

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

Minutes of SABIS Board of Trustees Regular Meeting – March 18, 2021
via conference call

In Attendance: Anne-Marie Nicolai, Joyce Gondek, Daryl Johnson, Paula Meara, Todd Fairman, John Delaney, Atu White, Sonja Shaw, Dena Facchini, Luis Aponte, Derryl Gibbs

Guests: DJ Conway, Tom Compagna, Lara D’Almeida, Laura Domasch, Tim Tynan, Kimberly Tynan, Vanessa Pelleggi, Tara Roberts, Danelle Skorka, Justin Baker, Amy McDonald, Laurina Sanford, Brittany Cundiff, Alexandra Fischer, Alyssa Sopet, Cynthia Miller, Diane Stetson, Rosara Pellicier, Kathleen Dupuis, Maretta ThoMs.en, Melissa Witherspoon, Tyrone Witherspoon, Sue Thibodeau, Paul Nicolai, Kristen Bly, JoAnne Laflamme, Jeff Londrville, Christie Sieple-Cole, Amy Wesley, Steve Bissonnette, Jean Reardon, Trina Roberts, Lisa Elkhay, Raipher Pelligrino, Shirley Vazquez, Elizabeth Jasse, Arline Pysher, Haley Ozdarski, Ryan Gaebel

Not Present: Freddy Lopez

I. Meeting called to order at 6:13pm.

II. **Open Forum**

Tara Roberts, parent of a kindergarten student thanked all the Kindergarten teachers for their dedication and support. Special thanks was given to Mrs. Conway, Ms. Vasquez and Ms. Cuen. Ms. Roberts started teaching eight grade during COVID and commends the curriculum. She closed by thanking the parents, leadership team and her co-workers.

III. **Approval of Meeting Minutes**

Paula Meara motioned to approve the 9/2/2020 Education, 10/28/2020 Special BOT, 10/19/2020 Special BOT and 11/18/2020 BOT meeting minutes. Seconded by John Delaney and APPROVED by Yes vote. YES: Anne-Marie Nicolai, Joyce Gondek, Paula Meara, Daryl Johnson, John Delaney, Todd Fairman, Atu White, Sonja Shaw, Luis Aponte, Dena Facchini.

IV. **Chair's Report**

Regular Board Meeting Schedule:

The Trustees agreed to move the regular board meetings to every third Thursday of the month due to upcoming issues with DESE, the school director position and how full agendas have been during recent last minute special meetings.

Community Relations Committee - Joyce Gondek (Chair) and John Delaney

Education Committee - Anne-Marie Nicolai (Chair), Joyce Gondek, Luis Aponte, Daryl Johnson

Executive Committee - Atu White (Chair), Paula Meara, Freddy Lopez, Anne-Marie Nicolai

Finance/Facilities/Technology Committee - Freddie Lopez (Chair), Luis Aponte, Derryl Gibbs

Governance Committee - Joyce Gondek (Chair), Dena Facchini, Sonja Shaw, Paula Meara

Long Range Strategic Planning Committee - Joyce Gondek (Chair), Sonja Shaw

Ad hoc Special Events Committee - Joyce Gondek (Chair), Daryl Johnson, Anne-Marie Nicolai, Paula Meara

Contract Review Committee - Atu White (Chair), Paula Meara, Joyce Gondek, Daryl Johnson, Freddy Lopez

Safety & Risk Management Committee - Joyce Gondek (Chair), Anne-Marie Nicolai, Paula Meara, John Delaney

All subcommittees are expected to have their monthly meetings scheduled in advance for up to four months.

Management Agreement:

Atu White explained that a final decision on the management agreement must be made before the April 1st deadline. SEM is still willing to work with the Board but won't budge on the wording therefore, the Board must make a decision so it can be brought to SEM. Everyone has been working hard from the beginning. Negotiations started a year ago with this management agreement and the Board had three sticking points. First, several Trustees wanted the director and business manager to report to the Board. Second, higher student outcomes for high school students and the third sticking point was the management fee would not increase due to the Board having the second renewal with academic conditions. In negotiations the Board gave up all those positions in the original language sent to DESE. After numerous negotiations the Board agreed to increase the amount of the management fee to \$2.175 million then SEM was willing to give 25% of the student outcomes requested. Essentially the Board agreed to SEM's demands for a raise upfront just to get the agreement done to send to DESE. DESE has expressed in writing that SEM is not a management company. They are consultants. The management is the Board. DESE insists the Board has the fiduciary responsibility to manage the school. SEM wants the language to now read that if SEM does not agree with the Board's decision they have the right to terminate the contract. Daryl Johnson

pointed out that the Board is no longer a governance board and needs to manage the school; it is an oversight Board. Attorney Nicolai pointed out the only way a contract can go to DESE for approval or denial is with a Board vote.

Poll for vote was denied. YES: Anne-Marie Nicolai, Joyce Gondek, Luis Aponte, Atu White. NO: Daryl Johnson, Dena Facchini, Paula Meara, John Delaney, Sonja Shaw, Derryl Gibbs

Daryl Johnson suggested that all the Trustees go back to the email sent from Atu White to read all the information and educate themselves so a vote can be done as soon as possible.

Virtual Board Retreat:

Postponed to another date in the Spring or Summer allowing getting financials approved and presenting options regarding facilitators.

V. Education Committee

Interim Director's Report:

1. Based on DESE guidance Commissioner Riley has said that return to school will be April 5th. Return in full for May 10th. This plan was approved on March 4th. Three feet social distance in class, six feet in lunch and K-12 must wear a mask. Maretta Thomsen reported that all teachers expected to return a week before students on March 29th. 726 teachers will return to campus and 697 will remain remotely for COVID related reasons.
2. The waiver needs to be voted on today for submission to Commissioner Riley. It states that SABIS would be returning on April 5th with cohorts. A and B one week in person and one week remote. Cohort C is made up of students that will be learning remotely by parent choice. Also that school would return to full K-12 on May 10th. This would go to the Commissioner along with the Board approved reopening plan from March 4th.

John Delaney motioned to accept the waiver for return to campus. Seconded by Sonja Shaw and APPROVED by voice vote. YES: Anne-Marie Nicolai, Joyce Gondek, Daryl Johnson, Paula Meara, John Delaney, Sonja Shaw, Luis Aponte, Dena Facchini, Atu White, Derryl Gibbs

3. The MCAS window for grades three through five has shifted to between May 10th and 11th. Middle school grades are still to be determined by the Commissioners.
4. The employee handbook was revised with a civil rights audit, revised, reorganized and submitted for legal review.
Luis Aponte motioned to adopt the revised employee handbook as presented. Seconded by Dena Facchini and APPROVED by voice vote. YES: Anne-Marie Nicolai, Joyce Gondek, Daryl Johnson, Paula Meara, John Delaney, Sonja Shaw, Luis Aponte, Dena Facchini, Derryl Gibbs, Atu White
5. Staffing is all set including 98.6% of teachers. Looking to hire one IT person.

A Special BOT meeting will be scheduled for Tuesday March 23rd at 6:00pm.

John Delaney motioned to adjourn the meeting at 8:20pm. The motion was seconded by Daryl Johnson.

Respectfully submitted,

Anne-Marie Nicolai, Secretary
SICS Board of Trustees