

December 9 Board of Trustees Meeting

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SUMMARY KEYWORDS


students, meeting, board, school, people, campus, year, west bank, icp, motion, employees, approve, adjourn, dixon, picnic table, family, excited, week, moving, minutes


SPEAKERS


Melanie Tennyson, Larissa Muetzel, Katie Carter, Susan Chapman, Jade Brown-Russell, All Board Members, Sarah Murphy, Yelena McCloskey, Unknown, Chad Rice, Grant Ligon, Howard Rodgers IV

 00:00

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 **Jade Brown-Russell** 21:33
Are we ready.

 21:35
All right.

 **Jade Brown-Russell** 21:38
Just a second.

- G** Grant Ligon 21:39
Yeah. All right, so this is the board meeting of the internet. December 9 board meeting. I'll call them eating the meeting to order. To start with, we'll have a recording of the attendance by Jade. Make sure everybody's here
- J** Jade Brown-Russell 21:59
don't have the full roll, but I can call roll for those that I see present. I see Larissa, I see Chad. I recorded as well. Howard, Grant and Lena. Did I miss anyone, any other board members. Okay, great. Thank you. Okay. We have a quorum.
- G** Grant Ligon 22:28
Very good, thank you very much So first of all we need to suspend the agenda to add an item to the action items, this item of be which is uh approving minutes of previous board and committee meetings. Do I have a motion to suspend the agenda.
- J** Jade Brown-Russell 22:47
So moved. And second, one emotion.
- H** Howard Rodgers IV 22:53
Oh, wait,
- M** Melanie Tennyson 22:55
Amending
- H** Howard Rodgers IV 22:56
Amending
- J** Jade Brown-Russell 22:58
Yeah. I'll restate it, Grant, I'd like to make a motion to amend the agenda. To add as an action item approval of the board minutes for prior meetings.

L Larissa Muetzel 23:15
Second

G Grant Ligon 23:17
We have a second.

M Melanie Tennyson 23:24
Larissa seconded.

G Grant Ligon 23:29
Okay, we're good so we'll add that item, II, so we'll go back to the agenda which is the action item A, which is a pupil progression plan.

J Jade Brown-Russell 23:38
Wait. Hey, hey grant, I think we just amended. I'm sorry. We just approved to amend the agenda. I'd now like to make a motion to adopt the minutes so moved from the prior meetings.

G Grant Ligon 23:54
Okay, good. So we have a motion we have a second.

C Chad Rice 23:56
Second.

G Grant Ligon 23:59
Very good. So that's an action item so we'll have a more comment on the approval of the minutes. Any public comment?

M Melanie Tennyson 24:09
We need to state or list the minutes that we're approving.



Grant Ligon 24:15

Very good. Let me pull it up. Okay, the Minutes we're proving or the June 27 board retreat. These are all dated 2020, the August 18 Finance Committee. The August 18 Strategic Planning Committee. The September 17 finance committee and strategic planning Planning Committee. The September 23 board meeting, the October 22 finance committee meeting, and the December 3 finance committee meeting. Those are all that are in the action item motion. Do I have a uh.. well. Do we have a motion and a second? we do. public comment? Any board comment before the public comment? Okay, members voting aye to accept the minutes of the prior meetings. Members voting aye.



All Board Members 25:25

Aye. Aye. Aye..



Grant Ligon 25:27

All right. members voting Nay? the minutes are approved, we're on to the action item A, which is a pupil progression plan. Do you want to explain that Mel or should we just walk through the motion is everybody comfortable that they've read it, we're ready to go. Is there any board comment we wish to make on or any questions.




Melanie Tennyson 25:48

We talked about it at the last board meeting. And what month were in December and November, and then we talked about it strategic planning. This past week. And just in case. We have new guests this evening. There was no leep testing at the end of last year, or in the spring of 2020, so the people progression template for all Louisiana Public Schools has been revised by the Department of Education to remove those requirements from the official document that we use. It is where we're approving adjustments to their language, not to any of the school's language the school has not revised our plan our requirements our promotional requirements are not tied to lead testing. So, it is what we're approving is the Department of Education's changes that we must include in our document,




Grant Ligon 27:02


Pretty clear to me. Um, let's let's go ahead and have a motion to approve that


 Larissa Muetzel 27:09
I will make a motion.


 Grant Ligon 27:12
And we have a second.


 27:16


 Yelena McCloskey 27:16
I'll second.

 Grant Ligon 27:17
we good any board comment on the matter. Any public comment on the matter, board members voting aye.

 All Board Members 27:29
Aye. Aye.

 Grant Ligon 27:31
Aye, board members voting nay. Okay, I action item A passes. Now A and B, this is basically the same thing they're basically aligning the school with the guidelines, other from DoE or, or the LDH. So the B is the proposed amendment COVID-19 policy regarding the group sizes. We had this discussion for last meeting, it was about. In framing that we're going to align with the public school policy. So Do I have a motion to approve that amendment.

 Chad Rice 28:07
I make a motion.

 Grant Ligon 28:09
The Second.

J Jade Brown-Russell 28:13
Second.

G Grant Ligon 28:14
Okay. Do I have any board comments or questions. Any public comment or questions, board members voting aye.

A All Board Members 28:24
Aye.

G Grant Ligon 28:25
Aye, board members voting nay. The be action item passes, we're on to action item C which is the proposed amendment to COVID-19 policy regarding duration of quarantine for asymptomatic contacts. So as new guidelines are put up at the CDC, this is us aligning our, our policies with that. Everybody's had a chance to review it. Do I have a motion to approve this item.

L Larissa Muetzel 28:58
I will make, I make a motion to approve.

G Grant Ligon 29:00
Yes.

Y Yelena McCloskey 29:02
I'll second.

G Grant Ligon 29:03
Thank you. Any board comments, questions. Any public comment or questions, board members voting aye.

A All Board Members 29:15

Aye. Aye,

- G** Grant Ligon 29:17
board members voting nay. That will pass though so item action item see what pass.
Thank you. We have done the minutes we're on to action item D which is for Howard on the nomination of the board, new board member. Howard?
- H** Howard Rodgers IV 29:35
Board moves quick. Today I stand as the Governance Committee to recognize that we want to nominate. Miss Sarah, to the Board she has successfully went through the vetting process and I think that she will be a good member for the board. So if he will all would, please nominate, er, second my nomination for Sarah so that we can vote our onto the board. So I have a second.
- C** Chad Rice 30:08
I'll second. The nomination.
- G** Grant Ligon 30:10
Good. So, any board coming on the nomination. Any public comment on the nomination, board members voting aye.
- A** All Board Members 30:21
Aye. Aye.
- G** Grant Ligon 30:22
Aye, board members voting nay nomination carries. Welcome to the board Sarah. Very good. Thanks for coming aboard. It's a good board you're gonna enjoy it.
- S** Sarah Murphy 30:34
Happy to be here. Thank you so much.



Grant Ligon 30:37

Thank you. And with that, we'll move on to a school report, so I'll turn it over to Melanie.



Melanie Tennyson 30:44

And before I forget the report I just want to say that it's kind of exciting tonight that we have a new software application that is closed captioning the meeting for those people who are hearing impaired and is also creating a transcript so that we have further expanded our ability to connect with a greater sector of our population and Thank you Susan for for doing that. That makes me very happy to know that we have created more even more access to our meetings. Before I get started.



Jade Brown-Russell 31:32

It makes me happy, too.



Melanie Tennyson 31:34

I thought that might, Jade. (laughter) So before I get started with the Head of School report I just want to again acknowledge what a great job that ISL staff has done this school year. They are remarkable people who work exceptionally hard. They've been pivoting, you know every other week between COVID and hurricanes and whatever else has come our way. I admire them greatly and couldn't do my job without them. Andrew gave a shout out to the nurses at the strategic planning meeting and I want to do that again. I spent yesterday afternoon with Hope Jones on the West Bank, and she and Kristin Butler and Kim Carbo are just warriors. You know they're right out there in front they're really brave, remarkable women. I also want to recognize Lena McCloskey when our super Treasurer board treasurer for the last few years Lena thank you so much for all that you have done to support. Emily and me and the school. We have really enjoyed working with you and we're really gonna miss you a lot and I hope that next year. When COVID is gone, and the Wednesdays in the park start up again that you're down there.



Yelena McCloskey 33:13

Fingers crossed they happen. Thank you so much, Melanie It has been a pleasure working with you all. I'll miss y'all a ton but I'm just one phone call away if you ever need anything I really hope well we get each other soon. Great. Thank you. Thank you.

M

Melanie Tennyson 33:30

So we have a 13 106 students enrolled as of today 353 at Dixon 644 uptown and 309 on the West Bank. As an aside, I think I mentioned in a previous meeting that people aren't seem to be moving out of moving out of town. This year I'm sure it's to look for work or moving to moving back in with family or other COVID related instances, but something that we're encountering is that they are some of our families were ICP families, and they're getting services out of state so we're wrangling with with that that's um, it hasn't become a problem yet. I think it's a testament to the school and that families want to continue and stay with us but it's something that we're starting to see, and having to work through our score, why benchmark testing continues to reflect the national trends. We're having some classes that are lagging behind others a little bit ahead. Overall, we're slightly behind where we were last year, which is to be expected. But there are a few students, a handful that were having a hard time, just tracking them and getting them to log in. We have, we're sending social workers to do home visits we're calling all the time, we've got them at the truancy office. It's been hard to find them and they're the kids, I think all over the country that educators are worried about, you know, all schools in our city the state the country. But we're doing our best to get them, get them back on track. We have made some calendar adjustments, this school year in order to make up instructional time that we lost we brought back some days before the Thanksgiving break and we're also going to bring students back either into the building or virtually before the week of Mardi Gras, and that would be the 11th and the 12th of February, the 11th was a half day the 12th with a was a full day. We generally are not in school. Those days because of where our campuses are located the West Bank and uptown in particular in location to Mardi Gras world over there playing Kern. But since we won't have rights. This year we will have access to the school and we're going to have the kids back in the seats, we will have the week of Mardi Gras off it's important tradition and holiday here in the city of New Orleans culturally, and then Thursday and Friday. We had scheduled professional development days with our folks from routes connected and we want to keep those days in the calendar for teachers so we'll bring students back for an extra day and a half of instruction. We've worked on the report on December 8. We had two students and two employees identified as positive, I believe, on the COVID dashboard today, it is now two employees and three students Andrew Am I correct Do we have Do we have one more today. I could get four more today, but annual and screen hearing screenings, have been conducted at all of our campuses. We were able to hire a sick special education teacher this week they are bilingual Spanish, English, which is really exciting for us we've had a challenge in the past. Being able to find special education teachers who were able to teach in the target language so that's a real trial, and we're excited about that. They're in the academics communication are and development, our pro bono grant, that's the foundation has advanced to the second round. We asked again for more shade. This year, last year, they funded. The installation of a big shaded area on the Dixon campus, and

we've asked to do the same. And we'll place that, either at the West Bank, or the Uptown campus we have not determined the location. Yet, we are hopeful that that goes through. We had a virtual campus tour our first open house event this week Facebook Live. It went really well. We're excited about that. Operations ISIL currently employs 208 people we have 63 at Dixon 81 uptime 49 in the West Bank and 15 at the CMO, we have four employees currently out on FMLA, And we're completing our annual end of the year, reporting for employees for their tax purposes. They're already getting excited and asked me about When are they going to get those w twos. They're 1099 so they're 1095 Cs, two pieces of IT equipment were lost due to water damage from Hurricane zeta and an awning metal awning on the back of the West Bank campus was twisted up a little bit. But we really didn't have any significant damages to any of our facilities, during the hurricane which is great. We have had some plumbing issues at Dixon we really old ceramic pipes are always something that we are working on over there. And we've reached out to city officials, Councilman Joe Russo, to talk about a giant sinkhole that has appeared at the beginning of the school year. Miss Brenda and I both were in touch. DEP Mehta Public Works came out and they were working on all the streets in that neighborhood, it was really exciting they patch that hole. And in the last couple of weeks. There's just like a giant four foot hole Prater has appeared in the middle of that street, and we're all trying to get them out there so if anyone has connections with the DP W. Please give them a call and let them know that there's a hazard there at marks Street.

H

Howard Rodgers IV 41:07

Melanie in Sorry to interrupt you, but is it, is it as bad as what it was, what the leak that was on on campus, and how that transcended over across the street. Well, it took forever to get fixed.

M

Melanie Tennyson 41:22

Yeah, Howard, this is, this is... a big fat hole.. one of the worst I've seen. Like, you know, I've seen them here and there around the city but this ranks right up there with one of the worst probably three or four feet deep with running water and it's all eroding away underneath and, like, for a couple of years it was just. Sorry everyone to go on it was like maybe 12 or 18 inches but then they repaired it and now it's real. It's, it's bad, you know we're, we're worried we've got families and buses and. And it just concerns us. A shout out to Andre McCullough, our facilities manager, he built 11 picnic table, beautiful picnic tables recently we did a little feature on him for our faculty and our families, when the city was at a picnic tables he just stepped up and create his own little picnic table building factory, and now all of our kids and employees can eat and meet outside, which has been really great. And everybody received a turkey or a pumpkin at Thanksgiving. This year, we gave

away 100 and or those who requested them we get 132 turkeys and 12 pumpkins. And we will continue the tradition of the organization giving each of the employees, a gift card or Rouses's gift card for the winter holidays coming up and head of schools office semester to instructional model for middle school will change we're really excited that the middle schoolers are going to come back into the building. In January, they've come back for seven weeks on Wednesdays. We've heard a lot from parents about the social and emotional needs of that particular group of students more than maybe others if you know about middle schoolers you know that that their social interactions are the most important thing in their world developmentally, and they're feeling really isolated so we're excited that, for those who are able to come into the building that they'll be able to interact with their peers. We sent out the parent choice ICP withdrawal enrollment form earlier today. We were trying to balance. Giving parents as much time and information related to what was happening with the virus, and the need to plan and get and make appropriate shifts for next semester. There we had quite a few people respond right away today, and we expect those numbers to keep rising. The one app lottery through enroll Nola this year for the first time in a couple of years our priorities have changed. For years, our first one of our first priorities was economically disadvantaged students, and they have removed that from our formulas so the priority for our library. Now, we'll be students with IEP s and that's up to a percentage determined by the Department of Education and that's statewide the average is 12. Last year, we received 16%, and we're shooting for a 9% nine minimum of 9% average at our school siblings of current ESL students have the next priority, then transfer between campuses and then all other applicants who are applying to iisl new schools Baton Rouge met with us. A couple of weeks ago, around November. 30, maybe, maybe the week before, and there's interest in having a type two iisl in Baton Rouge moving forward with the conversation, we'll have a feasibility study made up of members of the iisl leadership team, and Board of Trustee members will put up a call for volunteers there. The study should run from maybe mid January through mid March, and by that time we'll be able to determine if we have the combat capacity, both in terms of human capital financial capital, and the strength of will, or to pursue that further I think. I think it'll be a really good exercise to have those conversations facilitated with by an outside professional. Just in terms of our administrative team and where we are and where we're going and to have the board involved in, in those conversations, as well. Whether we go to Baton Rouge, or not. I'm looking forward to that exercise. School Improvement Plan meeting, we are required, annually to have a meeting that's open to the public, where we talk about how we use our federal dollars title 1, 2, 4, 3, and IDEA dollars to support our student achievement and the needs of our economically disadvantaged yellow students, students who are enrolled in our school and allow us to qualify for those dollars. And we have a template for a very specific plan that directly ties the activities that we're doing to the students and shows how we will be held accountable, or those done that, that document, and supporting documentation every

year is sent to the Department of Ed. for an audit. This year thanks to zoom or Google meet we were able to have over 30 people attend that meeting so that's another I think one of these, the kind of silver linings to this bleak period is that the technology once again is allowing for more people to attend meetings. Then, in previous years, a family engagement, have come up during that meeting and are surfacing again. And out of that meeting after that meeting I talked to the people in the admin team, and in particular one of our employees who is multilingual perfectly bilingual English and Spanish she speaks French and sits outside of the campuses and she is going to chair, a family engagement committee and conversations around what does family engagement, look like at iisl is do we want a traditional parent organization or do we want other, some other types of organizations to fill that need what, what does, what does that look like in 2020 2021, in a diverse by design school that wants to celebrate all of our cultural and other differences. And I'm excited that lithia has volunteered to be that person to facilitate that committee and she will bring back that information to the leadership team and hopefully we'll be able to find some interesting ways to move that forward. We're also working to create a student and family directory that came out of last year's coffee and croissant meetings. It's taken us a little bit longer than we would have liked due to time to get figure out a way to manage people's desires for privacy to be included or not, we're going to publish it like an old fashioned phone book, and we're hoping to have that out to families by the time we returned from winter break and ready to share with families by the end of January, and something I just remembered as I was giving their report that's not on here is that within the last three weeks, all of the French immersion schools in the city collaborated with the French council it. They created video celebrating all the different schools that they're using for promotion of French immersion and then there was a panel discussion of the various school leaders talking about emerging education that they put out there in the public eye, as well. It was really nice we, we often see one another in groups of two or three but not all five of us have not been all together at one time, just to, like, celebrate that French immersion and our schools and the work we do together. And it was much better than I think any of us imagined when, when we went, and that's it.

G

Grant Ligon 52:26

Very good school report. Next on the agenda is the public comment section. Susan Do you have some people in the queue you want to give some guidelines to how we do it.

S

Susan Chapman 52:39

The best way for people is if they want to make a comment to the board, they can type their name in the chat window. That way we'll be able to go in order, and generally the guidelines are we ask people to limit themselves to two minutes just so everybody has a

turn and not to violate the privacy of any students or employees.



Grant Ligon 53:01

Great. do we have some parents in the queue.



Howard Rodgers IV 53:15

Wendy Welsh.



Grant Ligon 53:19

Alright, Wendy. Do you have a public comment?



53:22

Just a question in regards to the family I guess engagement that Melanie discuss, would it be a combined all schools or just individual schools, per family that that she talked about, or is that still something left for discussion.



Grant Ligon 53:43

Okay, very good. We'll keep that as a note. It is more of a comment section but thank you, we'll make sure to get back to you, else in the comment section. If you say



Susan Chapman 54:03

... Carter?



Katie Carter 54:07

Yeah.. my comment is really in regards to the communication from the school about the, the ICP, you know, waiver or, you know, signing back up or maintaining ICP for students. I feel like it was given very short notice I know that there was a survey last month and that there has been some buried mentions of ICP changing in the tidbits but in multiple layers of links and those sorts of things and I feel like there wasn't really any clear communication as to what ICP is going to look like if it's going to look the same next semester. If it's going to change at any way whatsoever. In order for me to make an informed decision about whether the ICP is really the best choice for my for my child I

need to know more details. And I don't feel like those details were given, nor were we given enough time to make informed decisions about whether or not. You know, I can enroll my student in ICP for next semester. These are discussions that I need to have with my employer, with, you know, my family, all these things and I'm only given two days to make a decision and I don't feel like there was proper communication, nor adequate time to make those decisions.

- G** Grant Ligon 55:39
Okay. Good. Thank you for your comment any further public comment. Nobody's in queue Okay, very good. So devil in the public comment section I do want to make sure and acknowledge myself as well. Lena thank you for being on the board. It was a it was a pleasure serving with you. It was your meetings for always well run, always got a lot out of them. So thank you very much for your service and good luck for whatever's coming up next.
- Y** Yelena McCloskey 56:18
The pleasure is all mine, and a pleasure working with you all.
- G** Grant Ligon 56:22
Very good. And with that, we have come to the end of the agenda and. Do I have a motion to adjourn?
- U** Unknown 56:35
it looks like Katie Carter had a comment.
- G** Grant Ligon 56:37
Oh, we did have her comment.
- K** Katie Carter 56:44
I did, I had my comment.
- G** Grant Ligon 56:46
Yep. Very good, thank you. Katie. So at this point we are looking for a motion to adjourn.

- M** Melanie Tennyson 56:52
Grant, tradition has it that the new, when a new board member is brought on that they make. They get to make the motion to adjourn the meeting.
- G** Grant Ligon 57:08
Oh well thank you very much I didn't realize that! Been a long time for me. In that case I will turn it over to Sarah to please make a request the motion to adjourn to make a
- S** Sarah Murphy 57:16
I make a motion to adjourn.
- G** Grant Ligon 57:18
Do I have a second.
- Y** Yelena McCloskey 57:21
I'll second it.
- G** Grant Ligon 57:22
Again, we have a Second. All in favor say aye.
- A** All Board Members 57:26
Aye.
- G** Grant Ligon 57:27
Aye. All against vote nay. We good thank you everybody we're going to adjourn the meeting, it is 640. Thank you everyone for coming.
- A** All Board Members 57:36
Thank you. Have a good day y'all have a good night. All right. Thank you.

