APPROVED

Frayser Community Schools

Minutes

August 2021 FCS Board Meeting

Date and Time
Tuesday August 10, 2021 at 5:30 PM

Location
Westside Middle School
3389 Dawn Drive
Memphis, TN

Directors Present
A. Cathey, J. Thornton (remote), K. Adams (remote), K. Tucker (remote), R. Dowell, R. Hamilton

Directors Absent
M. Shepherd

Ex Officio Members Present
B. White

Guests Present
B. Lawson, E. Williams (remote), Katie Wise (remote), L. Warren (remote), T. Hervey (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 Aug 10, 2021 at 5:47 AM.

C. Approve Minutes

K. Adams made a motion to approve the minutes from FCS Board Meeting on 06-08-21.
J. Thornton seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

II. CEO Updates

A. Remembering the Vision

Dr. Bobby White:

- I wanted to share with the board, Mrs.Cathey already knew about this situation. On Wednesday of last week, Durham, our school bus provider, asked us to change our bus schedule because they didn't have enough drivers. While we were thinking through that, Durham then called and told us that Thursday, they had no drivers to service us on the first day of school, which was yesterday. Just us being who we are, being committed, and knowing people—being a part of the community—and just having this never die attitude, Mrs. Pearson and Mr. Lawson make phone calls, doing everything they could to figure it out. And we had several leads, but what ended up happening was our newest member of our team, Dr. Matthews, ended up knowing someone who had a few buses. The bus company allowed us to use their service on Monday, so we were able to have busses on Monday. After talking with them, we had buses on Tuesday. Now Mr. Lawson is looking at them and using them as our contractor instead of the national organization.
- I think that a part of who we are is being a part of the community and connecting with people who will do right by our families and children, and honestly, Durham has shown that they're not going to do right. And we've found this other local organization, and if they can do the work and do it in a thoughtful and capable way, then we're going to be able to provide them with that contract.
- Although this may not fit squarely into *Remember the Vision* as you all may think, it's who we're supposed to be. Because we empower all, our community, and our families, I'm excited that we could figure that out with the organization mentioned earlier. It speaks to our ability to be flexible and adjust to the challenges that we face.
- I'm pleased about just who we are, how we try to do the work and our connectability of how people see us.

III. Finance

A. Finance Committee Updates

Katie Wise:

Financial Highlights

- Anticipating budget surplus of ~$300K (but still finalizing numbers in preparation for audit)
- Higher actual BEP per pupil amount than budgeted: $9,931 vs. $9,615 (before 2.5% ASD fee)
- Lower actual enrollment than budgeted: 1,125 vs. 1,165 (see table below)
- Actual BEP funding of $10,683,255.57 vs. $10,921,676.66 ($238,421.09). Actual BEP funding also included deductions totaling $200,139.34 for SCS charges and refund of payments from ASD to SCS

School	Budgeted Enrollment	Final True Up on Weighted Average Enrollment	Change
MLK	575	568	-7
Westside	325	311	-14
Humes	265	246	-19
TOTAL	1,165	1,125	-40

FY2020-2021 Grants

- FCS received a number of federal grants this year (non-recurring and recurring) which had a positive impact on the budget this past fiscal year).
- FCS will continue to receive a significant amount of funding in federal grants this fiscal year.

IV. Academic Excellence

A. Academic Excellence Committee Updates

Mr. Brett Lawson:

- We had a great first two days of school, all the challenges notwithstanding, and a great two weeks of in-services. We had our in-service here at Westside, and it was a little scary for everybody to be back in the same room together and learn together.
- Yesterday, kids came back into the building. We've gone around, seeing how things are going. It does not take long for everybody to relax, get into their old roles, and get back to learning.
- I want to tell a couple of things about COVID that have come up that have helped us out. So, one of the things we're concerned about was when students come back into the building, and we could no longer maintain six feet of separation between everyone. And the CDC guidance was three feet, but they had not officially stated it would prevent close contact.

- Right before school started Le Bonheur sent out some new guidelines for schools that were helpful. And one of the things that they said was three feet is sufficient to sustain appropriate distance. In other words, a student would have to be inside of three feet with another student; more than 15 minutes to be considered close contact.
- For adults, it will be different. Adults still need to maintain six feet of separation between themselves and students and themselves and each other. So that helped us out tremendously. Last year, when we were in hybrid. The thing that saved us was when everyone maintained that six feet of separation. If we ran into contract tracing, we could say that there was no close contact in the building because everybody followed the guidelines. So now that they've made adjustments for students, we're much more confident that we can maintain that. The only thing that could cause us to do enormous quarantine situations would be community spread. So we have recommended that everybody gets shot, gets the vaccine.
- We are mandating masks inside the school at all times. When kids are in the building, we're modeling good behavior, making sure they are as well. And they are still nervous, and I think as they hear stories in the community and stories from their family members that they are taking it seriously. We're not having any problem.
- I'll talk a bit about registration. We're still using schoolmint at this point. We will be transitioning to Powerschool's platform for registration moving forward. Once that's complete, we'll set it up. After we get well in this school year, we'll make the transition over to Powerschool. It's a little bit of a delay between the time a parent completes registration and transition to Powerschool.
- It's a little frustrating to get students' information moved over because it takes a couple of days, but our process is moving on. We saw a few parents on a Tuesday night, primary registration night. But we saw many parents' were registering online. And then, most recently, we've seen many parents come into the building to register their students.
- So, the word is out, and we're starting to see a lot more traffic. Folks who are not tech-savvy may not have great internet or a good cell phone plan and don't quite know what they're doing are coming into the building using our laptops. And once we kind of get through this initial registration window, we'll start distributing laptops back out to those who registered and getting those going at the high school, mainly.
- Dr. White has already mentioned our transportation struggles. I'm proud that we're overcoming that situation. Our goal was sticking with Durham was to have a smaller operator who is more dedicated to our needs. And I'll tell you the story. I said, Well, if we're going to do business with you guys, would it be possible to get them, maybe a metallic sticker on the bus that says "Frayser Community Schools" when you're picking our students up? They responded saying, Oh Mr. Lawson, we're going to get it taken care of; and our kids feel really special. They're riding to school on a charter bus instead of getting on the yellow cheese.

- Academically, I know it's not on the agenda. Still, I just wanted to say that we implemented a brand new curriculum this year for our middle schools and a new curriculum for high school. We've got all of our MCL's positions staffed. Things seem to be rolling along, we're not entirely staffed, but we've got all the key positions in place. All the difficult-to-hire positions are coming along quickly. So, we feel good about where we are on that we're going to make in terms of staffing.

V. Governance

A. Governance Committee Updates

Mrs. Arlinda Cathey:

- I want to start with a special shout-out to Ms. Warren, who did an excellent job coordinating all the logistics tied to the retreat. She also made FCS swag bags for everyone, ensuring that the room was prepared and we had all of the food and beverages. Ms. Warren just went above and beyond. Thank you for all that you do. We genuinely appreciate it.
- There are a few things that I want to share on the governance side. I first want to thank everyone who was able to participate in the Board Retreat this past July. It was an excellent opportunity for us to get together. Just so that you're aware, I've attached all of the resources to the actual agenda packet. Still, I'm going to go ahead and send it in a separate email.
- During the retreat, we moved through a review of the CEO and Executive Director evaluation. We tried to capture as much of it via zoom, specifically with the training portion. You also will see attached to the agenda the organizational priorities that Dr. White and Mr. Lawson walked us through. Also attached is the full report for the CEO and Executive Director evaluation, which we gave a synopsis of during the retreat.
- Again it was an excellent opportunity for us to get together and plan. We didn't get through our full agenda; that is okay. Because we will continue to peck at some of the things that we want to achieve this year through our committee work, I will connect with Rex and Kirby to see where you feel like you would like to serve regarding committees move forward.
- The next thing that I want to share with everyone is that it is that time of year as we head into the fall where we are gearing up for our annual board smart training, which was implemented last year by the state. It's a requirement that all charter boards move through either four to six hours of training. It's to refresh us on the things that we are already feeling strong on and encourage us to grow in the areas in terms of board governance where we are not necessarily as knowledgeable. We need to build up our acumen.
- We have until November 15th to furnish all of our board training which are on-demand, hour-long sessions that you can participate in. Returning board members only have to do four hours. Our new board members will be required to do six hours.

- The trainings are On-Demand so if you are a nighttime person, a morning person midday person and would like to do a quick training session on your lunch break. All you have to do is view the actual recording, and then at the end of the recording, move through completing the form that shows that you completed it. I want everyone to be aware, and I will be sending out additional information about that. The good thing is that during the retreat, with BoardonTrack, we have been able to bump our training requirements down by an hour. So that will only be three hours. So, four hours to three hours and six hours to five hours, as long as you watch the video. And lovingly know that I'm not sending these emails to bug you, but it's just because it's what we have to do.
- Next, we are at the time of the year where we generally move forward with electing our E-Board, that is, four positions, our Board Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer. As you'll see on the agenda, two candidates already have put in a request for specific positions or at least have been acting in roles: myself as board chair, and Michael Shepherd, who's not here this evening, as the board treasurer. Mr. Theodore Hartwell has rolled off, and Mr. Michael Shepherd has taken on the role. So we still have two vacant positions. The Vice-Chair role, in the case I am not available for a meeting, presides over meetings. It is just as simple as being able to step in and provide governance and provide the ability to lead a meeting in my absence. So if it's something that you feel like you're up to and capable of, definitely let me know.
- Secretary is also something that I have been doing because it just has been helpful. As I've developed agendas, we luckily have Ms. Warren, who works with us very closely, ensuring that minutes are taken for every meeting we have. She transcribes the minutes into BoardonTrack. The Secretary is generally the final set of eyes that look over the minutes. Make sure everything is updated, everything looks correct, there aren't any discrepancies. If we took a vote, and let's say the vote was not reflected in the minutes, the Secretary is the last set of eyes that glances over them. So it's a specific role you can train for; you do not have to sit and write every word. Thank God, with Zoom, there is the feature which makes things easier, but I am encouraging that if anyone feels comfortable stepping into the secretary role, please let me know because we want your name on the slate of candidates, so then that way we can take a vote next board meeting. So that's just something to keep in mind.
- The next point I want to bring up to everyone that's not reflected in the agenda for this evening. But I think it is essential that we discuss the format for our board meetings moving forward.
- Given that we have stepped into a new school year where we have our teachers, staff, administrators, students back into the buildings. You know, the general thought process was that our board meetings would return, also to back into an in-person format. But of course, maintaining the remote feature so that all of our board members are not in the Memphis area can join, as well as for any other extreme reasons, you have the option to participate remotely, which has been highly beneficial to us over the past year.

- I want to hear from everyone specifically about whether or not this format works where we still have this mixed in person as well as remote option, or is it that we are choosing that if it's worked well for us that we look into remaining on zoom. Also, before I open it up for discussion, I want to mention that we now have a parent advisory council that gets together once a month, and they are convening here physically at the school. I want to make sure that we agree with the format that we're going to meet in because I want to make sure they have a clear understanding of the format we're meeting in. That way, they can feel empowered to join us at any point in time, whether that's in person or virtually too. So keep that in mind as well.

VI. Development

A. Development Committee Updates

Mrs. Arlinda Cathey:

- I'm going to make a few quick announcements concerning development as we are shifting the focus of the development committee moving forward. As you'll see in the agenda, we are attempting to step away from board led fundraising events; this is something we discussed during the board retreat.
- Over the past several years, this is something that we have focused on closely with regards to at least FCS day and some board art fundraisers that we had back in 2019. But the reality is that we see the more important focus for our work specifically tied to board giving. And that is important when other funding organizations are working with us, ensuring that the board has full buy-in specifically into the organization by giving on our own.
- Last year we initially introduced this concept regarding board giving, and there was an amount of $1,000 for each board member to raise over the academic year, and this is something that we want to move forward with this year. The $1,000 does not have to be out of your pocket. You can ask individuals in your network, your family, community members, colleagues, church members, sorority sisters, or fraternity brothers, asking them to help support the work we do at FCS. We would like to see the development committee shift into realistically thinking about incentives and, you know, exciting ways to make sure that board members are meeting their goals in terms of Board giving.
- Mrs. Pearson and I spoke on creating a way that if by chance you need an automated draft coming off of your paycheck that goes directly to FCS to make sure that you hit the goal monthly. But it's just as simple as developing a policy and a method for giving that shows our commitment. So we would like to move the development committee directly to that.
- We also will be dropping the development committee report off of the agenda for board meetings, really to where it will come up at least maybe once a quarter or so, just as we're having check-ins and giving reminders to board members about personal giving goals.

- So that's something that I did want to share with everyone to understand fully; the way the development committee has existed in previous years we're stepping away from. We are asking our board members to be fully aligned with the 100% giving of $1,000 a year.

VII. 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 7:13 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
A. Cathey

Documents used during the meeting

- FCS Financiald Update 8-10-2021.pdf
- FCS 20-21 CEO-ED Evaluation Report Summary.pdf
- FCS AY 21-222 Priorities - Board Retreat 07232.pptx
- FCS 20-21 CEO-ED Evaluation Report Summary.pdf
- FCS AY 21-222 Priorities - Board Retreat 07232.pptx
- FCS Board Retreat Training w Mike Mizzoni.mp4