

Beacon Academy Charter District 4124
 Regular Board Meeting Minutes, August 19, 2021, 6:30 p.m.
 3415 Louisiana Ave N, Crystal, MN 55427
Beacon Academy is authorized by Innovative Quality Schools
P.O Box 580, Hutchinson, MN 55350

CALL TO ORDER Wendy Terry called the meeting to order to at 6:33p.m.

1.ROLL CALL present at time of meeting unless otherwise noted	Present	Absent
Board Member		
Wendy Terry (President)	✓	
Kris Gapinski (Vice President)	✓	
Aaron Price (Treasurer)	✓	
Paige Roth (Secretary)		✓
Elizabeth Brobeck	✓	
Matheu Weidenbach	✓	
Joanna Pederson	✓	
Elizabeth Warpinski	✓	
	✓	
Sean Koster(ex-officio)	✓	
Mike Reeder (ex-officio)	✓	
Mike Pocrnich (ex-officio)	✓	

MISC. ATTENDEES: SHELBY NELSON, MICHAEL VU CHU, MARY PETERS, RACHEL BENSON, ALYSSA RODER, KIM REID, DANIELLE WITTICH, LINDSAY GRASKE, ELIZABETH JAEN

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

(Choral reading of the Pledge of Allegiance)

3. BEACON MISSION STATEMENT

(Choral reading of the Beacon Academy Mission Statement)

4. Approval of Agenda

Motion:	To approve the agenda							
Made by:	*Kris Gapinski				Seconded by:	*Matheu Weidenbach		
Discussion:								
Vote:	Member	Yea	Nay	Abstain	Member	Yea	Nay	Abstain
	Aaron Price	x			Paige Roth			X-absent
	Wendy Terry	x			Elizabeth Brobeck	x		
	Matheu Weidenbach	x			Elizabeth Warpinski	x		
	Joanna Pederson	x						
	Kris Gapinski	x						
Decision:	Passes							

5. Seating of New Board Members: We are seating one new board member. Joanna Pederson affirmed her oath of office.

6. Public Comment

The board will recognize anyone from the public who wants to speak at this time. The board reserves the right to limit the time of the public comment. The public will not have the opportunity to speak or comment on any agenda item after the public comment has passed.

Comments:

Rachel Benson has a first grader and entering kindergarten. She brought her children here because of the character development and not implementing a masking for children especially those that can't get the vaccine. She lives with family members that have cancer and keeping them safe is important.

John Hunt has a second grader this fall. At the beginning of the summer we were at the beginning of the Delta variant. We didn't know what we know now. We have a lot of kids here and they are the ones that are getting sick. Also, have family with cancer at home and can't take the risk. Parents are concerned and maybe not here tonight. Go with the science and not the feelings.

Michael Chu has a child here. Last week had 4 family members pass away of COVID. Afraid of sending daughter because she can't get the vaccine. He loves his daughter and does not want to lose her.

Shelby Neslon is here to speak about the political activity policy. She leads a club that supports black lives and wants to make sure to be an advocate for all students to feel included. She is unsure what the policy will pan out to be but wants to advocate for the students.

Elizabeth Jaen is here to talk about the COVID variant. The pressures she has faced have come at a great price. She feels like she is facing a great difficulty in sending her daughter to school without a mask. She won't be able to see her grandmother until June if she goes to school without a mask. We have to look at what is happening in the world and take note.

She also wants to speak about the policy being proposed about Prohibited Political Activity. She is unsure if it's administration or the committee that wants to implement this policy. Think about why you choose a charter school. All discussions are political. Please bring the policy to the public so everyone has the chance to know what is going on with this particular policy.

Wendy commented that we will be discussing the policy after feedback from our attorney. We will not be approving that policy but having discussion about sending it back to Governance.

7. Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Board members read the agenda and disclose if they have any real or perceived conflict of interest with any agenda items.

8. Approval of the Consent Agenda:

Motion:	To approve the consent agenda							
Made by:	* Aaron Price			Seconded by:	*Elizabeth Warpinski			
Discussion:								
Vote:	Member	Yea	Nay	Abstain	Member	Yea	Nay	Abstain
	Aaron Price	x			Paige Roth			x-absent
	Wendy Terry	x			Elizabeth Brobeck	x		
	Matheu Weidenbach	x			Elizabeth Warpinski	x		
	Joanna Pederson	x						

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Kris Gapinski	x				
Decision: Passes					
A. Approval of Minutes: Regular Board Meeting – July 22, 2021 B. Staffing Update C. Policy, Second Review <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 208 Development, Adoption and Implementation of Policies 2. 305 Policy Implementation 3. 306 Educational Administrator Code of Ethics 4. 716 Use of Electronic Signature to Conduct Official Business 					

9. Board Reports

A. Finance Committee, Mike Pocrnich

1. Review/Approve July 2021 Financial Report

- the audit is on its way. Because we have expended in excess of \$750k in federal funds we need to have an additional audit. This is due to the COVID funds we received. We are ballparking \$600k in surplus and we are looking very good right now.
- the committee met, and we are very early in the fiscal year so not much going on. We will see a slew of expenses coming through with the start of the new year. Cash is at 1.75 million. Year to date fund balance is \$2,336,612.
- updated numbers with enrollment projections will come in October. We will need to adjust based on the real numbers. We budget conservatively with enrollment and that has a domino effect on the budget. Current ADM is 615.

Motion: To approve the finance report as presented:								
Made by: *Aaron Price				Seconded by: *Elizabeth Brobeck				
Discussion:								
Vote:	Member	Yea	Nay	Abstain	Member	Yea	Nay	Abstain
	Aaron Price	x			Paige Roth			x-absent
	Wendy Terry	x			Elizabeth Brobeck	x		
	Matheu Weidenbach	x			Elizabeth Warpinski	x		
	Joanna Pederson	x						
	Kris Gapinski	x						
Decision: Passes								

2. ADM and Lease Aid Training

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-ADM is Average Daily Membership and that is how we budget. We start high and then level off as the year goes on. One ADM is one student. We have about 180 contact days. If a student comes part way through the year that number gets weighted.

-Pupil Units is there because there is a weighting that happens for different grade levels. Pupil units is how the state pays us. This is important. The students get more expensive to educate so we get more as a student progresses through the grades. Lease Aid Revenue is how we are able to pay for the building. This is also based on pupil units. As our enrollment slides so does our revenue and lease aid.

B. Executive Director – Sean Koster

1. Enrollment Report

- Last year about January, we cut about \$500,000 out of the budget. We are currently at 550 students. Unfortunately, we are seeing 2-3 families enroll and then we have a family call because they moved. The PPP loan got us through a certain period of time but we have to look at what the deficit will look like with the current enrollment. Adjusted budget report will be coming in October as we look at enrollment and what that does to our budget.

2. COVID Leadership Team Update

a. Masking: Sean sent an email to families today. The COVID team has made the decision to look at the data and make a decision on August 25th. We are looking at county data and even though it's rising the data is two weeks behind. Sean brought the vote early to the COVID leadership team and the team was not ready to vote. We have districts around us that are already making decisions. Our team was not ready to make that decision. Masking is still optional, but we will be looking at the data and will be making a decision. Sean is sorry that he didn't prep the team earlier. We have a democratic process and that is how we operate in all aspects of the school. We are continuing with home screenings and sending students home when they are sick.

We have MERV 13 air filters on our roof top units. We are doing all the cleaning of the rooms and making sure student wash hands and sanitize.

Social distancing is hard. As we look at the cafeteria for example; we will have inconsistencies in that we may mask during the day but once they get to the cafeteria they are in tight quarters with no masking while eating. We also have to look at movement in hallways, etc.

The team looked at different plans and plan C is a blended learning option. Last year the emergency orders said all schools need to go online. This year DL and Hybrid have been moved off because the executive order has expired. Blended learning is the new option and we had to apply for that in case of an emergency. We were approved for the blended learning in case of an emergency.

b. Quarantining: We have options to quarantine and that will be looked at when we make a decision next week.

Sean said that he has a survey ready to go that he will consider sending to our families.

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Elizabeth Warpinski asked what the actual issue was in making the decision. Sean explained it was a difference of opinion on the team and he is not going to bring the discussion to the board level.

Aaron mentioned that the reason for having the COVID team make decisions was to make the decision quickly and maybe we need to reaffirm that decision. Sean commented that the decision is not easy and if the committee made the decision to mask on Monday the question would not have been asked. The fact is other districts around us made a decision already and that affects how people are feeling.

Joanna was looking at the enrollment report and commented about the percentage of students that won't be able to get vaccinated. Also, the CDC says that people that are not vaccinated shouldn't be unmasked. Shouldn't we be looking at the science? Sean mentioned the inconsistency in social distancing, quarantine and staffing.

Joanna mentioned that Robbinsdale has mandated masks and the COVID team should remember that. Even though we don't pull all our kids from that district those families would be going back to that district if they left. Also, as a teacher she knows its easier to be stricter early on than try to enforce something later.

Elizabeth W. stated that the comment was made that we don't tell families what we to do but we do because we have a uniform policy. A mask is a piece of fabric. Sean said it is hard because people have opinions about masks and if it's the right thing for their family.

Elizabeth Brobeck asked if the COVID leadership team makes the decision will they still meeting weekly. Sean said the discussion has happened.

Kris G. asked if the decision to mask would be for the year or would it be looked at by date? Sean said there would be touch points and any decisions would be looked at.

Matheu asked about the next COVID leadership meeting and what would be discussed; just a decision or other discussions? Sean mentioned that there is a MDH call just before the meeting and that is usually discussed as well.

Wendy mentioned that it might be a good idea to survey the families and community to get a handle as to what might be ahead and start preparing the implication on the decision. Sean clarified that the survey should have a question about if families would leave based on a decision to mask or not. Aaron disagreed that we aren't using the information for a decision so what does it matter? Kris mentioned that it sounds like that would make our decision. And that is not going to determine whether we mask or not.

Wendy mentioned that the board affirmed in January that the COVID leadership team has the ability to make decisions.

The board recessed at 7:51 p.m
 The board reconvened at 7:59 p.m.

C. Board Training

1. Board Roles and Responsibilities

- The boards main job is to govern policy, budget, pay scale, student behavior and employment standards
- As a board we are looking at the whole of the school, not just as a teacher, a parent or community member. We have to look at the forest, not just the trees.
- The administration is in charge of the daily operation of the school.
- The executive board works on the goals of the executive director, etc.
- The committees of the board have board members and other community members on them. Committees of the board are Executive, Governance, Finance, Curriculum, ERCC and Fund Development.

D. Curriculum Committee

-no report

E. Fund Development Task Force

-one person is interested in grant writing this year. The first or fourth Tuesday will be the meeting date.

F. Governance Committee

1. 443 Prohibited Political Activity Policy

-Our legal counsel looked at the policy and had some feedback. The policy is being put forth to make sure that all students in our very diverse community feel safe in sharing ideas and putting ideas out. Our legal counsel wants some further definition and clarity. Because there are a number of things that are being suggested it is best to send this policy back to Governance and have them do a reset and then bring it back to the board. Committee meetings are public meetings and the public are allowed to attend meetings and observe. The committee chair has the ability to determine public participation at the meeting.

-Joanna asked for clarity about the policy and what it means. Wendy explained that a student in a classroom should not know how their teacher votes and there has been feedback from families that the students are uncomfortable knowing this and it's concerning to them. Because we are diverse, we are creating a space where we can have conversations and listen to opposing views. Joanna asked a clarification about social justice and some of the students and staff that identify with a group and how comfortable they feel.

-Sean gave a couple of examples for clarity from our attorney. These examples were about signs, political statements and social justice slogans being a hidden agenda whether it's intended that way or not.

-The policy will be a first reading when it is brought back in September.

Motion:	To send the Prohibited Political Activity Policy back to Governance for further development:							
Made by:	*Lizzie Warpinski			Seconded by:			*Aaron Price	
Discussion:								
Vote:	Member	Yea	Nay	Abstain	Member	Yea	Nay	Abstain
	Aaron Price	x			Paige Roth			x-absent
	Wendy Terry	x			Elizabeth Brobeck	x		

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Matheu Weidenbach	x	Elizabeth Warpinski	x		
Joanna Pederson	x				
Kris Gapinski	x				
Decision: Passes					

-One additional comment: We need to keep in mind that we have many black students that haven't felt supported and how do we show support to them? Wendy suggested that the admin would provide guidance to the staff.

G. Employee Retention and Compensation Committee

1. Facilities Update

-the committee met twice since last month's board meeting to look at the facilities pay scale. There is a proposal in front of you. There are two scales being proposed: one for a supervisor and one for a staff person. Also, there would be a 1/2 year given for years of experience which is different than the original scale. Both positions would be salaried, but the proposed facilities staff scale has the hourly for comparison. The request from the facilities staff for a scale like this has come the last three years. With a person leaving it was time to take a look at this and come with a proposal. The committee would like to have a vote this month.

Motion:	To approve the updated and proposed facilities pay scales:							
Made by:	*Lizzie Warpinski				Seconded by:	*Joanna Pederson		
Discussion:								
Vote:	Member	Yea	Nay	Abstain	Member	Yea	Nay	Abstain
	Aaron Price	x			Paige Roth			x-absent
	Wendy Terry	x			Elizabeth Brobeck	x		
	Matheu Weidenbach	x			Elizabeth Warpinski	x		
	Joanna Pederson	x						
	Kris Gapinski	x						
Decision: Passes								

H. Executive Committee

-Wendy is in conversation with a possible community member for the board. Hope to bring a recommendation in September. If you know of someone else please send them to Wendy. It's an appointment to fill the vacancy through June.

-The board retreat is next week. An email will be coming with an agenda and documents. No decisions will be made. It's just a retreat.

-There will be big picture road map of the year. Committees that have a review cycle or schedule for the year should send information to Wendy.

-Also, the next board meeting is September 23rd.

Adjournment

Board Retreat- Thursday, August 26th at 6:00 p.m.

Old Business- None

Action Items- None

NEXT MEETING IS September 23, 2021

MOTION TO ADJOURN

Motion to adjourn at 8:42 pm forwarded by Kris Gapinski seconded by Matheu Weidenbach. Approved unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 8:42 pm.

Approved on _____

Paige Roth, Secretary
Beacon Academy School Board