Liberty Tech Charter School Board Meeting

Monday, Aug. 13, 2018

Members in attendance: Mike Boylan, Stacee Lewis, James Fiderio, Eric Ochsner, Andrea Ferguson, Mike Stewart, Doug Waldorf, Joe Starr, Esther Goss, Kenneth Hammer

Meeting called to order 7:05: Motion - Eric Second – Doug - Approved 6-0

Motion to move to executive session – Eric, second – Stacee – Approved 6-0

Motion to adjourn executive session 7:22

Kenneth Hammer joined board

Public Comments: None

Principal’s report – Eric asks about grades being below 50 percent math scores on MAP scores in spring. Mike says our model was challenging for math teachers – no resources, create it on their own. They like step by step, what they can follow, logical. We gave them standards, but creatively coming up with how to reach it was not comfortable for most. Grades that show most growth – younger grades. 3rd grade teachers had natural skill for creating. Interested to see if having math curriculum this year will make a difference, seems like it already is. Bottom quartile didn’t get a lot of help last year, taught to the middle. Addition of EIP this year will help that as well.

Eric asks if we only lost one student. Looked like we lost more in first few weeks in past. Only lost one so far. Lowest number of withdrawals so far – six YTD. Reason has been commute, not programming.

Eric asks about infractions – two in-school, one suspension, typical or rough first week? Mike says not typical, but not rough first week either. It was known students with issues, make a firm statement this year.

Milestones – Eric says it might be interesting for academic committee to take statistics and graph them out to find trends and data. Mike says we only have two years, not a lot of trends. **(Action item – Academic committee to look for trends)**.

Andrea says we can also look at similar schools - put it under About Us on web site.

Summer camp messaging – Completed 2nd summer camp, don’t see continuing it. Juice isn’t worth the squeeze. Major drain on resources, finances and staffing. Only 40 kids in last week of attendance. Wasn’t adding anything to academic, taking away from staff morale. Take summer camp officially off the schedule – carefully crafted message. Sooner rather than later. It was done as a concession, one of reasons state charter school commission was amenable to our amending our charter. Eric asks if we can put it to a vote? Joe says we need to bring it up to the state before we do anything. Doug says we should put it on an agenda for upcoming meeting to let families know about, talk about it. **(Action: Joe will work with Eric on drafting message to state to ask about it).**

CSP visit – Authorize to go up to $775,000 , ordered all chromebooks, math and classicial curriculum, will order interactive boards and lab space. Need to get bids for interactive panels and lab work. Just bringing furniture and equipment items in. Our network isn’t set up for all of this. Doing network work right now. Utilities will go up. Will need a more expensive internet option. We’re not sure if our electrical frame will hold it – charging all these Chrome carts. Andrea says we can get an assessment to know what limitations are. Mike worried that building can’t hold what we’re wanting to do. We can’t let kids take them home because grant is federal funds and we need to show that asset when audited. Esther wonders about setting timers – thermostat off, sequence it. Mike open to all ideas. Eric says great STEM problem for kids.

Budget amendment that was sent needs a vote – HB 787 – It came in, not asmuch as predicted - $500 per kid - $200,000 we didn’t have – also reflects increase in CSP, IDEA and Title 2 funds. Yellow items were highlighted changes, biggest of which – just because we had $200,000 didn’t want to spend it all – put some of it into employee benefits (they went up 34 percent from last year, 21 percent increase year before) $650 contribution over $6000 contribution for benefits – reasonable. Without, it would be hard getting talented educators. **(Action – Doug will look at healthcare options, just to see if there was anything we could do).**

Eric motion to approve budget as amended, Andrea second – approved unanimously.

Federal programs information – Have to accept federal programs submission – only accepting Title 2 and IDEA – easy to monitor. Title 1, 3 and 9 not worth it due to rigorous monitoring, Eric asks about putting in stretch goals, would like to see what the stretch goals are – it looks like expectations and not goals.

PTO Report – Celesta McGee Starlite Night, 229 people paid to get in– raised $697 for school.

Next events – Fall Festival, Grandparent’s Day and Veterans Day - Disney program, can earn 20 tickets to Disney and raffle them off – put towards board’s fundraising event.

Conversation – feedback – change of so many board members, vision activity, see that we have a common vision in mind – what we see for Liberty Tech – articulate school that we imagine.

Original vision, STEM and classical foundation, year-round basis, something community didn’t have. Excel at their own pace, not leave others behind. 210 day calendar didn’t meet needs of families with students in other schools. Dropping high school from charter was painful for board – couldn’t find a way to make it work.

Eric – will we ever be a high school? Is that part of future vision? Would take a lot of money, data to support discussion with commission, this is why strategic plan is so important. Stacee wants to restructure mission and vision of school – vision statement is more like a motto instead of a vision. We should asks students what they want, ask parents what they want their children to learn. Mike doesn’t think high school is a viable option, despite wanting to see his son stay here all 13 years.

We are a Pre-K through 8 school, STEM-based, classical education. (Students at center of everything) Building a person, not a test-taker. Excellence. Great school. Great people. **(Action: Andrea send your notes, thoughts, vision/mission)**

Authentic learning experience, may not mean we hit 98 percent CCRPI – our model, best we’ve seen is 92 percent.

What makes people want to come here when we are surrounded by great (highest performing) schools? Project based, hands-on, not just test prep, - prepare for life after test. Our learning environment separates us. We want to perform well but that is secondary measure. Put student at center of what we do.

Increasing classical, most in middle school right now –

Work in virtual creation – coding, etc. (Alice in Wonderland virtual, AR)

Celesta McGee parent – Looking for other option for middle school, not discipline and drama, focus on education, kids love it, don’t sit at a desk all day. Collaborate and work with friends, problem-solve, create,

Andrea real world collaboration in the community, incorporate local industry into our curriculum, let them know what we are doing. Invite to exhibition nights, lay groundwork for fundraising,

Character training, virtues, really at center of what we do too.

What is one thing we do better than anybody?

**Action: Set up a special meeting to talk about strategy, rebranding, etc.**

Esther talked to FCBOE about extending lease for school, will look over audit, may have some equipment donated to school.

Eric motion to approve June minutes, Doug second – approved

Eric Motion to approve July minutes, Stacee second – approved

Development committee – Reminder about upcoming events, golf tournament – wanted to challenge get a team or part of a team – or help with businesses sponsor a hole, contest, etc.

Eric Motion to adjourn 8:50 p.m. – Doug second – approved