watching her rewrite it like six times.

Michele:

That's why I was trying to repeat, because I'm thinking of you typing.

Michele:

Okay. So I've made a motion.

Ann Marie:

I'll second.

Michele:

And Ann Marie, was that you? Welcome.

Ann Marie:

Indeed it was.

Michele:

No, right, welcome. And all those in favor, please signify by saying or raising your hand by saying aye. Opposed? Abstentions?

Michele:

Woo-hoo is all I'm saying. That's awesome.

Shannon:

This is exciting.

Michele:

Very exciting. And then I would also like to make a motion to approve the MOU, presuming, Shannon, you would like us to approve that MOU.

Shannon:

Please.

Michele:

Okay. Do you approve the MOU with Empire Charter as outlined in the Google drive?

Ann Marie:

I'll second.

Michele:

Thanks, Ann Marie. All right. All those in favor of approving the MOU with Empire Charter, please say aye or raise your hand. Any opposed? Abstentions? All right, motion carries go. Forth and replicate, team. Woo-hoo. This is huge.

Shannon:

This is huge. This is really exciting.

Ann Marie:

I'm so excited.

Michele:

Very exciting. If we were in person, somebody would have to pop some champagne or something.

Shannon:

I know.

Michele:

We have to celebrate. I know we haven't done the application, but this is such a momentous moment for us as a school. It's a celebratory. We have been working at it, talking about it. Like Ryan said, we're doing some really great work. So, thank you. Thank you to everybody, and Shannon and your team, thank you in advance for the hard work you're about to be taking [crosstalk 00:01:45:13].

Shannon:

I will say thank goodness that we worked so hard in doing the charter renewal last year, because there is so much that's already very recent that we can pull from to do this application. [crosstalk 00:21:27].

Michele:

That's good. Everybody understands we still will be going forward with our renewal. We'll be going forward, doing everything we need to do for our current charter and for that renewal that happens in three years, we will still be doing that. We're on track for that.

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Michele:

Okay. And with that, I am going to open it up for public comment.

Shannon:

We have an executive session. I just don't want you to forget.

Michele:

I see it down there. And that is the next item.

Shannon:

Okay.

Michele:

Very I'm very linear.

Shannon:

So I just want to make sure we didn't forget.

Michele:

To my own demise sometimes. All right.

Shannon:

No, that's perfect for the meeting minutes. Thank you.

Michele:

You're very welcome. See? Really, I scribe a lot at my meetings, so I'm always thinking of the scribe. All right. So not hearing any public comment or future agenda topics brought up by any board member at this time. Okay.

Michele:

Sometimes I feel like an auctioneer about to say, "Going once, going twice."

Michele:

All right. And so I would like to ask for a motion to move into executive session to discuss a personnel matter.

George:

Is there something more specific you can say about the personnel matter?

Shannon:

It is in regards to a position. It's in regards to a position. I don't know if I can say more.

George:

Does it has to do with creating a position? A disciplinary matter?

Shannon:

It's in regards to an update on a current position and a continuation of a offering of a salary for a long-term sub. I don't know what else to say.

George:

Okay. That's fine.

Shannon:

Is that okay? I don't know. Alison, what do you want me to help you with?

George:

Personnel matter is a little too general.

Shannon:

Too vague? Okay.

George:

So you're talking about re-evaluating salary situation for a long-term substitute?

Shannon:

Yes.

George:

Okay.

Shannon:

Yeah, that'll work.

Shannon:

Also, that's what the motion should say?

Michele:

Yeah. So I'd like to entertain a motion to go into executive session to discuss personnel matters specific to reviewing salary for a long-term sub position.

George:

Yeah. That works.

Nolica:

Well, that's a mouthful, so I motion for what Michelle said.

Shannon:

And you second.

Michele:

All right, and Shannon, all those in favor of going into executive session, aye. Any opposed? Any abstentions? All right. And hang on. There's some questions in the chat box.

Shannon:

About who stays and who doesn't. I think I'm going to stop recording, though, because...

Michele:

Yes. Stop recording, please.

Shannon:

Stop recording, or pause. There we go.

Shannon:

Technical difficulties.

George:

Okay. So this is a motion to move into executive session to discuss and evaluate salary with regard to long-term substitutes. Is there someone making the motion?

Nolica:

I can make the motion again.

Michele:

And I'll second.

Ann Marie:

I will second it. Michelle just said that. Sorry.

Michele:

That's all right. All those in favor of going into executive session, aye.

Shannon:

Is that Michelle?

Michele:

That's Michelle. Yes.

Shannon:

Okay.

Michele:

All right. Any opposed? Abstentions? All right, please pause the recording. We are now-

Shannon:

I'm back.

Michele:

All right. We are now out of executive session, back on public record, and I would entertain a motion to approve the long-term sub position for the art...

Shannon:

Art teacher. Do I need to say the name, George?

George:

Yes. you can use the name, and it sounds like you're moving to convert whoever this is from a long-term sub to a full-time teaching equivalent for the balance of the school year.

Shannon:

Yes. Okay. So it's a motion to approve Brianna Knab, it's K-N-A-B, to move from long-term substitute to a full-time equivalent art teacher position for the equivalent of the rest of the 2021 school year.

Michele:

Allison, you got that? Elizabeth? You guys good? Okay. All right. I will make a motion, Michelle, and somebody want to second?

Tasha:

Tasha will second the motion.

Michele:

All right. Thank you, Tasha. All those in favor, aye. Opposed? Abstentions? All right. Motion carries. There we go. That's good. Thank you, Shannon for that. And with that, Alison or Elizabeth, any actions that we need to review or agreements or anything before we move on? Okay. Great.

Michele:

All right. So anybody want to make a motion to adjourn?

Michele:

Really?

Nolica:

I motion to adjourn tonight's meeting.

Ryan:

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I second.

Michele:

[crosstalk 01:51:01] I thought the boxes would light up. All right, Nolica made a motion. Ryan seconded. All those in favor, please say aye. Opposed? Abstentions?

Jess:

[crosstalk 01:51:10] public knowledge or not until tomorrow?

Shannon:

It's technically public knowledge, yes. But it will go very public tomorrow.

Michele:

Yeah. Since we voted and approved, it is now public. It's all public record.

Shannon:

[crosstalk 01:51:26] Yep, yep.

Jess:

Congrats, everyone.

Michele:

Congratulations on a huge meeting [crosstalk 01:51:32]. Thank you so much, everybody. Okay. Take care. Stay safe, everyone.

Group:

Bye.

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