



# INTERNATIONAL CHARTER SCHOOL OF TRENTON

105 Grand Street Trenton, NJ 08611 609/394-3111 [fax 394-3116]

## *ICST Board of Trustees MINUTES for June 2, 2022*

*Opening of meeting, 5:15 pm. Trustees participating, mostly via Google meet, were Trustees Bob Kull (BK, presiding), Rachel Binz (RB), Valeen Vaccaro (VV), and Kim Sdeo (KS, joining mid-meeting). Also present online at the meeting were April Nixon (AN), Peter Lanzi (PL) and David Bosted (DB). Melissa Benford (MB), LP, was at ICST. Call to Order. Flag Salute/Pledge of Allegiance. All provisions of the Open Public Meeting Law of 1976 "Sunshine Law" NJ Public Law 231 had been met in the scheduling of the meeting. 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. The purpose of the meeting is to conduct regular business of the public charter school. Flag Salute. Pledge of Allegiance.*

*1. Minutes and Public Comment. Review of minutes of the 05/05/2022 meeting. Motion to approve. m/RB, s/VV, yes, RB, VV, BK approved.*

*2. Governance, School management. (a) MB reported that Lead and Copper water tests indicate that the tap water at ICST is safe. Results are posted on the website. (b) MB reported Covid continues to impact attendance for staff and students. ICST continues to offer antigen testing to parents and students, and rapid tests for students. While there has been a reduction of Covid cases from the peak, Covid is still widespread and recently growing according to Health Dept statistics in NJ. Masks are not optional. ICST has had several cases recently. (c) The 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade SLS testing has been conducted successfully. (d) NJSIG Indemnity Trust Agreement, approval of the NJSIG safety grant, m/RB, s/VV, yes, RB, VV, KS, BK, unanimous approval.*

*3. Financial Report and Review of expenditures, income, budget. (a) Board Secretary and Treasurer of School Monies reports for April 2022 are not yet available. (b) The monthly payroll totals for May 2022 @ \$110,491.41. M/RB, s/ VV, yes RB, KS, VV, BK, approved, unanimous. (c) Review of the May bills list and resolution to pay bills total of \$51,492.27, m/RB, s/VV, yes, RB, VV, KS, BK, unanimous approval. (d) Transfer of funds to cover additional hours of PL: \$3,950 from 11-190-100-300 to 11-999-230-100 to cover additional time.*

*4. Grants. (a) Title III allocations are for professional development, and other non-instructional expenses. At this time we have 2 identified ELL students now at the end of Kindergarten. (b) The Alyssa's Law grant has been submitted, as have the NJSIG Safety Grant. (c) After school enrichment is beginning to take shape for 2022-23.*

*5. Report on Staffing, Personnel and Employee Issues (a) Resolution to hire Michael Fusciello @ \$59,030 as the Health & PE instructor and April Nixon @ \$90,000 for principal.*

**ICST Board of Trustees Minutes, June 2, 2022 (continued)**

(b) One teacher declined re-employment, that position is now open as well as the ELL & school nurse. MB said that interviews for open positions have been going well. (b) Only one teacher who was renewed has decided not to return. RB said that ICST has good teacher retention. 6. Executive Session (optional, no exec session held).

7. "Under the Gold Dome." Newark School District has approved a new teachers' contract that calls for a starting salary of \$62G plus \$4G bonus for specialties such as ESL, math, science and special education, plus a generous benefits package, "to attract the best and the brightest teachers." Health costs are a major factor in the escalation of education costs in NJ. Unfunded mandates and hidden costs such as expanded teacher evaluations, and assessment requirements continue to impose financial burdens. The cost control of a 2% annual "soft cap, with exceptions" is mostly ineffective, and taxpayer incomes are not increasing 2% per year in any case. A proposed unfunded mandate for an armed guard in every school would be especially burdensome for smaller schools such as ICST. Transportation costs are astronomical, in part due to rapidly rising fuel costs. Inflation is high. Covid emergency funding has obscured the problems of funding public education, however it projects to be a difficult financial situation for all school districts in NJ, but especially for charter schools that only receive about 63% of district school funding per student.

8. Report on School Days, Student Achievement, Attendance and Enrollment. (a) MB reported that student behavior continues to be positive. (b) Testing reveals Covid's negative effect on student learning, but that has not diminished our academic efforts. We are calm and focused. (b) Summer School starts July 5. (c.) Daily attendance: most recent calculations show 93.67% in large part due to Covid. (d) MB reported that enrollment is at 88 students, with two vacancies in 4<sup>th</sup> grade.

9. Report on Facility. (a) MB reported on building maintenance and repairs. (b) MB reported that the HRC is doing work to comply with the Fire Inspectors findings.

10. School Operations. (a) There were no HIB incidents during the past month (or in the past year). Two Emergency drills were conducted in May. Parents were notified. (b) There was consensus that for the 2022-23 academic year, April will assume the duties of School Principal at \$90G/yr and MB will continue as Lead Person at \$60G plus benefits, while working approx. 30 hours over 4 days /wk F/T, with the details to be placed in a contract reviewed at the July 7 meeting. Since 1998, the school principal and lead person duties have been combined in MB. The school principal manages daily operations at the school, interacting with staff, parents and students. Under NJAC 6A:11, "Lead person" means "the person who performs the organizational tasks necessary for the operation of a charter school."

11. Old (unfinished) Business. None. 12. Correspondence review, if any. None discussed.

13. Trustee business and announcements. BOT Meetings will be held on the first Thursday of the month for the 2021-22 academic year, starting at 5:15 PM, on 7/7 and 8/4.

14. Adjourn. 6:25 PM.