

INTERNATIONAL CHARTER SCHOOL of TRENTON

105 Grand Street, Trenton, NJ 08611

Board of Trustees Minutes for March 28, 2024

Opening of meeting, 5:19 PM. Call to Order. Flag Salute/Pledge of Allegiance. All provisions of the Open Public Meeting Law of 1976 "Sunshine Law" NJ Public Law 231 have been met in the scheduling of the meeting. The purpose of the meeting is to conduct regular business of the public charter school. Present at ICST or virtually were Trustees Valeen Vaccaro (VV), Rachel Binz (RB) and Bob Kull (BK, presiding). Also attending were ICST school principal April Nixon (AN), CSA Melissa Benford (MB), Peter Lanzi (PL), and note-taker David Bosted (DB). Call to Order. Flag Salute/Pledge of Allegiance. MB reported that members of the public had the opportunity to provide comments in person or in advance or to join the meeting but she had received no public comments for the Trustees and no requests to join the meeting.

1. Minutes and Public Comment. Review of minutes for the February 29, 2024 meetings. Motion to approve the minutes, m/ RB, 2nd VV, yes, RB, VV and BK, unanimous approval.

2. Governance, School management. (a) The Trustees reviewed the proposed budget of \$2,119,685.00 for 2024-25. The budget is based on current State Aid projections. m/VV, s/RB, yes VV, RB, BK, unanimously approved.

(b) 2024-25 School Calendar. AN said the proposed calendar includes the 180 required school days. The calendar was developed with teacher input. Motion to approve, m/ RB, 2nd VV, yes, RB, VV and BK, unanimous approval. (c) Updated board policy 3542.1 Local Wellness and school policy for parents, m/VV, s/RB, yes VV, RB, BK, unanimously approved.

(d) Food Service Review findings—breakfast After the Bell (BAB). AN reported that the NJ State food service reviewer wants ICST to have breakfast eaten in the classrooms during instruction. At ICST, instruction begins at 8:05. Every school day the cafeteria opens at 7:30 AM and 73 of 108 ICST students receive free breakfast meals. This is much higher than the State average. Loss of high-quality instruction time at the beginning of the school day is a serious issue. There will be a minor funding loss for not implementing BAB this year, as well the increased potential for vermin and distraction problems if we must do it in the future. ICST may be able to request a waiver during the Summer, if the State opens a waiver window. (e) MB reminded the Trustees about school ethics forms, and thanked those who have submitted their forms.

3. Financial Report and Review of expenditures, income, budget. The reports of the Board Secretary and Treasurer of School Monies for February 2024 were reviewed. PL said the reports agree and were arrived at independently. Motion to approve the reports, m/ VV, 2nd RB, yes, VV, RB, BK, unanimous approval. (a) The payroll total for March @ \$126,124.77. Motion to approve m/RB, s/VV, yes, RB, VV, BK. Unanimously approved.

(b-c) Review & approval of expenditures & resolution to pay the bills list for March @ \$60,643.69. PL and MB said there were no extraordinary expenses. M/VV, s/RB, yes, VV, RB, BK, unanimous approval. (d) There were no transfers of funds.

ICST BOT Meeting March 28, 2024 (continued)

4. Grants. (a) Title I Math and after school support are running quite smoothly. (b) Title I Family Nights continue to be very well attended by eligible families. The goal of four Title I Family Nights is engaging parents & the school community to participate in both daily and overall planning of our educational programs.
5. Report on Staffing, Personnel and Employee Issues. No issues to report.
6. Executive Session (optional, not held).
7. Status Reports on Legislation, Regulations and significant Litigation. "Under the Gold Dome." Questions have been raised online about the sustainability of current school funding levels after the Federal covid funding is over in September 2024 and also about the sustainability of the 50% five-year drop-out rate for new teachers due to stress and receiving the most difficult and disagreeable assignments. If there is any hopeful news concerning these situations it is the axiom that "things that cannot be sustained, will not be sustained." An alternative phrasing is: "if something cannot go on forever it will stop."
8. Report on School Days, Student Achievement, Attendance and Enrollment (a) Fire & emergency drills were conducted in March. (b) I & RS referrals resulted in the Child Study Team opting to evaluate five students. Additional annual reviews and reevaluations will continue through June. (c) ICST continues to run full strength and smoothly. Student progress is quite evident. Nevertheless, MB reported that everyone is ready for Spring Break. The student session days at ICST will now end on Monday June 17th. (c) HIB incidents: none (d) Enrollment continues at 100% .
9. Report on Facility. AN reported that a new water heater has been installed. The HRC paid for the new heater after the 20-yr-old water heater had been previously repaired (but failed again).
10. School Operations MB reported that Crunch time begins in April: 3rd quarter report cards and meetings, cumulative assessments, NJSLA testing, field trips, and spring fever come in hard & fast! AN explained that she is pushing rigorous lessons that are engaging and fun. BK wished them good luck during this last lap.
11. Old (unfinished) Business. (none).
12. Correspondence review. (none).
13. Trustee business and announcements. Upcoming scheduled BOT 5:15 PM meetings in 2024: 4/25, 5/23, 6/27, 7/25, 8/29.
14. BK adjourned the meeting at 5:47 PM.