

GREEN Charter School Board Meeting Minutes
Thursday November 11th 2021 6:00 pm
Chair: Chetan Vora
Location: Spartanburg Campus

Attendance Summary

Board Members	Present / Absent
Abdulbasit Aydin	Present
Imtiaz Haque	Present via Zoom
Chetan Vora	Present via Zoom
Mandy Townes	Present via Zoom
Laurel Wiles	Present
Vincent Atkinson	Present
Chris Johnson	Absent

Executive Director

Tom Cronin	Present
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AGENDA

1. Welcome / Opening Remarks - Meeting began at 6:07pm. Mr. Vora is not present at start of the meeting so Mr. Atkinson the vice-chair is presiding. Mr. Atkinson welcomes everyone to the meeting and thanks the Spartanburg campus for hosting. Mr. Atkinson recognizes that date is Veterans Day and thanks all veterans for their service and sacrifice.
 - Presentation of student and staff success by Ms. Hester, Assistant Principal of Spartanburg campus.
 - Presented by Kailyn Lostaglia, Sofia Tsabounieris and Nora Atkinson - the Spartanburg campus National Junior Honor Society had a canned food drive where they gathered over 5,000 canned goods and raised almost \$500 for the Middle Tyger Community Center. Over 50 Spartanburg scholars participated and will deliver the food and coffee to the center.

- 5th grade science projects: Ethan Brown presented his project on Sea Mounts and Alexander Kantor presented his project on Mountain ranges
- Erica Smith, the literacy coach at Spartanburg presented a presentation on Project Read at the Spartanburg campus.
- Mr. Atkinson thanks Ms. Hester, Ms. Smith and all the students for their presentations.
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2. Public Comments -

T. Hornbeck - spoke about early release days and reminded everyone to watch the board candidate forums

Mr. Vora joins the meeting via Zoom, Mr. Atkinson continues to chair the meeting

3. Approval of Agenda

- Motion: Townes
- Second: Haque
- Vote was 6-0 (**PASSES**)

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4. Approval of minutes from October 5th 2021 meeting

- Motion to approve minutes: Haque
- Second: Wiles
- Vote was 6-0 (**PASSES**)

5. Quarterly Board update

- Ms. Townes presents a PPT presentation going over updates in the last 120 days

6. Approval of GREEN students to access all course codes for ACMS and LBA

- Mr. Cronin explains that these access codes allow students to have options for dual enrollment
- Dr. Haque asks who approves these classes for students. Cronin states there are guidance functions within the Upper school along with parents.
 - Motion to approve: Haque
 - Second: Vora
 - Vote (6-0) **PASSES**
 - Mr. Vora asks Mr. Cronin to send an email to all 6-7th parents at Greenville campuses so they can see what options are available.

7. Update on Five Forks Construction Project

- Mr. Cronin gave an update on construction for new Five Forks campus. Hoping around Thanksgiving to have founding principal and project manager. Project now has OSF platform and demo permits. Began mobilization on Nov 1 and demo began Nov 8th. Will be giving regular updates on construction. Harper has already ordered metal studs in anticipation of material lead times. Hoping to be

finished mid-July for an August opening. Met with Phil Hughes who is excited about the project.

- Aydin thanks Mr. Cronin for the update and asks for status of rendering of interior and full architectural drawing that can be used for cost projections?
- Mr. Cronin replies that we are in phase 1 and do not have full scope breakdown of cost at this time.
- Aydin requests to know when this will be. Cronin states hopefully before the end of December.
- Dr. Haque asks if there is a Gant chart for Harper for the project? Cronin responds yes, and can send it via email.

8. Approval of revised by-laws

- Mr. Cronin explains that this is changing 2 concepts in the by-laws: reorganization of org chart to realign CFO duties and to clarify board clerk language.
 - Motion to approve by-law revision: Townes
 - Second: Haque

Opened for Discussion:

- Aydin states that board brainstorming last year moved CFO duties out from under the Executive Director position and aligned it under the board for checks and balances. Expressed concern that this change will deviate from that goal.
- Dr. Haque state that the change last year was under circumstances that necessitated that action and those circumstances are no longer in effect. Agrees that it makes sense that ED oversees the financial person and that there is one person who has control and ultimate responsibility.
- Mr. Atkinson states that it is important for a CEO to have a CFO that would report to them. Mr Vora agrees.
- Dr. Haque asks a different question about modifying bylaws to clarify about the type of board training the newly elected members are required to take. When is this training held, and who administers it?
- Mr. Vora states that there was one internal training held before the election and then a second one post election that is held by district.
- Mr. Haque requests that the language in the bylaws be cleaned up to make that distinction clear by adding the word "internal." Mr. Vora states that there will be further revisions to clean up grammar. End of Discussion
 - Vote (6-0) **PASSES**

9. Update from the election committee on election timelines

- Ms Wiles states that as of Nov 8th voting ended, by the 10th waiting on any reports of irregularities and none had been made. Will count votes on Nov 16th at 3:30pm on the Greenville upper campus and a Zoom meeting link will be sent out to the public for anyone who wants to watch the live vote count. Winners will be posted online and will be called.

10. Review and Approve charter amendments

- Mr. Cronin reviews proposals to amend charters. School has found itself on narrow path between rock and hard place. When he arrived, there was a new building project with concerns about growth as well as lack of brand and consistency. $\frac{1}{3}$ of high school students are leaving GREEN. Met with district and they expressed concerns as well as a desire for school to “pause” growth and honor promises made but do it in a way to be highly effective. This is a summary of meetings with governance committee, district and his observations. These changes are for now, not forever. Pleads for board support and knows that this will create hardships for some families but gives the school a path to go forward. Proposes to change Midlands charter to K-8th grade, Spartanburg charter K-8th grade, Existing Greenville charter K-8th grade and new Five Forks charter 9th-12th grade. This will be branded as the “Upstate” high school. This plan has been given to the district and they are excited about it and want to present it at their board meeting next week pending approval.

- Motion to approve charter revisions as presented in expansion plan:
Haque
- Second: Townes

Opened for discussion

- Mr. Vora reiterated that if this passes Spartanburg will be changed from K-12 to K-8 and asks if high school students from Spartanburg can attend the Upstate high school with no lottery?
- Mr. Cronin states that is a goal they are working with district on, it’s a hill he will die on to protect our students.
- Mr. Vora asks, same with existing Greenville students and Mr. Cronin responds yes.
- Ms. Townes clarifies that the new campus will be 9th grade - 12th grade and Mr. Cronin responds, yes it will be the GREEN Upstate High School
- Aydin thanks Mr. Cronin for the draft and states he has concerns over changing the Midlands charter to remove the high school option as this will keep that school from the ability to look for a new location. Also states that he has been in talks with USC Upstate to build a high school there like Greenville Tech has and if the Spartanburg charter is amended that is a lost opportunity. Asks what will happen to the current Upper campus.
- Mr. Cronin states that he shares the interest in growth and to remember that this is a pause. He is specifically asking for school year 2022-2023 and has already told the district that he will be coming back to them in the future. States that current Upper campus will serve as 6th-8th grade middle school.
- Aydin asks if Lower will be K-5. Mr. Cronin states yes and would like to come back in the future and talk about early childhood education. Aydin asks if there is a way to make this only for 1 year. Mr. Cronin states that it says 2022-2021 and has been vetted by the district.
- Mr. Vora asks that if we are now changing the charter for Midlands for K-8th are we planning to come back and try for 9th in a year? Mr. Cronin states that the goal is to get support for this plan for 2022-2023 and then look forward. Mr. Vora

states that Spartanburg high school students will have the choice to go the the Upstate High school and then if the Spartanburg charter is changed to add 9-12, they would have the ability to transfer back. Asks if Spartanburg offers any college classes and Mr. Atkinson replies not at this time.

- Dr. Haque states that if GREEN can't attain excellence we shouldn't do it. We haven't excelled at high school at this point and it might take more than 1 year . Also states that opening a high school at USC Upstate isn't something that the board should consider without a strategic plan and not make false promises of 1 year or 2 years without proof. Ms. Townes agrees with Dr. Haque.
- Aydin agrees about the excellence but states that we have already established these locations and we have an obligation to fulfill expectations. If it can't be 1 year it should be as soon as possible.
- Dr. Haque states that we can't realize the dream of creating first class high schools unless we are able to demonstrate that we can do a good job as an Upstate high school and propagate this to midlands, Charleston, etc.
- Mr. Atkinson asks if after changing Spartanburg to remove K4, would there be space for 9th grade? Mr. Cronin states that he would put a hold on that idea and apologies to Spartanburg parents. He agrees that the board and exec team needs to develop a strategic plan.
- Ms. Townes clarifies that at this time, no changes are being made to Charleston charter. End of Discussion

- Vote 6-0 (**PASSES**)

11. Approval of 2022-2023 calendar

- Mr. Cronin provides draft calendar, somewhat mirrors last year and creates consistency. Early dismissal on 4 Wednesdays. Aligns with GTC Spring Break. Better alignment with shortened week after holiday break and semester ends at end of the year. No teacher comes back in June or July.
- Dr. Haque asks if this has been shared with stakeholders? Mr. Cronin stated no, this is the first time, worked with campuses and administrators to develop.
- Mr. Vora states that may need to keep in mind that parents with children at multiple campuses in Greenville will need staggered start/end times.

- Motion to amend: Townes

- Second: Haque

- Vote 6-0 (**PASSES**)

Mr. Atkinson states that the board is going to Executive Session but wants to thank the Spartanburg campus again for hosting. The canned food drive was fun, competitive, successful and made a massive impact.

12. Executive Session

- Motion to go to ES: Townes

- Seconded: Vora

- Vote 6-0 (**PASSES**)

Moved into Executive session at 7:55pm where board discussed a personnel matter.

- Motion to end ES: Townes
- Second: Wiles
- Vote (6-0) **PASSES**
 - **Out of Executive Session at 8:56pm**

13. Approval of Items from Executive Session

Nothing to approve. Mr. Atkinson thanked everyone for staying around and supporting the board.

Motion to adjourn: Townes

Vote 6-0 (PASSES)

Meeting adjourned at 9:00pm

Signed and dated:

Board Chairperson

Mandy Reeves Townes 12/7/2021

Board Secretary