

**Wissahickon Charter School
Board of Trustees Meeting
November 14, 2018 6:36pm - 8:01pm**

**Wissahickon Charter School Awbury Campus (Board Room)
815 E Washington Lane, Philadelphia, PA 19138**

Board Members Present: Rosi Barbera (Chair), Ebony Staton-Weidman (Vice Chair), Justin Wheeler (Treasurer- by phone), Fran Bradley, Bob Anderson, Rachel Loeper, Charles Case, Martin Milner

Staff Present: Kristi Littell (CEO), Jamal Elliott (COO), Jane Walsh (Development Associate)

Guests Present: Mike Whisman (Charter Choices)

Board chair called the meeting to order at 6:36pm.

Personnel and Hiring (Kristi Littell, CEO)

Kristi reported that the search for middle school math teachers at Awbury is still ongoing. Having spoke to administrators at other schools, there appears to be a general shortage of middle school math teachers. Kristi will send the job descriptions to the Board so they can share with their contacts.

The new Discovery Teacher at FH has begun and is off to a good start.

Development Update (Kristi Littell, CEO)

Major gifts received total \$102,000. The Development Team has \$98,000 remaining to raise to meet this year's goal for major gifts. These numbers do not include a \$5,000 grant for art supplies from The Corrine R. and Henry Bower Memorial Foundation, which was received just prior to the start of the Board Meeting.

The Development Team expects that the #GivingTuesday and End of Year Campaigns will bring in more funds before the end of the calendar year.

Kristi recommended a volunteer we've hosted to serve as the honoree for the Spring Event. As previously discussed by the Wissahickon Foundation Board and the Development Team, we would like to start honoring a second individual at the event who is a member of the school community of families or neighbors and goes above and beyond to support the school. We would also potentially like to honor a student who is doing exceptional work. Kristi will reach out to the honoree.

Review of September and October Minutes (Rosi Barbera, Chair)

The Board reviewed edits to the September minutes. Motion to approve the edits was led by Ebony and seconded by Bob. The Board approved unanimously.

The Board reviewed the October minutes. Motion to approve the October minutes was led by Marty and seconded by Bob. The Board approved the minutes unanimously.

Financials (Justin Wheeler, Treasurer; Jamal Elliott, COO; Mike Whisman, Charter Choices)

Mike Whisman from Charter Choices reviewed the Financial Statements which he reported appear good.

The School District is currently paying us for 217 special education students, but we believe their counts are off and that we have closer to 220 special ed students enrolled (we budgeted for 210). Enrollment numbers will be reviewed with the District which should clear up the discrepancy. We will then receive funds for those students retroactively.

Special Education costs have increased. The Finance Committee has asked Charter Choices to look at this trend and they will report their findings at the next Board Meeting.

A motion to approve the financials was led by Bob and seconded by Ebony. The motion was approved unanimously.

A motion to approve the expenditures was led by Ebony and seconded by Rachel. The motion was approved unanimously.

Highlights from Both Campuses (Kristi Littell, CEO, and Jamal Elliott, COO)

School leadership reviewed some of the positive recent occurrences at the school.

Jamal provided highlights from the middle school at both campuses. He reported that students from both campuses went to see the movie *The Hate You Give*, and did some pre-work prior to the viewing to improve critical thinking and comprehension. All students came back with positive things to say and were very moved by the film.

The high school application process is a significant part of middle school life. Staff/Counselors are working hard to expose the students to a wide range of schools and are making sure that students are submitting their documents on time and properly.

Some initiatives starting during Trimester Two at Awbury include The Student Leadership Initiative, Student Council, Black Boy Joy and Black Girl Magic Moments, students doing morning announcements, and the re-opening of the school store to sell healthy snacks.

Kristi provided some Lower School highlights from both campuses. She reported that Fernhill's new Lower School Director Aaron Dukes continues to do a wonderful job, is well-liked by all, and is working well with teachers. He and Dean of Culture Ms G. are working with the 5th graders (he with boys, she with girls) to work on service and try to invest them in the community to learn how their actions affect the whole.

Fernhill has been holding monthly all-school assemblies (CARES assemblies) at FH. These assemblies include, among other things, a celebration of student birthdays from that month, honoring a student and staff member for demonstrating CARES values, and a visit from The Fox, our school mascot. Administrators have reported that these new additions have provided a lot of "heart" to the school.

At Awbury, Lower School had "Awbury at Awbury", their annual two-day event at Awbury Arboretum. Students learned how to make apple cider, did crafts, played games, etc.

Also at Awbury, CARES champions will be selected each week. The two selected students will be featured in the weekly school newsletter and get to have lunch with Lower School Director Ms Kate.

Every Wednesday, the Kindergarten classes at Awbury start their day at the Arboretum for "Forest School". Forest School is an inquiry-based model led by a former Wissahickon teacher. This is a pilot program funded by an outside organization; but administrators are beginning to consider how we can continue this on our own in future years and how we might duplicate the program at Fernhill. Kristi provided a slide show to show moments from one day.

The Board went into a Closed Executive Session.

Marty made a motion to adjourn and Fran approved. The board approved unanimously and The Board Chair adjourned the meeting at 8:01pm.

Handouts that were distributed are attached.

- Wissahickon Charter School Financial Statements; October 2018
- Amended Board Meeting Minutes 09.20.18
- Board Meeting Minutes Oct
- Development Update for Board Meeting

Action Items:

- Kristi to reach out to potential honorees.