APPROVED

Alma del Mar

Minutes

Board of Trustees

Date and Time
Friday February 26, 2021 at 9:30 AM

Trustees Present
A. Cortez (remote), B. Cunningham (remote), C. Arnold (remote), C. Bator (remote), G. Fortes (remote), J. Baptist (remote), L. Hicks (remote), M. Kay (remote), M. Rosario (remote)

Trustees Absent
V. Brown

Guests Present
Ashley Cabral (remote), E. Darrow (remote), Libby Merrill (remote), Margaret Carvalho (remote), New Bedford Cable Access (remote), Will Gardner (remote)

I. Opening Items

A. Record Attendance

B. Call the Meeting to Order

J. Baptist called a meeting of the board of trustees of Alma del Mar to order on Friday Feb 26, 2021 at 9:30 AM.

C. Alma's Mission Statement

M. Kay read Alma del Mar's mission statement

D. Approve January Board Meeting Minutes

M. Kay made a motion to approve the minutes from Board of Trustees on 01-29-21.
C. Arnold seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

Roll Call	
B. Cunningham	Aye
L. Hicks	Aye
G. Fortes	Aye
C. Bator	Aye
J. Baptist	Aye
M. Kay	Aye
C. Arnold	Aye
M. Rosario	Aye
V. Brown	Absent
A. Cortez	Aye

II. Executive Director Report

A. Executive Director Report

W. Gardner updated the Board that the lottery for the 2021-2022 school year was held this past Wednesday. Corrin Williams from CEDC was our guest host who pressed the button to complete the lottery.
B. Cunningham asked if siblings were included in the lottery. W. Gardner replied that many siblings were included.
J. Baptist asked W. Gardner about Commissioner Riley's recent announcement regarding a full return to in-person learning for all elementary school students in Massachusetts.
W. Gardner informed the Board that K-2 scholars have already had the option to return to in-person learning. In the coming weeks, Alma leaders will review staffing and facilities capacity to determine if additional scholars will be invited back to in-person learning.

B. Data Dashboard

C. Arnold inquired about the progress and attendance of scholars.
W. Gardner replied that attendance has been lower for all scholars and that is something we are reviewing.

III. Academic Excellence

A. Special Education Academic Update

M. Kay shared the process by which scholars get identified as scholars in special education.
M. Kay defined IEPs and 504 Plans for the Board and reviewed the number of scholars at each campus who currently have an IEP or 504 Plan.

M.Kay described Ottiwell's sub-separate classrooms and how they meet the unique needs of those scholars.
M. Kay described supports and interventions available to Alma scholars based on their various needs. Alma offers speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy, counseling, and other support services.
M. Kay described the process by which scholars start on an IEP. M. Kay mentioned that families are a part of the IEP process from the very beginning and consent to all IEPs and services provided.
M. Kay noted that there are three scholars currently placed with NBPS based on their specific needs.
B. Cunningham noted how much work goes into each scholars' IEP.
L. Hicks inquired if there were any families who did not want to have their scholar placed on an IEP.
M. Carvalho responded that most families are eager for more support for their scholar, and occasionally families need more information about special education.
M. Kay described the quarterly progress reports generated for each scholar on an IEP.
M. Kay also mentioned that the Academic Excellence Committee reviews data for our English Language Learners and would like to share more about ELL progress with the Board in the future.
C. Arnold asked about funding for special education.
M. Kay responded that yes, there is additional special education funding available.
L. Hicks asked if Alma has any plans for a summer school given. W. Gardner responded that Alma does provide a small amount of specialized services based on scholars' IEPs but we do not have any plans for a large summer school program at this time.

B. Academic Data

M. Kay thanked Alexa Teevens, Ashley Cabral, and Margaret Carvalho for their hard work.
M. Kay reviewed the academic data included in the academic update and described ways in which Alma staff are working to increase all scholars' academic performance. M. Kay reports that teachers and leaders regularly review this data to inform instruction. M. Kay noted that in the remote setting, scholars are performing better overall in ELA than in Math. M. Kay noted how challenging the remote setting can be for scholars. M. Kay described that in grades K-2 scholars are now in person unless they opted out, so that is a better learning model for those scholars. Our highest needs scholars have also been provided with supervised remote learning in person.
B. Cunningham asked if the professional development is for all scholars or just leaders.
M. Kay responded that professional development is for all teachers and there are also development opportunities for leaders.

J. Baptist stated that she was very proud that our approach focuses on how we can improve our teaching to meet the needs of our scholars as opposed to thinking about a deficit in scholar learning.

IV. Development

A. Strategy Update

C. Arnold reminded the Board that there are occasional discrepancies between the Finance and Development reports based on the time the reports are generated.
C. Arnold mentioned that the Committee is focused on both stewardship of current donors and attracting new donors and the information in the Academic Excellence report provides helpful information to share with these stakeholders.

V. Finance

A. FY21 January Financials

B. Cunningham reported that the Committee is anticipating salary increases for the staff.
B. Cunningham noted the consultant fees have increased and the Committee will consider this in the budget for next year as well.
B. Cunningham reports that state tuition will increase for next year.
B. Cunningham reported that Alma also received COVID-19 relief funding, which has helped ensure safety within the two campuses.
B. Cunningham reports that the construction of the new Frederick Douglass campus is also on track and on budget.
C. Arnold reminded the Board about the debt that Alma is carrying and B. Cunningham responded that the Finance Committee consistently monitors all expenses.
J. Baptist echoed C. Arnold's comment that monitoring our debt is key to ensuring our financial future and we continue to keep a very close eye on all finances.

VI. Governance

A. Board Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Workshops

G. Fortes thanked the Board for completing the survey and reiterated the dates for the Board Workshops with Chante' Chambers.
The dates are: March 18th at noon, April 26th at noon, June 7th at noon. The Committee is asking for 100% participation in these workshops unless there are extenuating circumstances.
Next month, the Governance Committee will be looking at Board terms and possible new Board members following a skills assessment.

B. Open Mtg Law Review

J. Baptist noted that the Board reviews Open Meeting Law on an annual basis.

C. Bator noted that Board on Track had a good webinar on Open Meeting Law, but it was not specific to Massachusetts.
C. Bator mentioned that Alma received some feedback from DESE regarding the level of detail in the meeting minutes, but that Massachusetts state law only requires a general record of what was discussed on each topic (not a transcript).
C. Bator provided an overview of Massachusetts Open Meeting Law and he will share out a summary following the meeting.
C. Arnold asked a clarifying question regarding the use of email.
J. Baptist requested that the Governance Committee review the recertification letters.

VII. New Site Development

A. Update on Construction of the Frederick Douglass Campus

W. Gardner repots that the construction of the Frederick Douglass is on track.
J. Baptist asked about a possible beam signing for Trustees and other stakeholders. B. Kurie and the Development Committee are woking on a way to celebrate this moment in a way that is safe during the COVID-19 pandemic.

B. Vote to Approve Lease Agreement

C. Bator made a motion to authorize the Executive Director to enter into the lease agreement with the Christian Fellowship Center for the purpose of providing Alma scholars with additional temporary classroom space for the 2021-2022 school year.
C. Arnold seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

J. Baptist	Aye
M. Rosario	Aye
B. Cunningham	Aye
C. Bator	Aye
M. Kay	Aye
C. Arnold	Aye
L. Hicks	Aye
G. Fortes	Aye
V. Brown	Absent
A. Cortez	Aye

VIII. Other Business

A. Update on Hiring for Staff Diversity

L. Merrill mentioned Alma's REDI Strategic Plan and that one component of this is our goal that our staff reflect the demographics of our scholars.
L. Merrill stated that Alma's goal this year is for 35% of new instructional hires will be BIPOC staff.

L. Merrill described a professional development session that occurred yesterday on bias in hiring so that we are ensuring the most diverse pool of candidates.
L. Hicks asked how our approach this year will be different than previous efforts in this area.
L. Merrill responded that one difference is that we have done a more thorough audit of our current staff and we are being more intentional and data-based.
A. Cortez asked if there was training available for staff about poverty and the experience of the local community.

B. Alma's Race, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (REDI) Strategic Plan

W. Gardner described the process by which this Strategic Plan was created and asked Trustees to review the plan.
L. Hicks asked about specific acronyms included in the plan.
J. Baptist requested a glossary of terms used in the plan.

IX. Closing Items

A. Adjourn Meeting

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 11:01 AM.

Respectfully Submitted,
E. Darrow

B. Board Calendar of Monthly Activities

C. Board & Committee Goals 2020-2021

Documents used during the meeting

- E.D. Report 2-26-21 (1).pdf
- 2.26.2021 Dashboard.pdf
- 2.26.21 - Academic Excellence Handout re_ Special Education (1).pdf
- PDF - IEP Sample.pdf
- KEY - Demographic Data Directions.pdf
- Q1 interim demographic data - ELA.pdf
- Q1 interim demographic data - Math.pdf
- Q2 interim data - Sheet1.pdf
- 2.19.2021 DevComm Report to BoT.pdf
- FY21 January COVID19 P&L.pdf

- FY21 January Combined Financials.pdf
- FY21 Janaury SNP.pdf
- Frederick Douglass Construction Update 2.26.21.pdf
- 0223_001.pdf
- 1.21.21 DRAFT_Alma del Mar ABAR_DEI Strategic Plan.docx (2) (1).pdf
- Board and Committee Calendar and Suggested Monthly Activities_Updated June 2020 (2).pdf
- Committee Goals 2020-2021 (1).pdf