



## Achievement House Cyber Charter School Board of Trustees

Public Meeting Minutes  
Tuesday, February 19, 2019

The Executive Session commenced at 6:00 p.m. and continued until approximately 7:30 p.m.

- I. Pledge of Allegiance
- II. Roll Call
  - Mrs. Marilou Strangarity (President)
  - Mr. Jim Bowers (Vice President)
  - Mrs. Kristin Chettle (Treasurer)
  - Mr. Don Fraatz (Secretary)
  - Dr. Bob Maranto
  - Lisabeth Sweeney
- III. Notification of Recording
  - A. Marilou Strangarity announced that the Public Session would be recorded on an audio device.
- IV. Executive Session Statement
  - A. M. Strangarity announced that the Executive Session was held to discuss personnel and real estate matters.
- V. Approval of Minutes from 1/15/2019 Board Meeting
  - A. M. Strangarity called for a motion to approve the minutes from the 1/15/2019 board meeting.
    1. Motion to approve the minutes from the 1/15/2019 board meeting by Lisabeth Sweeney Seconded by Don Fraatz. Unanimous.
- VI. Discussion of Academic Video Report
  - A. M. Strangarity asked if there were any questions or comments about the Academic Video Report.
    1. Neal Thomas reported that the first School Improvement Plan Steering Committee meeting was held today. He also provided a WIDA testing update – all testing should be completed by the end of the week. Certified letters were mailed home to parents today to remind them the importance of the testing and to hopefully make testing arrangements. He concluded with a Special Education update – the department now has 232 students.
    2. M. Strangarity asked how many people attended the Steering Committee meeting.
      - a. N. Thomas reported that there were 8-10 people and that a parent and a student were invited to be on the committee, though they were not able to make today's meeting.
    3. R. Maranto asked what Launch Pad is?
      - a. N. Thomas reported that it is a course students go through upon enrolling to help acclimate them to the AHCCS cyber environment.
- VII. Discussion of SPED Video Report
  - A. M. Strangarity asked if there were any questions or comments about the SPED Video Report.
    1. N. Thomas reported that a new Special Education teacher, Shirl Vollmer, started today and that Anna Berzins has taken the lead of the supplemental teachers, which has been well received.

2. M. Strangarity asked what Special Education enrollment percentage was allocated in the budget.
  - a. Ryan Schumm reported that they budgeted for 25% of 500 for Special Education enrollment.
  - b. Don Asplen shared that they are currently at 39%.

**VIII. Discussion Enrollment/Marketing Video Report**

- A. M. Strangarity asked if there were any questions or comments about the Enrollment/Marketing Video Report.
  1. Alane Butler reported that there are 601 students as of today. She's expecting to hit 625 total enrollment for the year, but isn't sure if it will be maintained.
  2. R. Maranto asked about the current enrollment compared to years past.
    - a. A. Butler reported that the current enrollment is about 60 students higher than the same time last year.
  3. R. Maranto asked if that was due to better retention strategies.
    - a. A. Butler reported that it was definitely due to better retention because her data analysis showed that, at this time last year, they had oriented more students between August and February last year than the same time frame this year, but the enrollment was much lower last year compared to this year.
  4. A. Butler shared a student spotlight on A.C., who enrolled in AHCCS in 9<sup>th</sup> grade in order to follow her passion for dance. She was accepted to Virginia Military Institute (VMI) ROTC Air Force college program. Her ultimate goal is to become a commercial airline pilot. Her GPA is 4.02 and she is ranked 3<sup>rd</sup> in the class.

**IX. Special Presentation – Innovation Academy**

- A. Veronica Farr presented curriculum for Drone education. She has developed a framework for drone courses that revolves around Search and Rescue. These courses are cross-curricular and incorporate Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) as well as the four Cs (critical thinking, creativity, collaboration and communication).
- B. She stated that drone education meets so many academic standards and there are so many grants available to the school and possibly to students in the program.
- C. She is working on partnerships with Collegium, Germantown Friends School and their sister school in South Africa, and the FAA National Outreach Program for Diversity – Educational Outreach Initiatives.
- D. She shared that she has applied for a grant to fund a mobile STEM Drone lab so they can take the show on the road and do it safely. The grant would also fund a Drone cage so that drones could be flown indoors or outdoors safely. She is also working on two other grants.
- E. She shared that she recently had a paper she wrote, "Integrated STEM Helps Drones Fly," published by the IEEE (International Electrical and Electronics Engineers).
- F. She was accepted to present at the ISTE Conference on June 22<sup>nd</sup>. She will be doing a 3 hour workshop to show teachers how drones can teach STEM.
- G. She is also applying to iNACOL as they have a conference coming up. She would like to present a Competency Based Approach to Drone Education.
- H. V. Farr shared a little about the Drone course she's teaching. The course consists of students in grades 7-11. She has an EL student, a Special Education student, and all of them could engage and participate in the live class discussion about search and rescue.
- I. Finally, she shared that she earned her Drone Pilot License.

**X. Discussion HR Video Report**

- A. M. Strangarity asked if there were any questions or comments about the HR Video Report.

- B.** Bob Worn shared that a Senior Administration Assistant was hired, but she couldn't start today due to illness. She will start on Thursday.
- C.** A new Special Education teacher who came from Coatesville School District started today. She is very talented and very excited.
- D.** Warehouse support has been filled – it's a temporary position to support the IT Department.
- E.** There have been 4-5 counselor interviews – they will interview with D. Asplen and N. Thomas this week and next. There are 2 very strong candidates.
- F.** Finally, B. Worn shared that the MSA report was approved.

**XI.** Discussion of Guidance Video Report

- A.** M. Strangarity asked if there were any questions or comments about the Guidance Video Report.
- B.** Kris Botes shared that she is 100% caught up on placing students. She credited Cassie Valvo, Senior Guidance Assistant, with helping her accomplish that. She also stated that she is very proud of the team for rising to the challenge they've been presented with.
- C.** M. Strangarity asked how roles will change with an extra counselor.
  - 1.** K. Botes said she's hoping that the counselors will have an opportunity to be more hands-on after students exit Launch Pad to hopefully increase retention.
- D.** M. Strangarity asked if there are other areas of need
  - 1.** D. Asplen shared that they are developing a plan to address the forecast.
- E.** M. Strangarity asked if the retention/churn bonus program should be revisited.
  - 1.** B. Worn shared that it's definitely worth a re-visit.
- F.** N. Thomas thanked K. Botes and C. Valvo for their hard work.

**XII.** Finance/Business Report

- A.** Ryan Schumm provided the monthly Treasurer's Report.
  - 1.** He stated that finances are stable and healthy right now. He also noted that, as of mid-February, 332 districts had their 363 Charter School Tuition Rate Calculations on file. That left 168 districts that did not file theirs, which has caused many complications. For example, Charter Choices received an e-mail today from the Gettysburg Area SD the Charter School Tuition Rate Calculations for the 15-16 school year and the district was asking for a refund. This highlights a lot of the gray areas and deficiencies in the Charter School Law regarding due dates, time lines, and expectations for Charter School Tuition Rate Calculations.
- B.** M. Strangarity called for a motion to approve the written Treasurer's Report.
  - 1.** Motion to approve the written Treasurer's Report by K. Chettle. Seconded by D. Fraatz. Unanimous.

**XIII.** Discussion CEO Video Report

- A.** M. Strangarity asked if there were any questions or comments about the CEO Video Report.
  - 1.** D. Asplen shared that there are 15 cyber charter schools, 11 of which are awaiting their charter renewals. The governor illegally created a commission, which took him 3 years to staff. When he did staff it, he included a board member of PA Virtual. Unfortunately, nothing changed. The aforementioned PA Virtual board member recently left her position on the commission and, ironically, PA Virtual recently received their charter renewal. They were not next in line to receive their charter renewal, but they did receive it. Even so, D. Asplen stated he is not worried about AHCCS's renewal.

**XIV.** Governance/Personnel

- A.** Separations
  - 1.** Jane Moneta, Guidance Counselor
- B.** New Hires
  - 1.** Sherri Gilligan, Sr. Administrative Assistant, \$42,000

2. Shirl Vollmer, Special Education Teacher, \$56,000
  3. Rob Botes, Temporary Warehouse Worker, \$16/hour
- C. M. Strangarity called for a motion to approve the aforementioned separations and new hires at the salaries/rates specified.
1. Motion to approve the aforementioned separations and new hires at the salaries/rates specified by D. Fraatz. Seconded by L. Sweeney. Unanimous.

**XV. Governance**

- A. Ethics Forms
1. Brian Leinhauser reminded the board to complete and return their Ethics forms at next month's meeting. He will bring extra forms to the board meeting as well.
- B. Middle States Board Survey Tool
1. This agenda item will be revisited at next month's meeting.
- C. Dating Policy
1. D. Asplen asked the board to approve a new-to-the-school policy with the most recent amendments.
  2. M. Strangarity called for a motion to approve the Dating Policy.
    - a. Motion to approve the Dating Policy by L. Sweeney. Seconded by R. Maranto. Unanimous.

**XVI. New Business**

- A. M. Strangarity asked if there was any new business, but there was none.

**XVII. Public Comment**

- A. M. Strangarity opened the floor to public comment.
1. Bruce Williamson shared that he has followed up with 2 of last year's graduates. Both are in college and doing well and one credited her cyber school experience with the success she's having in school.
  2. N. Thomas asked B. Williamson to invite them to speak in Career Ready Sessions and encouraged him to ask them to join our Alumni Association.
  3. K. Botes shared that her daughter will be graduating this year. She has been at AHCCS since 8<sup>th</sup> grade and is currently taking college courses at Harrisburg Area Community College.

**XVIII. Adjournment**

- A. M. Strangarity called for a motion to adjourn the public board meeting.
1. Motion to adjourn the public board meeting by D. Fraatz. Seconded by K. Chettle. Unanimous.