

INTERNATIONAL CHARTER SCHOOL OF TRENTON

ICST Board of Trustees MINUTES for May 6, 2020

Opening of meeting, 5:30 pm. Trustees participating via telephone conference call due to the Governor's Emergency declaration on COVID-19 were Bob Kull (BK, presiding), Jason Briggs (JB) and Rachel Binz (RB) . Also present were Melissa Benford (MB, chief school administrator), Peter Lanzi (PL, Business Administrator), and David Bosted (DB). Call to Order. Flag Salute/Pledge of Allegiance. All provisions of the Open Public Meeting Law of 1976 "Sunshine Law" NJ Public Law 231 had been met in the scheduling of the meeting. The purpose of the meeting is to conduct regular business of the public charter school.

1. Minutes and Public Comment. Review and adoption of minutes for the March 4, 2020 meeting. Motion to approve noting that the April 6 meeting was also held by conference call pursuant to the Governor's E.O. emergency declaration on Covid-19 and the ICST Bylaws, m/JB, s/RB, yes, KS, RB, BK, unanimously approved. MB reported that members of the public had the opportunity to provide comments in advance but she had received no public comments for the Trustees.

2. Governance, School management. (a) MB provided an overview of the impact of COVID-19 on school operations. ICST is operating online. Parents and staff are holding up but are stressed. Several ICST parents and family members are sick. One Stepfather of an ICST student has died from the Covid-19 virus. MB noted that traffic on the streets and sidewalks of Trenton is greatly reduced. People are staying in. BK said that he was impressed and appreciative that ICST staff, students and parents were able to pivot so quickly and so successfully during this catastrophe.

(b) Vendor List for 2020-2021. Motion to approve, m/RB, s/JB, yes RB, JB, BK, unanimously approved.

(c) MB said that preliminary planning for the coming academic year is underway. MB is expecting significant budget adjustments. But if the State will seek give-backs Statewide from school staff, realize that teachers are working extra hard, and extra hours, to cope with the increased demands of operating electronically. Remote learning would likely be even more difficult in September than in April (when it was a continuation of a school year that was well-begun). New students in Kindergarten will likely have the greatest difficulty if remote learning continues into September. The State has extended its fiscal year through to the end of August, with a State Budget for FY2021 expected by August 25 and the new FY beginning September 1 (about when the new academic year begins).

3. Financial Report and Review of expenditures, income, budget. (a) Review and approval of the Board Secretary and Treasurer of School Monies reports for March and April 2020. The figures in the reports agree and were arrived at independently. Motion to approve, m/JB, s/RB, yes, JB, RB, BK. Unanimously approved. The monthly payroll totals for April, 2020 @ \$94,250.88 were reviewed and approved. m/RB, s/KS, yes RB, KS, BK, unanimous. There were no transfers of funds. (b-c) Review & approval of expenditures & resolutions to pay bill list total April 2020: \$30,680.24. Motion to approve, m/RB, s/JB, yes RB, JB, BK, unanimous. (d) Other financial information. None discussed.

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4. *Grants. Grants are being managed. Nicole Corchado and ICST teacher Katherine Palmer have obtained two small-but-useful grants to provide supplementary school supplies. 2020 New Jersey Schools Insurance Group safety grant application for \$2,000, motion to finalize the application and to accept the NJSIG grant if it is awarded to ICST, m/RB, s/JB, yes RB, JB, BK, unanimously approved.*
5. *Report on Staffing, Personnel and Employee Issues (a) MB said that distance teaching is stressful on the ICST teachers. They receive calls early in the morning and late into the night. (b) MB reported that one non-teaching staff member has been given a notice of non-renewal. There were no other significant employee issues for Board review or action.*
6. *Executive Session (optional, no exec session held).*
7. *Status Reports on Legislation, Regulations and significant Litigation. "Under the Gold Dome." Harry Lee of NJPCSA has provided a report each day on the Governor's daily Covid press conference which is held at the War Memorial Building Ballroom, which has a raised stage. The Governor has emphasized the financial crisis from Covid-19. This week he vetoed eight (8) bills that would have increased State expenditures. MB reported attending several webinars focused on continuing services to students and families during this period of remote education. NJPCSA has been holding weekly call-in events to keep members informed. NJPCSA has also conducted surveys of members, electronically.*
8. *Report on School Days, Student Achievement, Attendance and Enrollment. (a) MB reported that students were focused and learning during of April. 100% of students are on-line and submitting work. Parents are participating in the transition to an online school. (b) Third-Quarter Report Cards were distributed on-schedule. Grades K, 1 and 2 have shifted entirely to P/F. Other grades have the option to do so for the final marking period. (c.) Attendance and online participation are strong and we continue to be fully enrolled. Attendance is monitored through submitted school work and logs from digital websites. As usual, some ICST students will be leaving for 4th grade after being recruited by other local charter schools that have Middle School grade levels.*
9. *Report on Facility. (a) The building is mostly empty. There are no students inside the school building. Food is distributed at the rear entrance to about 25 participating families. Food waste has been kept to a minimum. (b) Keep It Clean continues to sanitize, but at a reduced cleaning schedule.*
10. *School Operations (a) The ICST teachers have successfully adapted to the use of interactive online technology to educate the ICST students during this emergency, but not without difficulties. (b) MB said there were no HIB reports for April. ICST staff continues to monitor on-line activity to the extent possible. (c) MB reported that no emergency drills were conducted this past month due to the school being shut down. School districts and CSs are awaiting NJDOE guidance on this.*
11. *Old (unfinished) Business. None discussed. 12. Correspondence review, if any. None discussed.*
13. *Trustee business and announcements. Upcoming scheduled BOT 5:15 meetings: 06/03, 07/01, 08/05. 14. Adjourn. 6:35 PM*