

TRAILBLAZERS

A C A D E M Y



Trailblazers Academy
Board of Directors
June 27th, 2019
8:00am
Community Room
83 Lockwood Avenue
Stamford, Connecticut 06902
MEETING MINUTES

Attendees: Craig Baker, Miguel Pickering, Jamie Waggaman, Steve Baker, Edwin Naval, Curt Battles, Paul Nestro

Phoned in: Julia Snowden, Gary Goldberg

Not present: Owen Davis, Angie Tortorella

Agenda:

- **Welcome**
- **Update on SPS Funding**
- **School Director Report**
- **Board Recruitment and Development**
- **Treasurers Report**

Curt Battles – Report on Graduation

- Graduation was a big success, celebration among the students and families.
- Miguel Pickering and Craig Baker reported breakdown as to high school plans for graduates - 3 to AIT, few to Wright Tech, few also to Stamford Academy. Typically, about 10% go straight to SA, then get another 10% may return after struggling in traditional public schools.

Update on SPS Funding – Craig Baker

- Ultimately this year received 10% cut to funding, about \$50k. Plan currently, DOMUS board is talking about whether to cover that or whether program budget can be cut by that much. Overall DOMUS views as a positive, because even if DOMUS can't cover based on that amount, the amount of cut can be managed.
- Negotiating MOU with Board of Finance and Board of Representatives for going forward based on per pupil metric so enrollment number is driver. Per Craig have had these conversations with several school board members, overall board view is this is still an important part of Stamford school makeup. Will be providing updates to the board, and Steve Baker will attend meetings on behalf of the TA board.

- Need to integrate with Stamford school board members and advocate directly. Silver lining per Craig is developed further relationships with the current board members through budget process. There are several board members politically opposed to supporting a charter school.
- With midyear change of leadership, lost Earl Kim as supporter, who had political will to push rest of the board to continue to support.

School Director Report - Mr. Pickering and Craig Baker

- Recently enrolled 2 seventh graders, and an 8th grader coming in for 2019-2020 school year. Currently administration is going to fairs and organizations for recruiting.
- Suspensions ended at 7.8%, below 10% state requirement.
- Attendance 3.1% absentee, very low rate.
- STAR assessments, completed, reviewing results. Waiting for state test results to come late July or early August.
- Potential hiring report: Hiring ELL, starting program up with federal grant. Looking for 3 math teachers
- New families' brunch is planned for July, to keep families that are signed up to attend to really participate and connect to the school. Last year a second earlier event was not well attended so only keeping a July event to engage families.
- Craig noted staff had an attendance group with students who've missed significant number of days. Now this year kept below the 10% threshold, very successful.
- Craig notes that we'll be below the state average for suspensions, staff doing very hard to use restorative justice model, which is difficult but fits mission with the students.
- Gary notes we need to determine how to best convey these successes to the Stamford school board.

Treasurers Report by – Edwin Naval

- Edwin provided year to date budget updates - circulated latest budget to the board, reflects \$50k budget decrease from city of Stamford.
- Federal grants - best estimate available is included. Title I plus lunch program amounts are final. School Improvement Grant also is final.
- State grant is moving target because tied to enrollment, guessing based on information available. Current estimate is based on 133 students.
- Potential Donors / Grants
 - o Put in \$100k to be raised by TA board.
- Expenses
 - o Per feedback from the state, separated out line items for DOMUS services.
 - o Reflects all potential hires based on current information.
- Budget vs. Actual
 - o City grants have been billed but not yet paid for special education teachers and paraprofessionals.
 - o Salary variances are due to not incorporating SIG hires and also family advocate overtime.

- Administration is looking at controlling food and incentive expenses for next year.
- Budget unanimously approved by all members present.

May minutes unanimously approved by all board members present.

Craig Baker – Confirmed school commitment not to sell unhealthy food or drinks to students. Motion approved by all board members present. Board agrees to comply with the rules to not sell any such food at the school / on campus.

Meeting Adjourned