



Statesmen College Preparatory Academy for Boys PCS
January 27, 2021 Board Meeting Minutes
via Zoom

1. **Board Members Present:** Nicole Solomon Mitchell, Juan Pagan, Ray McKenzie, Greg Van Houten, Shawn Hardnett, Alicia Adams, Raymond Weeden, Bernie Woolfley, Satira Streeter Corbitt, Samantha Barbee, James Cadogan, Bisi Oyedele, and Sandi McCoy.
2. **Board Members Absent:** Mary Brown.
3. **Staff Members Present:** Amanda Bloom, Sharonda Mann, and Rictor Craig.
4. **Outside Support Staff Present:** Kim Swenson.
5. **Roll Call:** Roll call was taken, the results of which are reflected above.
6. **Approval of October 2020 Board Meeting Minutes**
 - a. Mr. Van Houten moved to approve the October 2020 Board Meeting Minutes. Ms. McCoy seconded the motion. The present board members unanimously approved the October 2020 Board Meeting Minutes.
7. **Vote to Add Parent Board Member**
 - a. Presented by Ms. McCoy.
 - b. Ms. McCoy reviewed the slate of candidates and the process of selecting a candidate.
 - c. Ms. McCoy presented the rationale for nominating Mr. Kenny Pegram to the Board.
 - d. Mr. Hardnett moved to nominate Mr. Pegram to the Board. Mr. McKenzie seconded the motion. The present board members unanimously approved the nomination.
 - e. Ms. Mitchell welcomed Mr. Pegram to the Board, on behalf of the other Board members.
8. **Finance**
 - a. Presented by Ms. Barbee and Ms. Swenson.
 - b. Ms. Barbee noted that she recently circulated audit results and recommendations.
 - c. Discussed that, from a finance perspective, the earliest the school could return to in-person learning is March 1, 2021.
 - i. Discussed the fact that any return to in-person learning this spring will likely be phased, the effect being that expenses will not radically increase to Statesmen's detriment.
 - d. Discussed lowered expenses/cost savings stemming from remote learning.
 - e. Reviewed strong key performance indicators, including days of cash (159 days), gross margin (10.1%), and grants invoiced (27%).

- i. Discussed the fact that, because Statesmen (like many charters) will have challenges with enrollment given COVID-19 and otherwise, a financial surplus heading into 2021-22 will be quite helpful and advantageous to the program.
- f. Discussed the fact that Statesmen is expecting to see additional CARES funding in excess of Statesmen's original CARES award of \$105k.
- g. Discussed FY21 forecasted operating expenses and variances since October 2020 meeting (*e.g.*, decreased direct student expenses).
- h. Discussed high-level budget variances and cash flow forecast.
- i. Discussed draw down and use of federal grants, and the timing associated with the same.

9. Progress Toward SY20-21 School Goals

- a. Presented by Mr. Hardnett and Mr. Craig.
- b. Reviewed and discussed abridged vision statement, which the Board reacted very positively to.
- c. Mr. Hardnett noted the issues associated with the reliability of academic achievement data given COVID-19 and remote learning.
- d. Mr. Hardnett noted Zoom fatigue and the emotional and mental toll remote learning is taking on students, parents, and staff.
- e. Mr. Hardnett noted that early MAP data shows significantly above expected growth.
- f. Staff morale and parent satisfaction are quite high.
- g. Attendance and engagement is high, including with regard to extracurricular events.
- h. Mr. Hardnett noted that a small group of students struggle with attendance; a small group of students also struggle with achievement via distance learning.
- i. Mr. Hardnett noted that performance and achievement (as opposed to growth) are projected to be below our goals; but, again, the growth is reason for optimism.
- j. Discussed 93.7% re-enrollment rate (top 10 for students with disabilities and at-risk students).
- k. Strong in-seat attendance across all sub-groups. 95.6% in Q2 2020-21.
- l. Discussed student and staff satisfaction data.
 - i. Staff
 - 1. Instructional culture rebounded after low scores in 2019-20.
 - 2. Strong leaning environment results.
 - 3. This year's data is based on a much larger sample size than years in the past.
 - 4. Teachers perceive strong student-student support.
 - ii. Student
 - 1. Strong scores on growth mindset, staff efficacy, self management, and rigorous expectations.
 - 2. Discussed the need to circulate data for scores that were below average.
- m. Discussed academic growth, proficiency, and learning loss study.
 - i. Have not seen the losses in DC that are apparent in other areas of the country. In ELA, seeing 1 month of loss (expectation was 2-3 years). In math, seeing 5 months of loss (expectation was 2-3 years). Note that those figures are for DC at-large. Statesmen is significantly ahead in learning losses in ELA and generally on par with losses in math.

- ii. The learning loss study excluded quite a bit of data (due to guessing and anomalies with time spent taking the assessment). Across the city, only 53% of scores were included. Statesmen was at roughly 40-50%.
- iii. GPAs in Q1 2020-21 are above 2019-20, but below 2018-19.
- n. Discussed Statesmen's distance learning strategy.
 - i. Narrow focus, phased implementation, and structure.
 - ii. April is a realistic goal to resume *some* in-person learning.
 - iii. Discussed vaccination education efforts.
 - iv. Discussed low engagement with SPED-related services (which has to be opted into by parent/guardians).
 - v. Discussed prioritization of in-person learning, and prioritizing those who are struggling most outside of the building.

10. Middle School Implementation Update

- a. Presented by Ms. Bloom.
- b. Team has been meeting since October, weekly.
- c. The goal is to draft a plan so that our Statesmen Scholars are ready to succeed in high school after leaving the eighth grade.
- d. Targeted certain high schools and conducted extensive interview process involving interviews of school staff and students who have graduated.
- e. Biggest takeaways as far as what high schools look for:
 - i. Scholars entering HS on grade level in reading, writing, and math.
 - ii. Limited behavior problems.
 - iii. Self-advocacy.
 - iv. Sense of community.
- f. The team is in the process of drafting the model of a Statesmen graduate.
- g. Discussed the "gap analysis," which is the next step in the process.

11. Public Session/Comment Period

- a. No attendee raised any comments or questions for the Board's consideration.

12. Adjourned at 8:28 PM EST to enter Closed/Executive Session.

- a. Ms. McCoy moved to enter closed/executive session. Mr. Hardnett seconded the motion. Unanimously approved by board members in-attendance.
- b. Discussed facilities negotiations, CEO annual evaluation, and Board development and training.
- c. This portion of the meeting was closed pursuant to D.C. Official Code §2-575(b)(2), (b)(3), (b)(10), and (b)(12).
- d. With respect to Board development and training, and specifically regarding the Board's continued work around diversity, equity, and inclusion ("DEI"), the Board discussed contracting with a person or entity to provide continued training and to better align the Board with its related DEI goals. It was also noted that a \$10,000 grant was awarded by the National Charter Collaborative for the Board to engage in this work.

Because Ms. Adams was a candidate, she was recused from the Closed/Executive Session.

Ms. McCoy and Ms. Mitchell discussed the qualifications and bids of four persons/entities (Ms. Adams being one of them) that do DEI work. Those included Ms. Adams, Education Board Partners, the Equity Lab, and My HR Consultant LLC (“MHC”).

MHC’s bid was for \$22,250 and so was excluded. Despite several outreach attempts, the Equity Lab never responded, and so was excluded. Education Board Partners indicated a lack of capacity to do the work at a high-level and proposed a \$13,000 fee. Ms. Adams, on the other hand, offered (a) several years of experience in the field, (b) the *lowest* bid (under \$10,000), (c) knowledge of the board and its personnel, and (d) the capacity to do the work, now, at a very high-level.

The Board discussed its Conflict of Interest Policy in light of the fact that Ms. Adams submitted the most competitive bid but is also a Board Member. The Board determined that, because she submitted the most competitive bid, and because her bid would be fair to the school, that Ms. Adams was the best choice.

On those grounds, Ms. McCoy moved to approve contracting with Ms. Adams. Ms. Mitchell seconded. The present board members unanimously approved the motion.

- e. Ms. McCoy moved to form the CEO Evaluation and Support Committee. Mr. Hardnett seconded. The present board members unanimously approved the motion.