APPROVED

Springfield Prep
CHARTER SCHOOL

Springfield Prep

Minutes

Board Meeting

Date and Time
Thursday June 13, 2024 at 5:45 PM

Location
Meeting held at in person at Springfield Prep
2071 Roosevelt Ave.
Springfield, MA 01104

Zoom option also available

Trustees Present
A. Malone, A. Narvaez, A. Piela, M. Frodema, R. Leonard (remote), R. Molina-Brantley, S. Balogun, S. Monson

Trustees Absent
S. Fuller

Ex Officio Members Present
B. Spirer

Guests Present
J. Yiannos

I. Opening Items

A. Record Attendance and Guests

B.

Call the Meeting to Order

S. Balogun called a meeting of the board of trustees of Springfield Prep to order on Thursday Jun 13, 2024 at 5:46 PM.
Sherriff welcome Gina Brindisi-Powers, the Elementary School Instructional Leadership Fellow.

C. Public Comment, If Any

There was no public comment.

II. Consent Agenda

A. Approve minutes from the previous board meeting

A. Piela made a motion to approve the minutes from Board Meeting on 05-28-24.
S. Monson seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

Roll Call

S. Balogun	Aye
R. Molina-Brantley	Aye
M. Frodema	Aye
A. Malone	Aye
S. Fuller	Absent
A. Piela	Aye
R. Leonard	Aye
S. Monson	Aye
A. Narvaez	Aye

B. Contract Approvals

C. May Financial Dashboard

D. Vote to approve consent agenda items

A. Piela made a motion to Approve the consent agenda as presented.
S. Monson seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

Roll Call

R. Molina-Brantley	Aye
A. Narvaez	Aye
M. Frodema	Aye
S. Fuller	Absent
A. Malone	Aye
S. Balogun	Aye
S. Monson	Aye
R. Leonard	Aye

Roll Call

A. Piela Aye

III. Academic Items

A. Science of Reading Exercise

Jess Yiannos (Chief Academic Officer) and Gina Brindisi-Powers (Instructional Leader Fellow), joined to discuss the Science of Reading research and give a demonstration of how we are using it to modify our instructional approach.

- Jess completed a sample STEP assessment as a demonstration and used an example that demonstrated how the way we have been providing literacy instruction has allowed students to use a lot of picture clues to read books, rather than reading the text.
- We were seeing a lot of issues related to guessing in first grade as a result of this type of instruction, which was driven by the kindergarten STEP assessment.
- Gina shared the ways the new model is going to shift our instruction, including a switch to decodable books so students will be working on sounding out words first, rather than using pictures to guess the words.
- Jess discussed some of the additional professional development that the school has been providing to teachers and our plans to continue this next year. Next year, we also plan to focus more PD and instruction on language, including text structure and summarizing texts.
- Bill explained how the shift toward this Science of Reading is impacting the tools that are available to assess students' reading skills progress, in both comprehension and decoding.
- Ron shared his experience as a parent seeing this shift, and the positive impact it has had on his children's reading development.

IV. Executive Director Items

A. June Executive Director Report

- Bill reported that the Math Symposium happened yesterday and has grown significantly over the last three years, with many outside guests. Sarah suggested inviting some of our foundation partners to the event next year.
- Bill thanked board members for completing the conflict of interest training and shared appreciation for Amy connecting the school with a new possible funding source and/or board prospect. Amy noted that this connection came through a LinkedIn re-post of an SPCS post.
- Next Tuesday night is 8th grade graduation and that Sen. Gomez will be speaking. Bill reported that the 8th graders had a field trip to Boston today, where they met with Rep. Gonzalez and had a surprise meeting with Governor Healy.

- Bill reminded board members of the next meeting date, July 25, and the importance of that meeting for the Annual Report and Renewal Application. He also confirmed the date for the DESE site visit for renewal.
- Bill provided a staffing and hiring update, noting that the school is in a strong place with only a few openings left, including the Managing Director of Business and Operations role. The school has strong applicants for this position and expects to finalize a hire soon.

V. Governance Items

A. Board Slate for FY25

There was no discussion regarding the officers proposed. Amy and Sarah are up for their second term as Trustees and the Officer slate will remain the same as this year.
R. Molina-Brantley made a motion to Approve the FY25 Board Slate as presented.
M. Frodema seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

Roll Call

S. Fuller	Absent
S. Monson	Aye
R. Leonard	Aye
A. Narvaez	Aye
A. Piela	Aye
A. Malone	Aye
R. Molina-Brantley	Aye
M. Frodema	Aye
S. Balogun	Aye

B. Board Calendar for FY25

Bill discussed moving to Board Meetings to the first week of the month to provide more time between board meetings and committee meetings. The board agreed to this and to move to the first Thursday evening of the month next year, keeping the same start time of 5:45. The board will continue to have quarterly in-person meetings.
A. Malone made a motion to Approve the FY25 Board Meeting Schedule as presented.
A. Piela seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

Roll Call

R. Leonard	Aye
S. Fuller	Absent
A. Malone	Aye
M. Frodema	Aye
S. Balogun	Aye
R. Molina-Brantley	Aye
A. Piela	Aye

Roll Call

S. Monson	Aye
A. Narvaez	Aye

C. Student Opportunity Act 3-Year Plan

- Bill reviewed the Student Opportunity Act S(SOA) plan and discussed the purpose of the SOA - to increase funding for schools with higher percentage of higher needs populations. This funding increases the per pupil funding rates for these schools and requires schools to report on which student populations have the largest achievement gaps. Students with Disabilities and English Learners are found to have the largest gaps at Springfield Prep and therefore, the plan outlines the specific steps the school is taking to address these gaps.
- Ron asked if there were any findings and Bill shared information about a helpful tool that the state has put together to analyze the data related to these gaps.
- Amy asked who this is filed with and if there are related audit requirements, Bill explained that this is a state DESE submission, so DESE would let us know if there are any issues. Also, these plans are shared publicly on the DESE website. Meghan shared that there aren't any specific audit requirements and shared the challenges of isolating funds used for these strategies, since much of this work is embedded in our program model. Amy suggested looking into what other ways the data from this might be used to determine if there is any reason to report other financial aspects of the programs.

S. Monson made a motion to Approve the Student Opportunity Act Plan as presented.
A. Malone seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

Roll Call

S. Balogun	Aye
R. Molina-Brantley	Aye
A. Piela	Aye
S. Monson	Aye
R. Leonard	Aye
S. Fuller	Absent
A. Narvaez	Aye
M. Frodema	Aye
A. Malone	Aye

VI. Strategic Planning

A. Alumni Support Program

- Bill provided an overview of a proposed 3-year plan to launch an Alumni Support Program. He shared that Friends received a $15,000 grant from the Beveridge foundation to support Alumni programming.

- In the initial phase of starting this program, to take place next school year, the plan is to develop a database of alums and a communication platform, and host at least 2 alumni events. Bill shared rationale for a phased in approach, including getting additional information next year to inform the development of a larger program. Bill shared information about some current staff members who could support this work.
- Bill noted the potential that fundraising for the ASP could impact fundraising for school programs, because funds raised for alumni would not be supporting current students.
- Sherriff asked about the engagement model - including how we plan to engage students. Bill shared that social events may be a primary driver. Sherriff was supportive of using social networking and creating student-driven engagement opportunities. Amy noted that it could be a leadership opportunity for students.
- Anne asked about whether this would also be geared towards parents of alums. Sarah and Ron agreed parent groups would be helpful for parents.
- Sherriff asked about the data and the necessity to have a release of information to have their data and consider the liability related to this. Bill explained that the school worked with an attorney in the past to set this up and is now working with Krokidas and Bluestein, who has experience in this area, so they will address this.
- Sherriff asked about the idea of mentorship and the board discussed the opportunities this could create.
- Bill discussed the opportunity to fundraise for this alongside our 10-year anniversary.
- Sarah and others agreed that starting a program like this in smaller steps as suggested makes sense.
- Amy recommended engaging the law firm first to ensure we don't make any missteps as we set up new programs.
- Bill discussed the plan for Friends to vote to set up the LLC to "house" this program, which Krokidas and Bluestein recommended. This will support fundraising and programming and ensure the program is separate from the school to the extent necessary.

VII. Closing Items

A. Board meeting debrief

- Sarah asked if there was another method that would unearth more actionable debrief information. Amneris shared the Compass Check in - includes insight, challenge. Anne also suggested that not everyone has to answer if they don't have new information that hasn't already been shared. Bill shared a questionnaire the Women's Fund used and which Governance Committee member Donna Haghighat shared.
- Sherriff suggested framing an objective for the meeting - I.e. these are the three things we are trying to get out of the meeting. That way, at the end, we can ask, did we accomplish that?

- Anne suggested starting with an “advanced Organizer”.
- Bill and Sherriff discussed the idea of ending the meeting with a question about what board members would like to discuss more in the next meeting.
- Sherriff wants to talk more about the Alumni Support program.
- Ron suggested that we take some of the learnings from the ASP and apply that to current families to help younger families connect.
- Sarah suggested that we incorporate an opt-in parent info sharing at Open House in August.
- Sheriff suggested more strategic planning, especially at in-person meetings.
- Amy suggested updating how we facilitate strategic planning - smaller groups to have space for additional idea generation.
- Sarah suggested strategic planning in January, based on advice from Gina at Board on Track.

B. Next Board Meeting

The next board meeting is Thursday, 7/25 on Zoom.

C. Adjourn Meeting

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 7:15 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
S. Monson

Documents used during the meeting

- MEMO. FY25 Vendor Contract Summary. June 2024.pdf
- 0. SPCS May 2024 Financial Dashboard.pdf
- ED Report for 6.13.24.pdf
- Board Slate for Fiscal Year 2025 vf.pdf
- FY25 DRAFT Board Meeting Schedule.pdf
- Springfield Prep 3-Year SOA Plan - updated 6.13.24.pdf
- Alumni Support Program Pilot DRAFT.pdf