



Frayser Community Schools

Minutes

FCS Board Meeting (Web Meeting)

Date and Time

Tuesday April 13, 2021 at 5:30 PM

Location

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Directors Present

A. Cathey (remote), C. Houston (remote), E. Henneghan (remote), J. Thornton (remote), K. Adams (remote), M. Shepherd (remote), R. Dowell (remote)

Directors Absent

M. Matthews, T. Hartwell

Guests Present

B. Lawson (remote), E. Williams (remote), G. Thompson (remote), Jaques Hamilton (remote), Joshua Perkins (remote), Katie Wise (remote), L. Warren (remote), Lisa Lewis-Coleman, T. Hervey (remote), T. Pearson (remote), Tevis Haynie (remote)

I. Opening Items

A. Record Attendance and Guests

B. Call the Meeting to Order

A. Cathey called a meeting of the board of directors of Frayser Community Schools to order on Tuesday Apr 13, 2021 at 5:35 PM.

C. Approve Minutes

R. Dowell made a motion to approve the minutes from FCS Board Meeting (Web Meeting) on 03-09-21.

C. Houston seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

II. CEO Updates

A. Remembering the Vision

Dr. Bobby White:

- Welcome to our guest Tennessee Charter School Center team, and we thank you for joining the Frayser Community Schools Board meeting.
- I'm always getting back centered on why we started this; the school as the center of the community. This month as I completed my CEO evaluation, my portion of it, I just was encouraged by being able to go back and think through all of the things that we have accomplished.
- Despite the challenges, everyone around the country is facing, I want us to take a moment to remember the vision. Those of you who have evaluated me, if you saw the comments, you would recognize all of the things we've done to date. School is the center of the community and us being intentional about embracing our place in this space. To lead and be the change agents in the communities that we serve. We make sure that we are celebrating ourselves in this extremely challenging year.
- We developed the first drive-by graduation and it seemed like the other schools in the city copied us because we were able to pull it off. The drive-by-graduation was something we designed with a little more detail than other schools. Our students were given a backpack with keepsakes in them, so they would never forget the community and their experience at MLK.

- Also, for the seven years, our organization has been in the black. For many organizations, this is unheard of as it relates to our budget. We provided our student's laptops and do our wellness checks from the telephone calls to our parents, and we've pulled it off.
- Despite the challenges we have faced with our wellness checks, it was beneficial to do the self-evaluation because it allowed me time to reflect on what we have done over the past year. I want to thank the Board and FCS staff for all of our expertise, which has allowed us to move forward in this direction in a pretty positive way, and you for allowing me to continue to lead and serve alongside you. I'm proud of the work that we've done. And I am pretty sure the people are paying attention to the fact that the small mom-and-pop charter organization, over in West Tennessee, is black founded, and it's predominantly black leadership.
- Standing at the gate to be what the community needs us to be for the families, the students we serve. So I thank you, and I appreciate you all for allowing me to continue serving and leading this organization.
- We always celebrate those who are a part of our family. Today is the day to celebrate Erik Henneghan, who is our board vice-chair. Eric has been named the Associate Project Manager at All World Project Management. We always want to celebrate when our folks are recognized for the skillset they have. So I like to congratulate Erik as he moves to this next part of his career. Thank you for being a part of our team. We appreciate it, and we wish you well in this next era of your career.

III. Tennessee Charter School Center Presentation

A. Updates from TCSC Team

Joshua Perkins:

- Thank you all for allowing us to be here today. We want to share some of the things we're working on and get some feedback from you all today.
- So our purpose today is to tell you who we are, discuss the current governing board resources that we currently offer.
- My name is Joshua Perkins, and I am the Director of Quality Schools and Programs. I oversee school support, resources, and governing board professional development. So, any of those things, you can reach out to me and I'll do my best to provide whatever the issue or concern is or whatever resource you need.
- And we also have Jaques Hamilton, which a lot of you are familiar with. He's our Programs Coordinator and he oversees our governing board training compliance and our bimonthly governing board meetings, which is something that we're trying to take up a notch this year.

- Right now, our governing board resources include the ad council. This is one of our monthly meetings held only for the Shelby County Charter schools. We did open it up statewide when we had some presenters from the Tennessee Department of Education, but these meetings are specifically for Memphis schools, Shelby County schools; and this is an opportunity for you to discuss the state and county policy agenda. Any policies that you think should be changed or implemented are where these conversations are had. We also discuss grant updates, requirements, and deadlines.
- If you have any suggestions or policies that you would like to discuss, you're more than welcome to email Carra Powell. She's our Director of Policy here for Shelby County, and her e-mail is carra@tnchartercenter.org.
- Our bi-monthly board meetings are something that we've implemented this current year, and these meetings are bi-monthly and led by different charter schools within the state. And so, we would love Dr. White if you, your board, would like to present.
- Usually, it's the board chair and a school leader, but you're more than welcome to pick any board member of your choice. We want to discuss successes and challenges, especially during this pandemic. And share best practices and the opportunity for schools to talk amongst each other. You want to talk through some challenges with other schools who might have already experienced them; this is the opportunity to do that. Jaques oversees these meetings and they've been very successful.
- Also, we have charter one-on-ones, typically for new schools and any schools that want to expand. With this you have facility training, operations training, finance training, and a timeline guide that we provide.
- If you all feel the need to join these meetings or even share it with someone you know is a new operator that wants to open a school, please share the information.
- Governing board compliance is one of the things that's heavily discussed for board members. Every year, we know that annual training must occur so new members have 12 months to complete training from their start date and turn in their documentation to TCSC. All documentation goes to Jaques; he oversees the process and makes sure he turns it into the authorizers to let them know that you are compliant.
- Notice the public meetings and I like that this meeting is being recorded - including meeting date, time, and location. If virtual, you must provide the meeting link, it should be posted for those who would like to join.
- We want to know how we can better support you.

IV. Academic Excellence

A. Academic Excellence Committee Updates

Mr. Brett Lawson:

- The process for kids coming back from the building has been consistent

- We're, coming up on the testing season and the state has put some extra pressure on us to get 80% of our students tested. It's going to be hard-pressed to get 80% of our kids tested in this environment where it's a paper and pencil test, they have to come into the school to take it.
- There are two prongs to our concern here. One is teachers who have not been coming into the building because they have a physical issue that causes them to be no more apt to contract COVID. So now we need them to come back into the building. And we've also had an opportunity for them to get vaccinated even within our organization. So that's one prong of it.
- The other prong is getting parents to do whatever it takes to get their kids to the building. As a side note, it seems that Durham Bus Services appears to be losing the contract with SCS. It's going to cause us some additional difficulty with that particular task. Whenever we need to call on the buses to come, we're paying for that. We will pay the additional part of the contract when we say we need you to run the busses. So we're working with them, but we're also working with a new vendor. And we're considering other options in case we need some more transportation.
- Another big piece that you will want you to know about is our graduation numbers and our seniors. We're working very hard to recapture anyone who has lagged. In this environment, it will be tough for us to meet some of the metrics we have met in the past, graduation rate. So, I want to foreshadow what I'm currently seeing.
- We've been talking about seniors taking jobs; they're taking jobs because it's a survival issue in many cases. We don't fault families for having to do what they have to do to survive, but at the same time, we need these kids to graduate from high school so that they can be their best selves later on.
- FCS has done more than most do to encourage students. But when it comes time to walk across the stage, all our resistance goes away; because they want to walk across the stage, and they want to do whatever it takes to walk across the stage. And we go way beyond what would be required by anybody to help them get across that stage.
- The unfortunate thing this year is that if a student has been, for instance, working a job and they're failing all of their classes and we come to summer school and we're trying to recapture content in a short amount of time so that they can at least graduate after summer school - it's going to be very difficult for them to do that much work in the platform to prove to the State.

V. Finance

A. Finance Committee Updates

Greg Thompson:

Cash Flow Forecast Cash balance as of 4/8/2021: \$4.6M

- **BEP Revenue** – Revenue is currently based on 1,167* students (approximately \$10.9M) for FY21

- **EP Revenue** – Revenue is currently based on 1,167* students (approximately \$10.9M) for FY21

- MLK: 585.7 students
- Westside: 331.7 students
- Humes: 250.05
- Total: 1,167 students

*Note: FCS may see a drop in ADM as a result of the truancy work it's undertaken the last several weeks. See slide 4 for more information

Public Grants

- Frayser Community Schools has approximately \$3.7M in non-recurring, COVIDrelated grants and \$1.9M in public grants that are awarded each year to ASD authorized charter schools.

ESSER 2.0

- Frayser Community Schools is expecting to receive \$2.9M in grant funding as part of ESSER 2.0. FCS will be able to expend funds through the 2022-2023 fiscal year.

Increase in BEP for Teacher Raises: TN passed a law to increase the BEP for FY2021 (2% increase to the teacher salary portion of the formula) to enable teachers to receive a 2% increase in salaries. The practical effect of this was an increase in the BEP amount from \$9,571 per student to \$9,642 per student. That resulted in a \$82K revenue increase for FCS for this fiscal year. FCS has provided a 2% increase to all of its employees retroactive to the beginning of the year (about a \$150K expense impact on the budget).

BEP True Up for declined enrollment: As a result of FCS's work to locate students who were chronically absent, several students were dropped from the attendance list. February's BEP payment held steady as did the March payment (which is not yet reflected in the following financials), but we need to monitor future BEP payments to see if there will be any true ups with an adjusted ADM. Potential impact could be -150K+. We will monitor this allocation and continue to update the finance committee and board.

VI. Governance

A. Governance Committee Updates

Mrs. Arlinda Cathey:

- I want to thank everyone who submitted nominations for board membership. We will begin having some conversations with candidates to see if serving on the

board is something they're interested in committing to. We also received suggestions for parents from each of the three schools to potentially serve on the board, so we're super excited to have conversations with them. And, in a different sense, encouraged their participation because we need that type of presence on our board.

- Our goal is to bring on additional board members by the start of the new fiscal year. So as we move forward with retreat planning and any of the relevant training that the Tennessee Charter School Center will be hosting, everyone can participate in those trainings.
- The governance committee will be developing some recommendations around how we potentially will hold board meetings in the upcoming academic year. We're considering the possibility of maintaining a virtual format for several months but possibly still having quarterly in-person meetings. We're also thinking through what that looks like at the committee level. Great things have happened as we transitioned into a remote format. In terms of our attendance, our efficiency in terms of meeting and getting together. We want to keep in mind what our return to in-person meetings will look like.
- We are currently in our Executive Director evaluation process, so thank you to everybody who submitted their responses for our evaluation for Dr. White, which is an annual process that we participate in. Also, this is our first year where we have added on to the evaluation process our Executive Director, Mr. Lawson. As I shared in my e-mail when we released the evaluation last week for Mr. Lawson, BoardOnTrack has some limited functionality. So, we are referring to Mr. Lawson as a CEO for evaluation purposes. Still, as you are moving through and completing that evaluation, you will be evaluating him as the ED. So, that survey is still open, and then we'll close on April the 22nd. So, please make sure you're prioritizing completing it so that you won't get those e-mails from me.
- Thank you to everyone that joined the Governance Committee meeting last Wednesday. We devoted a good portion of our forum to discuss the Humes Housing Strategy. Realistically, a lot of the next steps are still ahead of us. As we continue to think through what this project will look like and how significant it would be to the Humes Community, some of the additional features of the project are in the infant stages. So thank you to everybody that joined and as more information comes our way we will be sure to share it with the Board for the needed discussion.

VII. Development

A. Development Committee Updates

Mr. Erik Henneghan:

- I want to give everybody an update on the development and what's been going on for the fundraiser. To re-iterate, again, the scheduled for Sunday, May 23rd, it's

going to be from 2 to 4. We're hosting it at Pursuit of God Transformation Church with Pastor Ricky Floyd.

- I met with Pastor Ricky Floyd last week to visit the Church and go through the run of show, the set up and security. One of the things that Pastor Floyd let me know is that they have a brand new entertainment system. They have new lights, cameras, everything, and a whole new production system. We're going to be working closely with his son regarding videos and the live feed. So we'll set up another meeting with him to talk through the show's run and talk through the logistics.
- One of the things I want to share with you guys GroveHero will have a food truck in the parking lot. They have parking set up, ensuring that the trucks are in the correct location and ensuring it is safe. I'm working with Cedric right now to bring a couple of officers that would be able to come out and help us out control the crowd and make sure everything is maintained. Even though the event will be inside the church, it won't be open to the public. We still want to make sure that we control the crowd outside as well.
- He'll be giving away food. We will have volunteers outside with buckets and have some iPads, where people can donate electronically, so I'm going to make it pleasant and fun. Although we're doing everything inside, we're going to make sure the outside is up and running as well.

VIII. Network Updates from the CEO

A. Pertinent Network Updates and Developments

Dr. Bobby White:

- I've been in Nashville for the better part of the last three weeks, meeting with legislators and building relationships.
- What I recognize with our legislators is the folks in East Tennessee and their proxy. They cannot vote based on whoever they had their last conversation with about whatever's going on because they don't have a context or frame of reference on what's going on and how things impact people around the state.
- I've been down there trying to build relationships and figure this out for us on our end. The new legislation did a couple of things. I call it the great compromise with 2021. We know that back in 19-20, the commissioner decided that she would really like put a line in the sand this year around ASD schools. You all remember they were meetings all over the state. I remember Mrs. Cathey attended a meeting at Trezevant where they talked about in 2021, which is where we are now, that there were going to be many decisions made about ASD schools.
- The legislators didn't appreciate that and the government didn't appreciate it. It felt like she was abusing her power and authority and not presenting a plan that would advocate and be respectful of the communities and families impacted by schools in the ASD. So at that time, they did this whole no school returns to the LEA before the year 24-25. The biggest thing about this current legislation is that language has

been taken out. Now the language is in 22-23; the people can apply to the SBE for renewal.

- Essentially, no school goes back to their LEA before 22-23. That's significant, but it is a compromise I think most operators are willing to take, given what we already talked about as related to facilities. The legislation says that the LEA would have to offer us the ability to lease or purchase the current property. Now, that is something that we never thought we would have the ability to do. Currently, we have our facilities for free now because of the work that we do. However, if we're going to be able to purchase or lease those buildings, if we are renewed, it is enormous. It's a huge, huge victory for all of us.
- I don't like that they took the 24 -25 year out, but here's where we are at the end of the day. Back when Christopher Barbic, my close friend, came to Memphis back in 2012, we all knew that our charter contracts at the 10th year something would be happening. Well, at this point, I always understood that. Westside is the school that comes up on its 10th year first, and given that legislation, we're very definitive now about what our strategy is moving forward. We will be applying to renew our charter application with Westside this coming up year and will be applying to be renewed through Shelby County. The following year, we will apply to be renewed for Humes. The following year, we will apply, to be renewed for MLK.
- There's a chance that we may Mrs. Harvey and I, along with Mr. Lawson, will decide to apply for renewal for Humes and Westside at the same time this next fiscal year. I think we're well-positioned to be successful because the truth of the matter is that nobody will meet Shelby County Schools' performance framework. After all, we were never held against it as a standard. Our framework was always an ASD standard, and we haven't had a framework with ASD for the last four years. So, Shelby County, when we apply for renewal, is up to their board, more so than their framework and their Shelby County School Charter permission. SCS has to say that this organization, given all of the things that they've done in the community, who they are, and their reputation, if they are part of our LEA, then we are the organization holding them accountable. We're excited about them being a part of our District.
- I'm excited about our opportunity to be able to do that. And, for the first time, I guess I'll say, I now know exactly what our plan of action is. And, so, now, it informs how Mr. Lawson and I decide to strategize about what's next for our organization. Absolutely one hundred percent for sure; we will be submitting an HR application to Shelby County to renew Westside Middle School next April. The process starts in December. The application is due April 1st, and we will be ready. Not sure whether or not we'll apply for Humes simultaneously, just because it makes sense.
- The other part of the legislation is that there is a parent trigger law that 60% of your parents decided they want you to continue to do the work then, you activate that. What's unclear to me right now is what that activation looks like, so we have Mr. King looking into that.

- First, we can apply to Shelby for renewal, and second, we have the parent trigger. So, I am incredibly optimistic about our chances of continuing to do the work in the foreseeable future and the distant future at this point. And, without getting into the weeds, I think those were the major points I wanted to bring out.

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 7:33 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
A. Cathey