

## STEM School Board of Directors Meeting

July 16, 2019  
5:30pm – 7:30pm  
High School Commons

8773 Ridgeline Blvd. | Highlands Ranch, CO | 80129

### MINUTES

#### I. Call to Order

##### i Roll Call

- Meeting called to order at 5:30 PM
- Directors present: Mark Alpert, Rudy Lukez, Jeff Berg, Roy Martinez, Nicole Smith, Thomas Wendling, Heidi Elliott, and Brian Sapp. Tracy Scroggins was present via telecom.
- Other attendees: Penny Eucker, Karen Johnson, one state legislator on the State Safety and Wellness Committee, one student, and approximately 23 parents.

##### ii Pledge of Allegiance

- Mark Alpert initiated.

#### II. Reciting of the Mission Statement

- Rudy Lukez read the mission statement.

#### III. Review and approval of previous board meeting minutes

- Brian Sapp motioned to approve the 5/14/2019 minutes.
- Heidi Elliott seconded.
- All directors approved.
- Thomas Wendling motioned to approve the 6/4/2019 minutes.
- Heidi Elliott seconded.
- All directors approved except Rudy Lukez who abstained.
- Brian Sapp motioned to approve the 6/29/2019 minutes.
- Nicole Smith seconded.
- All directors approved.

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**IV. Safety and Wellness Committee- Mark Alpert, board president**

- Brian Sapp is Chair of the committee and Heidi Elliott is another director on the committee.
- The School will have a full-time School Resource Officer (SRO) and a full-time security guard when students return to School on 8/7/2019.
- An outside mental health expert, Dr. John Nicoletti, is providing the committee advice.
- The committee is seeking a security expert for additional advice.
- The committee has a short-term goal of supporting the first day of classes (8/7/2019) while posturing for a long-term focus.

**V. Logistics for the opening of 2019-2020- P.J. Eucker PhD, executive director**

- The eleven classrooms that were offline because of investigation of the events of 5/7/2019 consisting of approximately 20000 ft<sup>2</sup> have been release for School use. The remodel will reconfigure classrooms 107 and 109 equipping those classrooms with state-of-the-art technology and furniture. The target for completion is between fall break and Thanksgiving. A student survey will allow student feedback on what they would like to see in the remodeled area.
- The School plans to have several community and student mental health discussions and a mental health night where specialists will outline assistance avenues.
- Playfield construction is on schedule. The playfield includes plans for a Kendrick Castillo memorial spirit garden with a Jeep theme.
- Repaving the two parking lots has a planned completion prior to the start of the school year.
- STEM teacher attrition was approximately 16% prior to 5/7 and an additional 13% after bringing the total to 29% as compared to 14% last year. DCSD attrition between the 2017-18 and 2018-19 academic years was 14%. Average Colorado charter school teacher attrition has historically been 36%.
- The School is interviewing applicants to fill the Communications Officer position.
- The School is addressing the conditions of the Charter Renewal Contract.
- The approximate employee cost for full coverage health and vision benefits is \$40/month.

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- Recovery and healing from the events on 5/7/19 continue. The Executive Director suggested that the process seemed appropriately illustrated by a phoenix rising from the ashes.

## **VI. Public comment**

Comment almost exclusively focused on student wellness and safety.

- A parent of two K-5 students advocated for instituting a Watch D.O.G.S. (dads of great students) program offering to donate the \$450 startup cost.
- A parent with three students, one at each of the three school levels, presented comments on the remodel of the recently released space emphasizing the importance of the remodel to the recovery process. The parent recommended widespread dissemination of the schedule for student feedback sessions and making a written feedback option available.
- A parent that has been involved with the Student Wellness and Safety Committee said that his understanding was that the committee would provide recommendations to the STEM School Board of Directors and that the committee has yet to develop that posture. Mark Alpert pointed out that the committee is still in the formative stages.
- A parent suggested the need for additional mental health specialists. The Executive Director explained that the School has 4 counselors, 2 social workers and 1 psychologist or a ratio of roughly 250 students per counselor. The School plans to add another specialist and a case manager. Additionally, all staff will engage in more training in the area including but not limited to threat assessment.
- A parent recommended Google-type mental wellness solutions like play areas and hammocks stressing the need for students to be outside more. Mark Alpert encouraged the parent to become involved with the Student Wellness and Safety Committee.
- A parent recommended improve safety drills and changing the voice on alert announcements. Another parent supported these recommendations. The School will announce the first drill of the school year beforehand and will change the voice of the alert announcements.
- A parent suggested that STEM School might reach out to other Colorado schools particularly those in neighboring districts to determine alternative approaches to student wellness and safety.

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#### **VII. Draft Whistleblower revision to staff and student/parent handbook-Tracy Scroggins**

- Tracy Scroggins summarized the draft of the whistleblower policy.
- Heidi Elliot asked if the whistleblower policy together with the student/parent handbook would satisfy the charter renewal condition of a parent complaint and communication policy. Mark Alpert indicated that the Board would oversee the development of a separate parent complaint and communication policy which would complement and be consistent with the whistleblower policy and the student/parent handbook.
- Rudy Lukez suggested consultation with legal counsel as to appropriate language to include contractors working for the School in section 1 of the policy.
- Roy Martinez recommended that references to the School Board specify the STEM School Board to avoid confusion with the DSCD School Board.
- Once finalized, the policy will be available on the School website.
- Directors are to send feedback to Tracy by the end of the week. The updated draft will be considered at the next BOD meeting.

#### **VIII. Class A Director elections- Rudy Lukez**

- Rudy Lukez will work with Mike Pritchard to update eligible members and load all eligible members into the voting system. The BOD rescheduled the election which was originally scheduled to be open from May 10<sup>th</sup> to May 17<sup>th</sup> to the week of August 12<sup>th</sup>.
- The election is for two positions. To align class A director terms with STEM School Bylaws, the election for the position currently held by Brian Sapp will be for a two-year term and the election for the position currently held by Heidi Elliott will be for a three-year term. Both incumbents are nominees for their respective positions. Additionally, one to two other nominees are running for each position.
- The fee to conduct the online election is approximately \$1000.
- 25% of the membership constitutes a quorum. Roy Martinez stressed the importance of a quorum so that the decision does not revert to the BOD. Jeff Berg encouraged strong participation to further demonstrate significant member involvement in matters important to the School.

#### **IX. Policy adoption for enrollment- revising for the new contract**

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- Conditions of the charter renewal contract require policy revision to affect waitlist enrollment priority for potential students residing within district over potential students residing outside of the district.
- Heidi Elliott indicated the change would lead to primarily students who reside in the district at the School.
- Mark Alpert indicated that revisions awaited a finalized charter renewal contract which might lead to the need for a side letter addressing enrollment policy requirements.

**X. Conflict of Interest policy**

- Directors agreed to individually complete and sign the DCSD Charter Board Conflict of Interest Form in the most recent charter renewal contract.

**XI. Adjourn public session**

- Rudy Lukez motioned to convene to executive session.
- Brian Sapp seconded.
- All directors approved.

**XII. Convene executive session**

*The Board may vote to recess into executive session pursuant to:*

C.R.S. § 24-6-402(4)(e)(I): Determining positions relative to matters that may be subject to negotiations; developing strategy for negotiations; and instructing negotiators

C.R.S. § 24-6-402(4)(b): Conferences with an attorney for the local public body for the purposes of receiving legal advice

- Rudy Lukez motioned to reconvene open session.
- Brian Sapp seconded.
- Rudy Lukez motioned to adjourn session.
- Heidi Elliot seconded.
- All directors approved.