

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

**Minutes of SABIS Board of Trustees Meeting – May 12, 2020**  
**Contract Committee**  
**via conference call**

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

Guests: Vanessa Pileggi, Amy Wesley

Not Present: n/a

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

II. **Contract Review**

Atu White updated the committee on the contract work:

Benchmarks/first draft of the contract for review. Atu White asked committee members if they have any questions or items for clarification. Daryl Johnson asked how the call with DESE went; noted it was difficult to get education committee, contract committee, SEM in agreement with benchmarks. Education committee has focus on how to hold SEM accountable. Is SEM creating action plan for improvement? Sticking points between committees and SEM--DESE requires that SEM needs to provide clear plan of action on how to address grades 3-8 MCAS scores. He said that Amy Wesley spoke with DESE last week and that they say the plan of action shouldn't be in contract but referred to as a separate document. Response to date on student outcomes from SEM perspective is what they're sticking to, without modifications.

Sonja Shaw noted that there are conditions per DESE and these are recommended to be placed within the contract, per accountability. The conditions will be in the contract but sticking point of negotiation is how to address the improvement that's needed—what are the benchmarks and how to incorporate the accountability within the contract? Atu White noted that the education committee submitted an email today and that SEM is sticking to the document submitted previously and won't adjust "graduation rate" language. How to proceed forward? Need plan of action to finalize.

Ellen McDonald said that in speaking with DESE on Wednesday, they advised we were on the wrong path with blanket “15 point” approach. They didn’t think SEM was using the correct approach, either. They require benchmarks lined up with accountability. Suggestion, submit what we has been developed as benchmarks to DESE for feedback, since they guided us on how to develop valid and measurable points, and followed DESE protocol. Anne-Marie Nicolai reminded of the tight timeline.

*Amy Wesley joined the meeting.*

Amy Wesley reported that she has not had a response from DESE yet on her email. She spoke with DESE; they are not looking for internal measures, but student outcomes per DESE targets. Waiting to hear how board wishes to proceed. She understood email to DESE was to ask about student outcomes and plans with detailed steps on how school works to achieve the outcomes. These are normally found in accountability plans submitted to DESE (waiting on a reply). She said she had told committee they would take off the table the part of the proposal regarding a 5% increase on internal scores, since DESE wants commitment to achieve DESE targets which becomes part of accountability report.

She referred to notes from last night’s education committee meeting. Ellen McDonald asked, what are the benchmarks that SEM is proposing for external accountability to DESE, and if there are subgroups declining, are there internal targets? Amy Wesley said that DESE sets targets. Proposing student outcomes are based on those and that DESE doesn’t include subgroup results in the targets they set for schools. In setting the targets, they look at all students results. They are built in but not specifically set as target. So yes, there would be natural increase in subgroups as well. Can clarify with DESE.

Atu White clarified, so no student outcomes as relates to MCAS, 5% improvement is off table? Amy Wesley said yes there are MCAS outcomes in management agreement. But of the two additional measures initially proposed after call with Alison, remove 5% end of year on internal scores. Other measure proposed was 10% increase in annual criterion reference target percentage from accountability report. Fine with leaving that one on the table as it is tied to DESE accountability. Fine with other scores tied to DESE targets.

Atu White sent Amy Wesley a copy of what was submitted from education committee. Ellen McDonald outlined it; looking at 2019 Report Card, annual criterion percentage, improvement year over year, overall progress toward improvement 75% or higher and all indicators reflect steady improvement in the aggregate. Example, those at 0 should achieve gain of 1 point per year resulting in a score of 3 by the review date. If a category is 1-3 it should gain 1 point per year. If currently at 4, must be maintained. Committee also looked at each category, achievement, growth, etc. and there are clear targets. Year over year all subgroups must show steady improvement/no decline. There are

specific targets in the subgroups. Amy Wesley will review that document with Atu White.

Contract Costs. Freddy Lopez noted that he has names of four CFOs from different schools to get information. DESE can provide copies of the contracts that charter schools in the area have with their management companies. Amy Wesley said that SEM took as a base for calculating what SABIS network charges, standard model 6% management 8% licensing, PPF at 14% rounded down a bit. Freddy thought it was 6/6 last time. Ended up “splitting the difference” with what contract committee came back with. Freddy Lopez will gather info before the Tuesday meeting.

*Amy Wesley left the meeting.*

Follow-Up. Daryl Johnson commented under section 2.2 student outcomes, insertions the fourth bullet point “SEM shall strive to achieve 95% graduation rate” – should say “shall” not “shall strive to”. And increasing overall student performance in the third bullet, also remove “strive to”, assuming those items are remaining in contract.

Noted that the board has ability for due diligence much earlier than five-year date. Atu White will clarify with attorney and he can join our next meeting on Tuesday, 5/19. Straight five-year contract allows due diligence any time. SGP of 50 in existing doc/ DESE is looking for 60. Education committee suggests 60. If committee chooses to incorporate language proposed by education committee; confirm it is not contradicting existing language. Example, if SGP of 60 is goal, then remove SGP in section 2.2 that says mean SGP of 50 or higher in the aggregate.

Section C ‘selection of director’ needs review. DESE would like to review prior to board vote.

Daryl Johnson moved to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Joyce Gondek. The meeting adjourned at 7:29 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Anne-Marie Nicolai, Secretary  
SICS Board of Trustees