

INTERNATIONAL CHARTER SCHOOL OF TRENTON

*ICST Board of Trustees **MINUTES** for March 3, 2021*

Opening of meeting, 5:15 pm. Trustees participating via online video (on Google Meet) pursuant to the Governor's Emergency declaration on COVID-19 and ICST Bylaws were Bob Kull (BK, presiding), Jason Briggs (JB), Rachel Binz (RB) and Kim Sdeo (KS). Also present were Melissa Benford (MB, chief school administrator), Peter Lanzi (Business administrator, PL), Rick Morano of Barre & Co auditors, April Nixon, and David Bosted. 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.

1. Minutes and Public Comment. Review and adoption of minutes for the February 3, 2021 meeting.

Motion to approve minutes, m/RB, s/JB, yes, JB, RB, KS, BK, approved. MB noted that members of the public had the opportunity to provide comments in advance but she had received no public requests or comments for the Trustees. April Nixon attended to learn more about governance and operations.

2. Governance, School management, (a) PL introduced the auditor Rick Morano of Barre & Co. to discuss the annual audit. The audit is 100% satisfactory, with no negative findings and no recommendations. Three areas were audited for compliance, so in effect, the audit has three opinions, all satisfactory. The audit found no weaknesses in ICST's internal controls. The June 2020 final FY fund balance was \$70,051 on approximately \$1.7 M in revenues. MB noted that ICST's financial stability was achieved in a challenging situation where funding was flat but expenses increased. The auditor explained it by saying that expenses went up faster than revenues. Increased benefit costs and extra technology expenses (in part due to covid) were noted. The decrease in the fund balance, as shown in the audit, was not a problem this year but will not be sustainable in the long run. BK thanked the auditor for the diligence of Barre & Co this year and in past years. The auditor praised PL and Nicole for their hard work and for the full cooperation from management to prepare the audit. This audit is the first audit ever prepared for ICST that was accomplished completely remotely (due to covid).

(b) MB reported that ICST is currently operating effectively with Kindergarten students having the option of attending in person on a M/W or T/Th schedule. Nine K students have been signed up to attend in person. But the hybrid model is extremely draining for the classroom teacher to teach both online and in person. Good news: 100% of the ICST community has a robust device and a reliable internet connection.

(c) MB said that ICST will be conducting the NJDOE standardized assessment in grades 3 & 4 later this Spring. (d) Annual Ethics Disclosure forms are due April 30. The content is the same, however the computerized format has been altered and has additional steps.

3. Financial Report and Review of expenditures, income, budget. (a) Board Secretary and Treasurer of School Monies report for January 2021. The reports agree and were arrived at independently. m/JB, s/RB, yes JB, RB, KS, BK, unanimous approval.

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Payroll. The monthly payroll total for February, 2021 @ \$86,928.47 was reviewed and approved, m/KS, s/JB, yes KS, JB, RB, BK, unanimous. There were no transfers of funds. (b-c) Review & approval of expenditures & resolution to pay final bill list total for Jan 2021, \$59,803.13. After discussion of individual items, Motion to approve, m/RB, s/KS, yes RB, KS, JB, BK, unanimous.

4. Grants. MB said that ICST will be receiving roughly four times its normal allocation in ESEA money this Spring, due to covid emergency funding increases. Possible uses include a Title I teaching/support staff, summer school, and more air quality controls. The search for a Title I teacher has begun.

5. Report on Staffing, Personnel and Employee Issues. (a) MB asked the Board to hire JT Kaltreider as Title I teacher at a prorated salary of \$55,777 beginning March 29, 2021. m/RB, s/JB, yes RB, JB, KS, BK, unanimous approval. (b) MB reported that ICST teachers continue to provide quality virtual instruction on a daily basis. ICST on a typical day has 100% student participation. Enrollment is now also 100%.

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

7. "Under the Gold Dome." The Daily NJ Education Report, organized by former Lawrence Twp Board President Laura Waters, is an excellent way to stay informed about news, nonsense, regulations, conflicts, trends and rumors in NJ education. For example, a national study covered in the online newsletter marveled that Camden Charter Schools, with less than 50% of the per student funding of Camden district schools, are out-performing the District schools by a wide margin. Trenton was not in the study but the situation is similar, namely, many fewer dollars, noticeably better academic results.

8. Report on School Days, Student Achievement, Attendance and Enrollment. (a) MB reported that there are no interruptions to virtual learning at ICST. (b) Attendance has been excellent. ICST has an exceptionally high online participation rate. (c.) There were no HIB incidents during the past month or the past year. ICST has good success in preventing HIB. (d) 2nd Quarter Report Cards were completed and distributed. (e) Standardized State-run testing of students is expected in the Spring.

9. Report on Facility. MB reported: The Fire doors were repaired (as per Fire Marshall's instructions).

10. School Operations (a) MB indicated that the school meals program continues to operate successfully, about 30 meals per day. (b) Two emergency drills were conducted in February. There are only a few students and few staff members in the building to participate in those in-school drills. (c) Funding may be available to add a fifth grade in 2022-23. MB has discussed this with the CS office at NJDOE. 11. Old (unfinished) Business. None discussed. 12. Correspondence review.

13. Trustee business and announcements. Upcoming BOT meetings 4/14 (vote to change to this date, m/RB, s/JB, yes, JB, RB, KS, BK, approved and advertised) 5/5, 6/2, 7/7, 8/4, 2021.

14. Adjourn. M/JB, s/KS, yes, unanimous, 6:25 PM.