

**The SABIS International Charter School
160 Joan Street
Springfield, MA 01129
Board of Trustees**

Minutes of SABIS Board of Trustees Meeting – May 4, 2020
Education Committee
via conference call

In Attendance: Ellen McDonald, Anne-Marie Nicolai, Joyce Gondek, Patrick White, Atu White, Luis Aponte, Paula Meara, Sonja Shaw

Guests: Vanessa Pileggi, Amy Wesley, Maretta Thomsen, Parent

Not Present: n/a

I. **Meeting called to order at 6:03 p.m.**

II. **Public Forum**

Pat White reported that a parent reached out to him to ask about graduation or virtual graduation, that Springfield Public Schools informed parents that graduation will be virtual. A parent asked if that applies to SABIS too. Maretta Thomsen said they are in discussion and details are not ironed out but should be by this week. Graduation will be held but will not be on a stage, will be virtual. More details following shortly. Patrick White said that the parent asked about senior dues that were already paid? Maretta Thomsen said this year the school will pay for cap and gowns; unable to hold Senior BBQ. In process of finding out what date can go on diplomas and what can be held and at what time. She will reach out directly to the parent.

III. **Status of Chromebook Distribution**

Chromebooks are purchased. They were distributed last week for the high school and later in week for younger grades. About 74% of students are using the remote learning plan and still sending out about 142 packets by paper. Distribution went very well, nurse checked temps of distributors; parents drove through gate and placed signed policy in a box, drove forward and received the chromebooks. Families with multiple students signed a form for each chromebook received. 192 were distributed. Will distribute this week to grades 3-8. Cannot predict return rate, could be 50% lost/damaged as a worst case scenario. Kids can surf safely and limited. Regarding parent questions, Amy Wesley said teachers and staff are communicating with families by phone/email and reporting issues to IT. Also note students are on-line with their teachers every day. Ellen McDonald asked if teachers are all set up? Yes they are ready to go, using own equipment, some from school. Maretta Thomsen said teachers like using Teams and pleasantly surprised with numbers participating. Generally each week, the students have five English classes, five math, two to three each for science and social studies; and in grades 6-12, two Spanish classes per week. Luis Aponte noted his kids haven't had that many classes yet. Note, sample schedule is on the website.

Overview of how on-line classes are working/how has participation been?
Approximately 60% in lower; 69% in middle school; and for high school grades 9-12, about a 73% average participation rate (consistent with device distribution). Before devices went out, the rate was about 50%. Teachers are taking attendance and can tell who signed in. Some lessons are prepared in advance so that students can log in later. Paper packets are mostly for the lower grades. Students can ask teacher questions but not each other. 85% participation in grades K-2 with paper.

Joyce Gondek said teachers are doing a wonderful job. School has not heard of any families having issues with internet access but have placed information in the remote learning plan if they need suggestions. Students take weekly quizzes, and are given feedback, not a grade.

Since Commissioner changed plan, have you had to revamp curriculum or presentation?
Amy Wesley said that the Commissioner first indicated no new material could be taught, and they provided revision material with SABIS pacing. Once the Commissioner allowed new material to be taught, SABIS has picked up regular pacing to cover concepts that are standards. Curriculum doesn't have to be revised to provide in a remote setting/only difference is the means used to provide the instruction.

How handling students who may be failing? Maretta Thomsen noted that because of the Commissioner's statement about standards, they are not anticipating regular summer school but could be remotely provided. Ran a term 4 report so they could see exact position of every student and identify students that needed extra support and they're receiving extra help and teachers are aware. Important for communication that board members always refer parents directly to school.

Luis Aponte asked if all grades are using TEAMS the same way and how are students returning assignments to the teacher? Will speak directly to Maretta Thomsen on this.

Sonja Shaw asked for another update for the full board meeting on May 20; and also, what would summer school look like if things are not lifted by June 30? Maretta Thomsen noted that it would be basically same as it has been but would be remote. Last day of school is June 17.

Atu White requested that an education committee member be available for the DESE meeting on Wednesday.

Maretta Thomsen thanked board for helping with this project.

Patrick White moved to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Anne-Marie Nicolai. The meeting adjourned at 7:06 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Anne-Marie Nicolai, Secretary
SICS Board of Trustees

Attachments

n/a