

SCHOOL IN THE SQUARE CHARTER SCHOOL

Meeting of the Board of Trustees

November 27, 2018

MEETING MINUTES

Location: School in the Square

Board Members Present (in alphabetical order): Peter Gatof (by phone), Scott Gottlieb, Scott Levenson, Aaron Listhaus, Michael Pollack (by phone), Walter Rendon, Joel Talish, and Mindy Tucker

Other Attendees: Carrie Amon, Alan Dichter, Jennifer Grazel, Bob Keogh, Cristina Melendez, Evan Meyers

Materials provided to the Board prior to the meeting: October meeting minutes, October dashboard, Meeting presentation, ED report, October financial package.

BUSINESS MEETING:

Ms. Tucker opened the meeting at 5:30.

Mr. Meyers introduced Cristina Melendez, as a nominee to the Board, and provided a brief background. Ms. Melendez also commented on her educational background and employment experience, in addition to noting her interest in S2.

Mr. Meyers presented an introduction to an 8th grade student. This student faced many challenges (both behavioral and academic) since she enrolled in S2 in the 6th grade. She achieved a level of proficiency on the last state exams, and is doing well in school both intellectually and emotionally. She is a true S2 success story.

Principal's Report: The students all participated in various community events in advance of the Thanksgiving holiday, including nursing home visits, assistance at a local bookstore, food drives and positive messaging in the community. It was well received by all participants. The school held a turkey trot and Thanksgiving feast.

Ms. Amon reviewed grades, which reflect a combination of homework, class participation and testing, across all subjects and grades in an effort to maintain consistency across all teachers in terms of methodology. Some variation noted which will be addressed, as well as the challenge faced by families in understanding the difference between class grades and test scores.

ED Report: Mr. Meyers noted that student enrollment is closed for FY2019, with a current 298 students enrolled across 3 grades. Mr. Meyers commented on the staff and discussed some of the challenges of recruitment. S2 has been fortunate in identifying a new staff member who will be starting in January. Mr. Meyers noted that S2 is working on adding to its "non-academic" staffing. Ms. Grazel mentioned several non-profit organizations that might be helpful in developing a strategy.

Several board members and S2 “friends” have or will be hosting small fundraisers. Mr. Meyers noted that he is developing and will share with others several letters that can be sent to potential donors prior to year-end.

Mr. Meyers updated the board on the school expansion. S2 will be submitting a request for a revision to its charter before December 15th requesting the admission of 50 5th graders and 100 Kindergarten students for FY2020. The following year add 75 5th graders, and 100 5th graders for FY2022. The objective is to have a dual language English/Spanish K-4 and a 5-8 location. S2 has engaged a consultant to help prepare the application. The school will be hosting a community event within the week to begin elementary school student recruitment and gauge community interest. S2 anticipates a response to the application from the SED in mid-February.

Finance Committee: Ms. Tucker noted that the October financials had been distributed prior to the meeting, and that the committee is working on presenting a dashboard of metrics for future months.

The real estate challenges and options for the school expansion was discussed. Mr. Keogh noted that in discussions with the SED, it was confirmed that a CSP grant of up to \$1.2 million over 3 years could be available for the proposed S2 expansion.

The board went into Executive session at 7:10 pm and resumed the meeting at 7:20 p.m.

Board Voting: The board voted on the following items:

- **Approval of the 10-23-18 Meeting minutes.** Mr. Talish made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from the October Board meeting. Mr. Rendon seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.
- **Nomination of Cristina Melendez to the School Board.** Mr. Gottlieb made a nominate Ms. Melendez to the S2 board, subject to a background check and approval by the SED. Mr. Listhaus seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

The meeting adjourned at 7:30 pm

Respectfully submitted: Mindy Tucker, Treasurer