



**Urban Academy Charter School
School Board Meeting
October 19, 2020
Saint Paul, Minnesota**

MINUTES

Board Members:	Ex-Officio Members:	Advisory Members:
Melissa Jensen	Mongsher Ly	Luis Brown-Pena
Tamara Mattison		Ralph Elliott
Fong Lor		
Nancy Smith		
Caley Long		
Yu Yin Liao		
Ronsoie Xiong		
Chao Yang		

Staff and Guests Attending:		
Tony Lang from UA		
Jean Newman from NEO		

Meeting called to order by Melissa Jensen, Board Chair at 6:03 PM via Zoom webinar

Acceptance of Agenda

Corrections made: none

Board Motion: Approve the agenda

Board Member motioning to approving agenda: Yang

Board Member seconding the motion: Xiong

Discussion: none

Unanimously approved

Conflict of Interest

None to report

Approval of September 22, 2020 Minutes

Board Motion: to approve the minutes

Board Member motioning to approve the minutes: Mattison

Board Member seconding the motion: Long

Discussion: none

Unanimously approved

Reports/Presentation

Mr. Tony gave an academic presentation:

-Phone calls daily and packets going out every Tuesday to cover five days; layout is consistent across grades for parent ease

-Chrome Books went home with the older students; some students using Facetime with teachers, Google Meets, Zoom, or a special Facebook page as well as texting with parents

- Grades 4 – 7 are using Google Classroom
- The goal is that by November 1, all students will have access to virtual mini lessons
- Pre-K – grade 3 we are slowly integrating technology but teachers are primarily using telephone
- Once new Chromebooks are sent we'll have them for every single students
- Challenges during this time: slow internet speeds with multiple kids online at one home; coordinating students with multiple teachers; getting students to attend to all questions in their packets. Teachers are actively working to help families and children with coordinating and moving through these challenges.
- Successes during this time: 80-90% attendance rate; new social worker on board to help build relationships; 7th grade is running very well with our new teachers; and all teachers are learning new strategies to teach remotely.

Board Member Reports/Ex-Officio Member Presentations:

Board Chair, Melissa Jensen: nothing new to report

Board Finance Chair, Dr. Tamara Mattison: reviewed last month's Financial Snapshot for details for fund balances and expenditures; see attachment

Superintendent, Dr. Ly:

ADMINISTRATIVE/COVID-19 DISCUSSION

- Per our discussion at the beginning of this academic year, we agreed to re-assess our distance learning plan this month. With cases rising and worsening, there is great concern with hybrid learning. Staff has called some parents to survey their thoughts and about 90% of parents did not want their students to return in-person. In discussion with MDE, MDH, MACS and the Governor, there are many ongoing problems: some charters have closed as have other school districts. Given the current HVAC system in our building, it doesn't seem feasible to ensure proper ventilation and with the flu season and holidays around the corner, it does not seem reasonable or responsible to re-open for hybrid learning at this time. Dr. Ly would like to review again after winter break to re-assess.
- Our COVID-19 plans and hybrid and distance plans are in place and are available to review. There is a COVID-19 committee at UA as well.
- Dr. Ly would like to have a special meeting in December to re-assess plans.

Motion: to approve the decision to remain with distance learning and conduct a special board meeting in December to reassess

Board member motioning to approve: Lor

Board member seconding the motion: Yang

Discussion: none

Unanimously approve

FACILITY

- New building is fully done; board members welcome to come and check it out. There were discussions to put four classrooms in old cafeteria, but that is no longer acoustically possible given the space. We're currently in discussion to build out that downstairs of the building to create spaces for 7 and 8 grades in the building. Cost would be \$200,000 to get the cafeteria up to code for buildings; Dr. Ly opened up the project for discussion as we do have both the funds and time to complete the project. Estimated completion end of January 2021. Our strong and healthy fund balance would support the financial needs of the project and UA Finance Manager is in agreement.

Motion: to approve the estimated \$200,000 build-out of the current cafeteria to build classrooms

Board member motioning to approve: Yang

Board member seconding the motion: Lor

Discussion: none
Unanimously approved

ACADEMICS:

- See Mr. Tony's report
- All of Chrome Books went home and we're still waiting on our back-order from June. We're hoping they arrive before end of November. Nationally there is a huge shortage because of distance learning. Ronnie shared that the units themselves are quite inexpensive and are a good fit for schools and the way we use the devices. They have typing, camera and Internet capabilities.

OPERATIONS

- Lease aid FY 2020 still pending as MDE wants blueprints of new building to appropriate funds for this year and last year based on final square footage. MDE has the information they need.
- Audit complete and done. Will invite Stacy to our November meeting to discuss the report.

COMMUNITY:

- Coat drive underway: please drop off at Urban before November 17.
- Non-perishable food drive underway too. Please drop off at UA as it will be a tough holiday season for many of our families.
- Toys for Tots and Securian are helping with holiday gift drive.
- No holiday meal this year so we need to do everything we can to rally for our families. Donations accepted M-F from 8 – 4 pm.

BOARD:

- No items to discuss.

Motion: to approve the board member reports

Board member motioning to approve the board member reports: Lor

Board member seconding the motion: Xiong

Discussion: none

Unanimously approved

Board Consent Agenda:

Motion: to approve the board consent agenda

Board member motioning to approve the board consent agenda: Yang

Board member seconding the motion: Lor

Discussion: none

Unanimously approved

Old Business:

- None

New Business:

- Board retreat has been postponed to August 20-22, 2021 due to COVID-19. Please plan on attending next year!
- See Mongsher's email on board training survey and please respond by end of first week of November

Open Public Comments (Limited to 2 minutes)

- None

Board Motion: To adjourn the meeting at 7:12 PM

Board Member motioning to approve to adjourn the meeting: Xiong

Board member seconding the motion: Yang
Unanimously approved
Meeting adjourned at 7:13 PM

**Next board meeting November 16, 2020 at 6:00pm via
Zoom!**