

# **A+ Children's Academy Community School**

## **Board Minutes**

### **Governing Board Meeting**

**October 12, 2020**

The regular meeting of the Governing Board of the A+ Children's Academy Community School was held on Monday, October 12, 2020. The meeting was called to order at 5:41 p.m. by Board President and Meeting Chairperson, Mrs. Sherry Kuehnle.

**The following Board Members responded to the roll call and were in attendance:**

Mrs. Sherry Kuehnle, Mrs. Ana Gantz, Mr. Duane Miller, Ms. Christina Pagan and Mr. John Storts

**Also in Attendance:**

Mrs. Cathy Blankenship, Superintendent, Mrs. Gwen Dunn, Assistant Treasurer, and Ms. Lori Wood, Ohio Department of Education Representative, Ms. Sharice Martin, Ohio Department of Education Representative (by phone).

**I. Roll Call**

Five members of the board responded to roll call.

**II. Approval of Agenda**

The agenda of the board meeting was presented and reviewed by the board members. Mrs. Kuehnle requested the addition of the Finance Committee Report after Public Participation to the Agenda. Mr. Gantz motioned to approve the agenda with the addition. Mr. Miller seconded the motion. With no discussion, the motion was voted by roll call and carried 5-0.

**III. Approval of the Regular Minutes of the September 14, 2020, Governing Board Meeting**

The minutes from the Monday, September 14, 2020, board meeting was presented and reviewed by the board members. Mr. Storts motioned to accept the minutes. Mrs. Gantz seconded the motion. With no discussion, the motion was voted by roll call and carried 5-0.

**IV. Public Comments/Participation**

No members of the public were in attendance.

**V. Finance Committee Report**

Mrs. Kuehnle reported the Finance Committee met with the Treasurer who went over his financial report for the last month and year to date. She noted he was asked if the report had anything out of the ordinary the board should pay attention to, and he answered no. She explained he reviewed the Five-Year Forecast and that he prepared it conservatively. She noted he added 2% increases in staffing and the retention bonuses were included as they are paid with Comprehensive Continuous Improvement funds. Mrs. Kuehnle stated the Treasurer recommended we accept the Five-Year Forecast, that does include increases in FTEs, and the Budget. She reminded the Board members that the Forecast is a fluid document and will be reviewed throughout the year and updated in May. Mr. Storts added that the Forecast also projects the school will continue to have 30-day cash reserves.

Mr. Storts also noted that the United Healthcare premiums were expected to be reduced in January 2021 and the purchase order covers six employees, up from five in the previous school year.

Mr. Miller motioned to accept the Finance Committee recommendations and approve Items Q., R. and S. of the Consent Agenda including the two blanket purchase orders. Mrs. Gantz seconded the motion. She also asked what the Toshiba purchase order was for. Mrs. Blankenship explained that it was for the lease of the Toshiba copiers which replaced the ComDoc copiers that were removed when they were informed of the termination of the lease. Mrs. Dunn also added that the school received a buyout payment from Toshiba in FY2020 but would continue making lease payments to both Toshiba and ComDoc in the current fiscal year. With no further discussion, the motion was voted by roll call and carried 5-0.

**VI. Treasurer's Report**

- A. Mrs. Dunn reported the student population for October is 105.90, reduced from the June through September FTE total of 116.84. She further noted the October foundation payment of \$70,321.55 decreased from the September payment of \$81,259.76 and the first of two Student Wellness and Success Funding payments of \$20,985.13 would be received in October.
- B. The Assistant Treasurer stated that the firm of Milhuff Stang is in the process of preparing the financial statements for FY2020 and anticipates the financial statements will be completed by the October 31 deadline to submit to the State of Ohio.
- C. Mrs. Dunn reported she participated in the pre-audit conference as required by our sponsor with the auditor from the firm of James G. Zupka, CPA, Inc. and Rebecca Vogler, Finance Administrator of the Office of School Sponsorship October 7. Even with the possibility of additional testing due to COVID-19, she explained the firm does not anticipate any issues completing the audit by the December 31 deadline. Mrs. Dunn also reported to date all information requested of the school has been provided and are now waiting on the completion of the financial statements.

Ms. Pagan motioned to accept the Treasurer's Report, and Mr. Storts seconded the motion. With no questions, the motion was voted by roll call and carried 5-0.

**VII. Superintendent's Report**

- A. Current Enrollment
  - K- 10
  - 1-28
  - 2-22
  - 3-19
  - 4-15
  - 5-15
  - Total- 109Mrs. Blankenship reported that an additional kindergartener enrolled today increased the total to 110.
- B. Suspensions or Expulsions – Mrs. Blankenship reported no suspensions or expulsions in September.
- C. Residency verification – Mrs. Blankenship explained that the Board members had the verification information in their packets. She reported two new students were enrolled in

September and what school districts the students lived had been updated. She further noted four disputes had been closed, five students were selected randomly for review and one parent had voluntarily updated their residence information.

- D. All Star Breakfast Challenge – Mrs. Blankenship reported that the school had been recognized at the silver level.
- E. Rebranding – Mrs. Blankenship explained that the school began in 2012 focusing on the integrated arts, but the logo created at the time does not recognize A+ Children’s Academy as a school and the school often is associated with Children’s Academy. The school, she further noted, does not have a mascot or something that brings the school together. She recommended some rebranding, giving the school a mascot that could be added to a banner for marketing purposes. With Board approval, the goal, she explained would be for the rebranding of A+ Children’s Academy so that it looked and sounded more like a school. Mrs. Gantz asked how would changing the name affect government filings. Ms. Wood stated that the biggest cost of rebranding is financial, printing new letterhead, envelopes, etc. Mrs. Blankenship explained that the school does not have letterhead stationery so does not expect funds to be expended for the rebranding, but also the school would not be changing its name and would still be known as A+ Children’s Academy. Mr. Miller asked if the students wore uniforms in which Mrs. Blankenship answered yes. Mr. Miller further suggested with a new logo, clothing would help develop community within the school. Mrs. Blankenship stated items with the logo could be offered in a school store. Mrs. Kuehnle asked Mrs. Blankenship to call Dr. Sams, the founder of the school, to let him know we won’t be changing the name but would be rebranding items so that he understands the changes. Mrs. Kuehnle also stated she was glad the staff was taking ownership of the rebranding. Mrs. Blankenship added she would be bringing rebranding options to the next Board meeting.
- F. Beginning of Year Testing and Reading Improvement and Monitoring Plans – Mrs. Blankenship reported teachers are creating plans and contacting parents by phone. She explained that all students were tested by the deadline of September 30. Last week, she noted, during the teachers’ professional development time, they brought all of their data and began creating focus groups for students identified to be at the same skill level. The Superintendent also stated the teachers discussed how to address students at different skill levels as part of the full class. In addition, she reported teachers set goals for all their students in that program and will measure their progress throughout the school year. Mrs. Blankenship explained the 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade reading test was still scheduled and that the teacher has contacted all families to inform them that test times are available twice a day over a two-week period. She noted that the parents can choose to have the students take both parts at the same time, however, special education student would be taking the two parts of the examination over 2 days. Mr. Miller asked if the tests would be taken by pencil and paper and Mrs. Blankenship confirmed they would. Mrs. Kuehnle asked if the Americorps person had started. Mrs. Blankenship explained that the Americorps administrator had been concerned about the person that they identified to work with the school and felt she did not have the technology skills to meet the school’s need. She added that Americorps was still looking for someone who could work with our students.
- G. First Quarter and Plans for the Second Quarter – Mrs. Blankenship reported that the students are doing what the teachers are asking them to do, attending sessions, and participating. The teachers, she noted, are struggling to get a few students engaged, and have requested the family come to school to discuss the matter. Mrs. Kuehnle asked which grades the struggling students were in, and Mrs. Blankenship replied third and fourth. Mrs.

- Blankenship reported she was quite impressed with the results the teachers were receiving from the students compared to what they were getting in March. It seems more students are engaged now. She explained the school would begin the hybrid model of learning November 2 with students divided into groups A and B and attending school two days a week and continuing remote learning three days a week. She added that parents had been asked by survey if they were comfortable sending their children to school, and the response from parents was to please bring our students back. One parent, she reported, felt the school was ruining his career by not fully opening five days a week. Mrs. Blankenship did also state that some kids will continue working completely remote. The Superintendent explained a committee including parents was formed to review what a day will look like to maintain the safety of kids noting that the parents' input would provide another perspective as they prepare to open. In addition, Mrs. Blankenship reported a video was also being prepared for parents. Mrs. Gantz asked if she could attend the committee meeting to review the reopening plan, and Mrs. Blankenship agreed to provide her the details.
- H. Assets Policy and Discuss Inventory Disposal List – Mrs. Blankenship reported many old computers need to be disposed of because they no longer work, and a list was provided to the Board members. Mrs. Dunn explained that the equipment would need to be identified as to when it was purchased so that the cost of the equipment could be removed from Fixed Assets in our Financial Statements. She reported that an inventory had been taken by David Weislogel several years ago and would be useful in identifying the equipment which would to be disposed. Ms. Wood stated the school must have a policy as to how equipment is removed from inventory before the administration moves forward with disposals. The policy and list were removed as Item A. of the Consent Agenda.
  - I. 2019-2020 Annual Report – Mrs. Blankenship pointed out the inclusion of the Annual Report in the Board member packets. She noted that information provided includes teaching staff's educational background, enrollment, attendance, demographics and financial data. In addition, she reported the mission and vision had not changed but has been updated to reflect the academic goals and the assessments utilized. She pointed out that the school follows the Ohio Learning Standards and uses reading and math blocks. Mrs. Blankenship added that teachers will be providing her plans as to when they will be teaching and testing those standards. She reported that the teachers have received the information, and she is currently meeting with them as to how to reach these goals.
  - J. School Comprehensive Plan – Mrs. Blankenship explained that the plan was much the same as previously provided and included enrollment projections, curriculum mapping, and the internal financial controls. In addition, she added that the parent advisory committee would once again be meeting when the school has reopened with more activity.
  - K. Dispute Resolution Process – Ms. Wood reported that the school's process was okay right now and, as long as a process is in place, no discussion was necessary.
  - L. Health and Safety Policies – Mrs. Blankenship explained that because the Board approved the policies two years ago, she was presenting these policies for Board review only, and no changes were requested.
    - a. Hand Washing
    - b. Personal Safety
    - c. Equipment Safety
    - d. Student Medical Emergencies
    - e. Communicable Diseases
    - f. Direct-Contact Communicable Diseases
    - g. Bodily Fluid Exposure Control

- h. Head Lice
- i. Compliance with Federal and State Safety Programs
- j. Chemical Hazard Communication Program
- k. Integrated Pest Management
- l. OSHA Exposure Control Plan
- m. Asbestos Hazards
- n. Chemical Hygiene
- o. Hazard Review and Inspection

**VIII. Consent Agenda**

- A. Removed from consideration at this time.
- B. Be it Resolved that the Board approves the Annual Report.
- C. Be it Resolved that the Board approves the Comprehensive Plan.
- D. Be it Resolved that the Board approves the Hand Washing Policy.
- E. Be it Resolved that the Board approves the Personal Safety Policy.
- F. Be it Resolved that the Board approves the Equipment Safety Policy.
- G. Be it Resolved that the Board approves the Student Medical Emergencies Policy.
- H. Be it Resolved that the Board approves the Communicable Diseases Policy.
- I. Be it Resolved that the Board approves the Bodily Fluid Exposure Control Policy.
- J. Be it Resolved that the Board approves the Head Lice Policy.
- K. Be it Resolved that the Board approves Compliance with Federal and State Safety Programs.
- L. Be it Resolved that the Board approves the Chemical Hazard Communication Program.
- M. Be it Resolved that the Board approves the Integrated Pest Management Policy.
- N. Be it Resolved that the Board approves the OSHA Exposure Control Plan.
- O. Be it Resolved that the Board approves the Asbestos Hazards Policy.
- P. Be it Resolved that the Board approves the Hazard Review and Inspection Policy.
- Q. Be it Resolved that the Board approves the Toshiba Purchase Order (#1482) for \$5,806.20.
- R. Be it Resolved that the Board approves the United Healthcare Purchase Order (#1483) for \$12,830.40.
- S. Be it Resolved that the Board approves the 2020-2021 Budget and Five-Year Forecast.

Action by the Governing Board in "Adoption of the Consent Agenda" at this point of the agenda means all items above constitute the Consent Agenda and are adopted by one single motion unless a member of the Board or the Superintendent requests that such items be removed from the Consent Agenda and are voted upon separately or are tabled.

Mr. Miller motioned to approve Items B. through P. of the Consent Agenda. Mrs. Gantz seconded the motion. With no discussion, the motion was amended to removed Item A, voted by roll call, and carried 5-0.

**IX. ODE Representative Presentation**

- A. Sharice Martin - Ms. Wood introduced Ms. Martin who is part of the Office of School Sponsorship staff and will be assisting with compliance. She added that she brings valuable experience to the table when working with schools.

- B. Columbus Public Elementary Schools Reopening and Transportation - Ms. Wood noted Columbus elementary schools are now moving the start date for reopening to November 2. She informed the Board that she had let the Superintendent know if the school had any issues with transportation that she should reach out to her. Columbus Public School has a large transportation department and will be working to meet the needs of the community schools.
- C. Earlier Reopening Date - Ms. Wood asked the Board to consider if there was any benefit to reopening earlier than November 2.
- D. Special Education Reporting - Ms. Wood informed the Board that the special education report is due this week as well as the expenditure report. She reported that the Superintendent had sent the STAR report to her and noted that there was a lot of work to do. However, she expressed her confidence in the school's administration and the way Mrs. Blankenship is working with the teachers, the resources available and with parents.
- E. Vision and Hearing Screenings – Ms. Wood made the Board aware that the Ohio Department of Education requires vision and hearing screenings to be done by end of October. The Health Department, she explained, has reported that the screenings do not have to be done until January. ODE, she noted, is in the process of determining when they must be completed. In addition, Ms. Wood added that no vendors are currently coming into the schools to provide screenings.
- F. Attendance Assessment - Ms. Wood explained that student attendance is currently be determined by assignment as long as the schools are open for in-school learning. She further explained that students are marked present when they choose to turn in assignments and not when or how long you spend completing the assignments. She reported two different forms of attendance assessment will be needed when schools are operating on a hybrid school. Ms. Wood said attendance assessment is tricky because the school does not want to disenroll any student. Mrs. Kuehnle asked if disenrollment was just for Community schools, and Ms. Wood responded yes. Mr. Miller asked whether some students are receiving a paper packet each day and if they turn the packets in at the end of the week, are considered present for each packet. Mrs. Blankenship responded yes. Mr. Miller further recommended making any deals with the parents and student to ensure the work is turned in. Ms. Wood complimented Mrs. Blankenship on her creativity for encouraging the students to turn in their work.
- G. Ms. Wood strongly encouraged the school's teachers to use TIDE (Test Information Distribution Engine) This practice testing, she explained would give the teachers a snap shot of how kids are performing then they can refer to the blue print to determine on what they need to focus. Everything the educators need to teach to these standards, she noted, is online. She reminded the Board there are no waivers for testing. Mrs. Blankenship reminded the Board that the school does not have to retain students just because they did not pass the tests. Ms. Wood asked if the school would want to advance them if they do not pass. Without any further questions, Ms. Wood added that the Board should keep in mind all variables when making decisions about reopening the school.

**X. Additional Discussion**

Mrs. Kuehnle asked Mrs. Blankenship if she wanted to further discuss reopening? Ms. Wood reported said some community schools are opening before the November 2 date and taking advantage of increased enrollment. She stated that it was not necessarily

something this school may want to consider. Mr. Miller stated the school should be very careful because there are so many implications for both the students and teachers when parents want their children to go back to school. But, he questioned, is returning to school and risking the contraction of COVID-19 and even the possibility of death from the virus complications worth one life being lost. Mrs. Blankenship reported she had sent a teacher and aide home who may have been exposed to get tested just to be safe, but both tested negative. She stated that there were a lot of implications because so many are affected, and no guarantee can be given that students will not get sick. Mrs. Kuehnle suggested continuing with the original plan.

**XI. Next Board Meeting Monday, November 9, 2020 at 5:30 p.m.**

**XII. Adjournment**

Mrs. Gantz motioned to adjourn the meeting, and Ms. Pagan seconded the motion. With no discussion, the motion was voted by roll call and carried 5-0.

Adjournment at 6:47 p.m.