APPROVED

Springfield Prep
CHARTER SCHOOL

Springfield Prep

Minutes

Board Meeting

Date and Time
Tuesday March 26, 2024 at 5:45 PM

Location
This is an **in person meeting.** A remote option is available if necessary.

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

Trustees Absent
A. Piela, S. Fuller

Trustees who arrived after the meeting opened
R. Molina-Brantley

Ex Officio Members Present
B. Spirer

Guests Present
M. Wagner

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 Tuesday Mar 26, 2024 at 5:50 PM.

C. Public Comment, If Any

There was no public comment.

II. Consent Agenda

A. Approve minutes from the previous board meeting

A. Malone made a motion to approve the minutes from Board Meeting on 02-27-24.
S. Monson seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

Roll Call

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

B. Monthly Financial Dashboard

C. Medication Administration Policy (2-year review)

D. 2024-25 School Calendar

E. Vote to approve consent agenda items

A. Malone made a motion to approve the consent agenda.
S. Monson seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

Roll Call

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

III. Executive Director Items

A. March Executive Director Report

Bill shared highlights and updates from the month:

- Report card conference participate was very high, with ~95% of families participating in in-person conference with their child's teacher.
- We hosted a successful visit with State Senator Gomez. Thanks to Amneris for attending. Sherriff noted how the school has come a long way in terms of building relationships and partnerships with state and community leaders.
- Thanks to Sarah's husband Felix, a Springfield Firefighter, for speaking at Middle School Community Meeting.
- Bill shared that he will be candidate to join the board of the MCPSA to increase representation of Western MA charters. Anne asked about the timing and Bill explained the term would start July 1.
- Bill shared that Diana La Paz, the school's communications coordinator will be moving on at the end of the year and shared appreciation for the work that she has done to move this forward

R. Molina-Brantley arrived at 6:05 PM.

IV. Finance Items

A. FY25 Budget Draft & Multi-Year Projections

Meghan presented the FY25 Budget draft.

- Two major things impacting our funding: 1) ESSER funding is ending so our government grants will be significantly reduced. 2) Student Opportunity Act (SOA) funding is increasing, but not at the level that ESSER funds are decreasing.
- Given these changes to funding streams, we modeled out the budget through FY30 to ensure that what we are proposing is sustainable over the longer term.
- We are proposing a 2% COLA increase to the scale we developed last year through our compensation study. We modeled this out across the next six years to see how it would contribute to a surplus or deficit, including after the end of implementation of the SOA. We see that it will continue to be sustainable through FY30.
- Meghan noted a few differences to planned revenue through this budget: 1) an increase in private fundraising to $350,000, because we are projecting an ability to raise $240,000, likely closer to $300,000 in new funds and we have money held at Friends, which we can transfer in. And 2) we are projecting an increase in interest income. We are now holding our reserves in interest bearing accounts which will contribute to revenue. We are being conservative with our projection there.

- We are being strategic with our purchasing this year, such as buying computers and IT equipment, so there are fewer needs next year.
- Ron noted that we are not including the $25,000 contribution to capital reserves.
- Ron and Meghan discussed how we are not growing or changing significantly any more, so we are a lot more certain with our budget.
- Mary Kate shared that the committee discussed how to message the increase in salaries while also messaging that this is a tight budget year.
- Bill said that the school is in a strong position financially and that it does not make sense to put more away to reserves at the expense of increasing salaries.
- Meghan explained that we expect more tuition details in April that will help us finalize our numbers.
- Sarah asked if we had any concern about the budget numbers given the changes we're discussing.
- Meghan said that while it is a leaner budget than normal, she is not concerned, and mentioned that in these numbers noted that she projected the government grants out at flat funded, which is very unlikely. Typically these increase annually and there are competitive state grants available.

V. Governance Items

A. Executive Director Evaluation Process update

Sarah reported out on a training workshop she attended on ED evaluations, which was hosted by the MCPSA.

- She reported that a best practice is to move it later in the year instead of pushing for the earlier timeline. This allows for the consideration of staff attrition and annual state testing data.
- The plan included here moves the timeline back to a fall evaluation. The governance committee discussed this and thinks it's right.
- A mid-year evaluation check in would provide an opportunity to check in on progress halfway through the cycle
- Bill noted that the committee meetings and board meetings are very data-driven and include dashboards that regularly report on progress toward goals. Because of this, the Governance committee didn’t think more frequent ED check-ins would be necessary
- Sherriff noted that memorializing where we are mid-year will allow for more continuity and support a more robust end of year discussion
- Bill shared that we had done feedback from just 3 staff members and 3 LT members before. The committee discussed opening this up more broadly. The board discussed whether staff would participate. Anne noted that participation would be dependent on the messaging. Bill asked about reframing the prompts.

- The board discussed that it is worth trying and then making a determination if any changes are needed to make this more effective. Ron noted that this could be an opportunity to find patterns
- Bill shared that this is a way to increase transparency into the process of how Bill is evaluated each year and the board's role in school governance more generally.
- Ron asked if the feedback would be anonymous and the board discussed that it should be.
- Amneris suggested that it should come from Bill as a name that staff recognize, versus a member of the board.

VI. Academics & Culture Items

A. Teacher and Staff Evaluation Redesign Project

- Bill reported that the Academic Achievement Committee discussed the new teacher and staff evaluation redesign project. Bill noted that currently all staff are evaluated annually, but in a onerous process that doesn't always make clear what competence and excellence look like, particularly because it doesn't differentiate between experience levels effectively. Wendy Soref, our Director of Talent has been leading this process with a consultant, Rebecca Cagle.
- Bill noted that the previous process does not include 360 feedback and we think this would be helpful to add to support managers in their development
- Bill provided the overview that the current rubric is very granular, narrow and specific, while this new eval systems is based on broader competencies, which will hopefully provide teachers and staff additional clarity on their overall success in their role and areas for growth.
- Bill shared that we have had a lot of discussions about whether academic results should play a role in teacher evaluations. We instead decided to go with competencies that can be a proxy for student outcomes because of the numerous challenges of using student outcomes (co-teacher model). MK asked how often an evaluator is observing teachers and Bill reported that this is at least once every two weeks. MK also asked about how much the evaluation impacts teacher pay and Bill reported that it does not factor into compensation.
- Meghan spoke about her experience at Achievement First, which used a performance pay model. It was challenging and created a number of culture issues.
- Sarah asked who is the manager of the teacher and Bill explained that it could be a Principal, an AP, an Academic Dean, or a teacher who is an instructional coach.
- Bob shared his perspective from employment law and that it can be counter-productive to try to tie pay to performance.
- Anne shared her experiences with 360 evaluation processes and suggested that we frame these to purposefully be about supporting leader effectiveness and

development. Otherwise, these can become a place to vent more general frustrations and it can be less helpful developmentally.

B. Academic & Culture Dashboard

Bill reported out on the academic and culture dashboard.

- Bill reported that enrollment is strong, attendance is good and chronic absenteeism is down to 12.9%. This has been a challenge and the school is focused on this. Student discipline rates remain low.
- Bill shared the mid-year MCLASS data. McLass, our foundational reading assessment, was new in 2023-24, noting that MCLASS fills in some of the gaps in STEP assessments.
- The school has focused on foundational reading skills, such as decoding and word recognition.
- Bill reported that ANet data shows that students are in strong place but still have a ways to go.
- Anne noted that the work right now is to include infusing the love of reading with also moving forward with the foundational skills.
- Ron shared that this new data provided parents with more information with how students are performing.
- Bill reported that over half of our 8th graders are planning to attend selective, “college-prep” schools and 9 planning to attend Veritas. Bill noted the work that Beth Bishop, the High School Advisor is helping students to determine which school will work best for them. Mary Kate asked which of the schools require payment and whether this is barrier. Bill explained that only the small number that attend private schools would need to pay tuition and that financial aid typically lowers the burden.
- The committee noted that the Veritas application data was off in the high school report -- the school will look into this.

VII. Closing Items

A. Board meeting debrief

Sarah led the board in a "what's new and what's blue" exercise she took from a board training institute.

B. Next Board Meeting

C. June Board Meeting Scheduling

The board agreed to move the next meeting to 6/13 at 5:45 pm.

D. Adjourn Meeting

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 7:25 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
S. Monson

Documents used during the meeting

- 0.FY24 February Dashboard.pdf
- SPCS Medication Administration Policy.pdf
- SPCS Calendar SY24-25 - DRAFT.pdf
- ED Report for 3.26.24.pdf
- FY25 Budget Memo for the Finance Committee & Board 3.22.24.pdf
- SPCS FY25 Budget Proposed 3.22.24.pdf
- SPCS Multi Year Budget Projections FY25 - FY30.pdf
- Executive Director Evaluation Process Overview.pdf
- Evaluation Redesign Summary.pdf
- Academic Dashboard - March 2024.pdf