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Achievement House Cyber Charter School Board of Trustees
Public Meeting Minutes
December 11, 2018

The Executive Session commenced at 6:00 p.m. and continued until approximately 7:19 p.m.

- I. Notification of Recording
 - A. Marilou Strangarity announced that the Public Session would be recorded on an audio device.
- II. Pledge of Allegiance
- III. Roll Call
 - Mrs. Marilou Strangarity (President)
 - Mr. Jim Bowers (Vice President)
 - Kristin Chettle (Treasurer)
 - Mr. Don Fraatz (Secretary)
 - Lisabeth Sweeney
- IV. Executive Session Statement
 - A. M. Strangarity announced that the Executive Session was held to discuss personnel, financial, and real estate matters.
- V. Approval of Minutes
 - A. M. Strangarity called for a motion to approve the minutes from the October 16, 2018 meeting.
 1. Motion to approve the minutes from the October 16, 2018 meeting by J. Bowers. Seconded by L. Sweeney. Unanimous.
- VI. Discussion of Academic Video Report
 - A. M. Strangarity asked if there were any questions or comments about the Academic Video Report.
 1. J. Bowers commented that performance is trending up based on the RIT scores from the Fall.
 2. M. Strangarity asked about differentiated supervision. Neal Thomas explained that the QUOTES method adapted from the Danielson Model is currently used to evaluate teachers. Level 1 teachers have formal evaluation twice a year and Level 2 teachers have a formal evaluation once a year. He is looking into differentiated supervision which would mean veteran teachers could develop a different way of showing their skills. This could be through a portfolio, improve a certain group of students by demographic or content area, or other projects that are within the Danielson Model, but not a formal evaluation. Teachers would give suggestions or N. Thomas would give list to pick from. A formal evaluation would happen every few years but would have the opportunity to do the projects in between those years. M. Strangarity asked if this would add or take away from N. Thomas's responsibilities. N. Thomas stated that it would take away and put more ownership of improving on the teachers. L. Sweeney supported in the idea and stated that it would give more meaning to the evaluations rather than just checking a box. D. Fraatz asked if there would be peer coaching as an option. N. Thomas agreed that could be an option for the staff.

3. K. Chettle asked about the professional learning communities. N. Thomas stated this is for professional development. Instead of a longer pre-service and lecture-type setting, teachers would form their own groups and areas of focus. They would research and collect data over the year to present at the end. N. Thomas would like to discuss with a small group of teachers first before implementing. Possibly begin implementing during Spring In-service. L. Sweeney suggested to make sure these are organic groups and not forced to make sure it is intrinsically motivated. N. Thomas suggested to have a backup track if they are not organically created. N. Thomas also said that he is looking to move away from the term “professional development” and move toward calling it “professional learning”, to tie the term into choice and picking the topics you want to learn about.

VII. Discussion of SPED Video Report

- A. M. Strangarity asked if there were any questions or comments about the Academic Video Report.
 1. M. Strangarity asked in light of Lisa Russo’s transition to PaTTAN, how are the responsibilities divided. N. Thomas stated that Dr. Jeanmarie Mason is answering the Special Education questions and they are both attending IEP meetings as the LEA. D. Asplen also stated that there is some outside assistance for some of the LEA responsibilities as well. N. Thomas also mentioned that Beth Anne Stork is taking on some of the administrative responsibilities that L. Russo was doing as well.
 2. M. Strangarity also asked about the number of special education students currently attending. N. Thomas stated we are at about 215 and growing. D. Fraatz asked where the new special education students were coming from: Permission to Evaluate (PTE) or Enrollment. Alane Butler stated that there are a few who come in with IEPs. D. Asplen stated that more of the PTE students come from the beginning of the year, not many during the school year.
 3. M. Strangarity asked about the federal changes made through the Every Student Succeeds Act. D. Asplen stated that the funding would change: there would be more for Special Education and the money would be spread through out the year instead of one lump sum at the end. The sub group categories also play a part in which school will be determined as priority schools.
 4. M. Strangarity asked a science teacher, Bruce Williamson, if he has a lot of Special Education students in his classes. He responded saying that he has quite a few special education students in his Chemistry and Physics classes. D. Asplen and Bob Worn described a lesson in grit and resilience that B. Williamson taught during the Future Ready session. It gave a tangible meaning to the word for the students.
 5. D. Asplen showed a clip of the Morning Buzz (morning announcements) to the board.

VIII. Student Spotlight: T.P.

- A. A. Butler shared a story of a student who came to AHCCS with failing grades and was looking for a new start and a different type of education. One of the student’s interest was gaming and he was recruited by a gaming company. He had the opportunity to go to San Jose, California and meet the team members that he works with on a regular basis. This student has been with us for two years now and is a straight A student while managing his work with the gaming company. Parents are thrilled with his progress and glad for this opportunity. AHCCS has given him the opportunity to be flexible with his time and focus on school and work, managing both well.
- B. This spotlight spurred on a discussion about jobs, careers, and opportunities available in video gaming.

- C. N. Thomas and A. Butler explained that James Flick would be initiating a club at AHCCS called E-sports where students (9th-12th) will play on teams against other school districts. There will be two program managers (AHCCS staff) to lead the students and then students will be able to practice, play, strategize, and design. The students will need to be in good academics standing in order to be part of the club or team. A. Butler stated that we have recruited five students for the team.
- D. B. Williamson mentioned it will be a great motivator for our students who have a low GPA to help them improve their grades so that they can compete on the team.
- E. N. Thomas mentioned that students will be required to use their own personal computers to participate as the school computers are not meant to handle the gaming capabilities needed. M. Strangarity also asked about the liability of the federation providing coaches for the students. D. Asplen assured her that this would be reviewed.

IX. Discussion of Enrollment/Marketing Video Report

- A. M. Strangarity asked if there were any questions or comments about the Enrollment/Marketing Video Report.
 - 1. M. Strangarity suggested using the “Buzzy Bucks” to encourage student and parent surveys. A. Butler stated that she has a few demos scheduled and some other apps to review about the points system and school store that she is hoping to implement soon. She has been reaching out to students and teachers to find out what types of items should be available in the school store.
 - 2. M. Strangarity stated that in A. Butler’s report she mentioned that our retention rate is up and M. Strangarity wants to make sure we are reaching out to families to find out what is making the difference and how to continue to increase our retention rate.
 - 3. M. Strangarity suggested promotional videos featuring students and teachers to showcase our school and marketing tools. L. Sweeney suggested promotional videos of snippets of teachers’ lessons, especially science courses. A. Butler suggested possibly doing a lesson of the week on YouTube for others to view and use as marketing as well.
 - 4. B. Williamson also suggested that “Buzzy Bucks” be used to help get Change of Address forms back from students as well.

X. Discussion of HR Video Report

- A. M. Strangarity asked if there were any questions or comments about the HR Video Report.
 - 1. B. Worn has an interview setup with someone who has a Special Education background
 - 2. B. Worn also mentioned using Indeed.com is the primary site for searching for prospective staff.

XI. Discussion of Guidance Video Report

- A. M. Strangarity asked if there were any questions or comments about the Guidance Video Report.
 - 1. M. Strangarity asked if there was need to add another guidance counselor to the team to assist with the number of newly enrolled students. D. Asplen stated that when we hit 650 students, he will begin the process of hiring a new counselor. He is aware of the workload as we enroll more students and with new responsibilities with Chapter 339 and will continue to monitor it.

XII. Finance/Business Report

- A. Ryan Schuum stated that the current year receivables are higher due to larger volume of school district invoicing along with the increase in students and increasing Special Education ratio. Days cash on hand is higher as well, about 90-100 days in the past few months.
- B. M. Strangarity called for a motion to approve the written Treasurer’s Report.
 - 1. Motion to approve the written Treasurer’s Report by L. Sweeney. Seconded by K. Chettle. Unanimous.

XIII. Discussion of CEO Video Report

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

1. Pennsylvania Coalition of Public Charter Schools (PCPCS) now has a legal advisory council instead of a solicitor that could create a conflict of interest. Four solicitors have volunteered 10-20 hours a month for the purpose of providing direction, litigating cases, drafting legislation, writing policies and other necessary tasks. One solicitor will be part of the coalition who will help with the non-profit side and not be a conflict of interest. The coalition now has 100 members participating and is gaining traction and momentum in Harrisburg.
2. M. Strangarity asked about Don's time input to the coalition and he stated he is doing about four times what he was doing, but worth the time that is going into it.

XIV. Personnel

- A. New Hires
 1. Lisa Yvonne Brown, Special Ed Teacher, \$57,000
 2. Stephanie Dyba, Special Ed Teacher, \$47,000
 3. Melissa Zimmerman, Special Ed Teacher \$45,000
- B. M. Strangarity called for a motion to accept the new hires at the salaries presented above.
 1. Motion to accept the new hires at the salaries presented above by K. Chettle. Seconded by J. Bowers. Unanimous.
- C. Separations:
 1. Cheryl Force, Special Ed Teacher
 2. Lisa Russo, Supervisor of Special Ed
 3. Nancy Schwartz, Reading Specialist
 4. Marge Sorber, Special Ed Teacher
- D. M. Strangarity called for a motion to accept the separations above.
 1. Motion to accept the new hires at the salaries presented above by L. Sweeney. Seconded by D. Fraatz. Unanimous.
- E. Financial
 1. IT Bonuses as discussed in Private Session
 - a. D. Asplen stated that this is related to the laptop refresh that happened at the beginning of the school year.
 - b. M. Strangarity called for a motion to accept the IT Bonuses as discussed in Private Session.
 - i. Motion to accept the IT Bonuses as discussed in Private Session by L. Sweeney. Seconded by D. Fraatz. Unanimous.
 2. Shana Harris, \$1000 stipend for SAP (Student Assistance Program Coordinator, paid through the year)
 - a. M. Strangarity called for a motion to accept \$1000 stipend for Shana Harris as the SAP Coordinator.
 - i. Motion to accept \$1000 stipend for Shana Harris as the SAP Coordinator by K. Chettle. Seconded by L. Sweeney. Unanimous.
 3. Beth Anne Stork, SPED Coordinator salary adjustment, 10% increase
 - a. D. Asplen stated this increase is because Beth Anne is taking on some of the responsibilities of the departing Special Education Supervisor, which also requires a higher level of skill.
 - b. M. Strangarity called for a motion to accept 10% increase for SPED Coordinator salary adjustment for Beth Anne Stork.
 - i. Motion to accept 10% increase for SPED Coordinator salary adjustment for Beth Anne Stork by J. Bowers. Seconded by L. Sweeney. Unanimous.
 4. Nicole Renninger, moved to Full-time Art Teacher, \$46,000
 - a. N. Thomas and B. Worn stated that in addition to her art classes, she is helping with STEM and Future Ready sessions as well as teaching the Career Readiness courses.
 - b. M. Strangarity called for a motion to accept the move of Nicole Renninger from part-time to full-time, at the salary presented above.

- i. Motion to accept the move of Nicole Renninger from part-time to full-time, at the salary presented above by K. Chettle. Seconded by J. Bowers. Unanimous.
- 5. Don Asplen's Contract Renewal
 - a. M. Strangarity called for a motion to accept Don's revised and reviewed contract, retroactive to July 1, 2018.
 - i. Motion to accept Don's revised and reviewed contract, retroactive to July 1, 2018 by L. Sweeney. Seconded by J. Bowers. Unanimous.
- 6. Don Asplen Bonus
 - a. M. Strangarity stated that in order to compensate Don for this patience in working out the contract as well as the excellent job he has done in the improvements that have been made at the school, the board will give him a bonus with a deferral option.
 - b. M. Strangarity called for a motion to accept Don's bonus with a deferral option.
 - i. Motion to accept Don's bonus with a deferral option by L. Sweeney. Seconded by K. Chettle. Unanimous.

XV. Governance

- A. None at this time.

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.B. Williamson commented that he is glad to hear that Melissa Miller will continue to be teaching at AHCCS.
 - 2.B. Williamson commented that the atmosphere of staff being able to talk to anyone in the building for help or assistance is a gem of a quality and that should be fostered as much as possible.
 - 3.B. Williamson asked about the lawsuit Don mentioned in a staff meeting previously. D. Asplen summarized the result of the lawsuit was the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) removing themselves from the process of charter schools getting paid by the school districts for students attending their schools. Charter Choices suggested the PDE host a webinar on the proper way to be paid and they did with many schools in attendance.
 - 4.A. Butler shared that Brittanie Strachko and Jennifer Vargas utilized funds from the Sunshine Fund to buy personal items for some of our homeless students. M. Strangarity asked about how many students and A. Butler believed it was about three. D. Asplen also mentioned that B. Strachko has done a coat drive for our students for about three year now, where staff will donate coats and give them to our students. She has about 50-75 coats given out to students and families
 - 5. Erinn Bean also mentioned that the Young Parent Alliance group, which B. Strachko and S. Harris is also involved, will be meeting tomorrow to discuss the holidays with the young student parents and how to handle stress, as well as creating salt dough ornaments with them. This is a fun activity for the students to do something with their families and have an inexpensive memento for the holidays. 25 boxes with ingredients and supplies were shipped to the students to make sure they had what they needed.
 - 6.D. Asplen commented that these activities are from the 12-month staff and he believes this contributes to the
 - 7.B. Worn stated that the Sunshine Fund is supported by staff contributions and is to help support students and staff in various ways.
 - 8.B. Williamson stated that there are so many of our students like the T. P. from the Student Spotlight that are not mentioned because they take the small steps towards success but make a huge difference for them. D. Asplen commented that he has been encouraging our staff to encourage our students with the following statement to help them with small goals to reach the big ones: "You are enough. You are so enough, it is unbelievable how enough you are."

9.B. Williamson commented that he is having a parent come into the Future Ready session to discuss an apprenticeship program with the students. He wants to make sure that our students are aware of the other opportunities that are out there.

10. M. Strangarity thanked all the staff from the bottom of her heart for the care and opportunity they are providing our students, as she can personally attest to the generosity of others. Our staff and teachers are providing academical and emotional support to our students that they may not see anywhere else, and she hopes that this will instill confidence in our students to for their future endeavors.

11. D. Asplen attested to the environment of caring that wraps this school, including the Principal and Board President.

XVIII. Adjournment

A. M. Strangarity called for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

i. Motion adjourn by K. Chettle. Seconded by D. Fraatz. Unanimous.

B. Adjournment of the public board meeting at 8:46 pm.