



# INTERNATIONAL CHARTER SCHOOL OF TRENTON

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## *ICST Board of Trustees September 9, 2021*

*Opening of meeting, 5:16 pm. Participating at ICST were Rachael Binz (RB) and Melissa Benford (MB), Lead Person. Participating via Google Meet were trustees Bob Kull (BK, presiding), Jason Briggs (JB) and Valeen Vaccaro (VV). Also present at the meeting were April Nixon (AN, online) and David Bosted (online). 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. 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 and adoption of minutes for the July 29, 2021 meeting. Motion to approve, m/RB, s/JB, yes, RB, JB, VV, BK, unanimously approved, noting that BK abstained with respect to the vote on his reappointment as Board President. MB reported that members of the public had the opportunity to provide comments in person or in advance but she had received no public comments for the Trustees and no requests to join the meeting.*

**2. Governance, School management.** *(a) Update on Renewal. April Nixon has been working diligently with MB on preparing the renewal application. The request to add a 5<sup>th</sup> grade will be mentioned in the renewal application, but is the subject of a separate application to NJDOE. November 8 is the NJDOE visit to ICST. Some Trustees should be present however we want to avoid having a quorum of Board members, constituting a meeting. Trustees may be asked about school priorities such as health of students and staff, academic accomplishment, parent communication and involvement, and staff training to overcome difficulties, so we will want to be confident and consistent about those topics. The renewal application will highlight ICST's many strengths. It will put a spotlight on use of data in decision-making at ICST for individual instruction as well as school-wide decisions. The entire school operation features vertical alignment among the grades. Motion to support the filing of the renewal application and expansion request, m/RB, s/VV, yes, RB, VV, JB, BK.*

*(b) MB provided a COVID testing update. There is a push Statewide to use the approved vendors who are on a list to provide testing at no cost to schools. However, the approved vendors haven't responded to inquiries from ICST. JB noted that the rapid test is unfortunately only reliable if the person being tested has symptoms. (c) MB presented the need to have half-days to allow for professional development. As many as 12 half-days may be needed. The days are full days of instruction, in terms of hours of instruction, but with early dismissal scheduled in. Motion to revise the calendar to accommodate up to 12 days of professional development, the first day being September 29, m/JB, s/RB, yes, JB, RB, VV, BK, unanimous approval. (d) No policy updates from NJSBA. (e) Trenton School District has a shortage of bus drivers and is not currently providing bus service for ICST students. This is contrary to previous communication from the Trenton District, but has not affected ICST operations.*

## **ICST Board of Trustees Minutes, Sept 9, 2021 (continued)**

**3. Financial Report and Review** of expenditures, income, budget. (a) Board Secretary and Treasurer of School Monies report for June and July, which agree and were arrived at independently, m/RB, s/JB, yes, RB, JB, VV, BK, unanimous.

(b) The monthly payroll totals for August 2021 @ \$21,865.89, reviewed and approved, m/RB, s/JB, yes RB, JB, VV, BK, unanimous. There were no transfers of funds. (c) Review & approval of expenditures & resolutions to pay final bill list total for August \$25,847.36. Motion to approve, m/JB, s/RB, yes JB, RB, VV, BK. (d) Other financial information. None discussed.

**4. Grants** MB reported that the third and final CARES act grant is due 10/1 and will continue to focus on student emotional and physical health and academics. Student emotional and psychological health has been affected by fears of covid-19, social distancing requirements, feelings of isolation, etc.

**5. Report on Staffing, Personnel and Employee Issues** (a) MB recommended the hiring of Jaydine Williams at \$15,400 as a school cafeteria manager and April Davis at the prorated amount of \$57,761 as additional support and co-teaching. (b) Staff is very enthusiastic about the new ELS program. The enthusiasm should translate into effective implementation and improved reading skills.

**6. Executive Session** (optional, no exec session held).

**7. "Under the Gold Dome"** Many members of the NJ teachers union have the option today (9/9) to drop union membership, which is the most expensive in the US. This will be closely watched, Statewide, and is also a National issue.

**8. Report on School Days, Student Achievement, Attendance and Enrollment** (a) MB reported that school has successfully reopened. Today is the fifth day of school of the 21-22 academic year. (b) Student academic assessments are underway. (c.) Attendance is good, even with Hurricane Ida. Enrollment is 90 students. Some parents belatedly transferred students in and out of ICST, but demand for seats at ICST continues to be strong. ICST has a solid reputation in the community.

**9. Report on Facility** (a) Some water entered the building due to a blocked window drain during the rainfall from Hurricane Ida. That was cleaned up promptly. The HRC has taken preventative steps and is working to further alleviate the problem. (b) Fire and emergency drills will continue to adhere to recommendations from the Office of Emergency Management. (c) Cooper Pest control has been working with ICST to mitigate the impact of mice and roaches migration into the building with the onset of cooler weather.

**10. School Operations** (a) The Restart Committee that NJDOE is requiring will meet online to plan Sept-Jan and will include a design for remote learning only instruction, if that should be required. (b) There were no HIB incidents during the July Summer Session or for the entire school year 2020-21. (c) Our school nurse is excellent and will return for another year. Our official school doctor contract was renewed with the Henry J. Austin Health Center.

**ICST Board of Trustees Minutes, Sept 9, 2021 (continued)**

**11. Old (unfinished) Business** *None discussed.*

**12. Correspondence** *review, if any. None discussed.*

**13. Trustee business and announcements** *BOT Meetings for the 2020-21 year will be held on the first Thursday of the month for the 2021-22 academic year, starting at 5:15 PM. 10/7, 11/4, 12/2, 1/6/2022, 2/3, 3/3, 4/7, 5/5, 6/2, 7/7 and 8/4.*

**14. Adjourn** *m/KS, s/RB, yes, unanimous. 6:00 PM.*