INTERNATIONAL CHARTER SCHOOL OF TRENTON

*ICST Board of Trustees* ***MINUTES*** *for June 4, 2020*

*Opening of meeting, 5:30 pm. Trustees participating via video and telephone conference call due to the Governor’s Emergency declaration on COVID-19 were Bob Kull (BK, presiding), Jason Briggs (JB), Kim Sdeo (KS) and Rachel Binz (RB) . Also present were Melissa Benford (MB, chief school administrator), Peter Lanzi (PL, Business Administrator), and David Bosted (DB). 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 May 6, 2020 meeting. Motion to approve the meeting minutes, m/RB, s/JB, yes, JB, KS, RB, BK, unanimously approved. MB reported that members of the public had the opportunity to provide comments in advance but she had received no public comments for the Trustees.*

*2. Governance, School management. (a) MB provided an overview of the impact of COVID-19 on school operations. ICST is operating successfully online, with 90% regular student participation. Parents and staff are holding up but are stressed. Several ICST parents and family members are sick. However, parents of 9 students (10% of enrollment) have shown minimal interest in the online school classes, despite being contacted in every conceivable way. Meals are being distributed efficiently.*

*(b) NJDOE has been slow to provide guidance for example on Summer programs and Summer food distribution or on 2020-21 operations, but repeatedly demands that a myriad of local plans be submitted. The bureaucratic over-burden has interfered with online operations. Each district is doing its best to provide services to students. Hamilton Public School District has designated Fridays as “catch-up days” with no new assignments or deliverables, in other words, has converted to 4-day school weeks. Potentially this could morph into a reduced school year, since there is no pending legislation to reset the 180-day school year requirement.*

*(c) MB said that preliminary planning for next year is underway. MB and PL are still wary of significant budget adjustments, but the preliminary figures for Trenton show an increase, not a reduction in funding. Other districts have been hit hard by State Aid reductions. Teachers are working extra hard, and extra hours, to cope with the increased demands of operating electronically, so salary cutbacks and givebacks are not realistic. MB discussed “looping” with the staff but the consensus was, no looping. The State has extended its fiscal year to the end of August, with a State Budget for FY2021 expected by August 25 and the new FY beginning September 1 (about when the new academic year begins), so that will extend the confusion about funding into the 2020-21 academic year. If funding from Trenton is delayed until October, that may precipitate a crisis. The DOE Commissioner has resigned, with no replacement named.*

*3. Financial Report and Review of expenditures, income, budget. (a) Review and approval of the Board Secretary and Treasurer of School Monies reports for May 2020. The figures in the reports agree and were arrived at independently. Motion to approve, m/KS, s/RB, yes, KS, JB, RB, BK. Unanimously approved. The monthly payroll total for May 2020 @ $94,197.11was reviewed and approved. m/JB, s/KS, yes RB, KS, BK, unanimous. The transfer of $3115 funds from account #11-190-100-300 to #11-999-230-100 was m/RB, s/JB, yes RB, JB, KS, BK, unanimously approved. (b-c) Review & approval of expenditures & resolutions to pay bill list total May 2020: $30,826.28. Motion to approve, m/KS, s/RB, yes KS, RB, JB, BK, unanimous. (d) Other financial information. None discussed.*

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*4. Grants. Grants are being managed. There are four resolutions to accept grant funds. EASA $79,512, m/RB, s/JB, yes RB, JB, KS, BK, unanimously approved. IDEA $28,624 m/RB, s/JB, yes RB, JB, KS, BK, unanimously approved. CARES $51,075 m/RB, s/JB, yes RB, JB, KS, BK, unanimously approved. NJSIA Safety Grant (previously approved by BOT)* *m/RB, s/JB, yes RB, JB, KS, BK, unanimously approved.*

*5. Report on Staffing, Personnel and Employee Issues (a) MB said that distance teaching is stressful on the ICST teachers. They receive calls early in the morning and late into the night. (b) All the teachers have indicated Yes, they will return for next year.*

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

*7. Status Reports on Legislation, Regulations and significant Litigation. "Under the Gold Dome." Harry Lee of NJPCSA has provided a report each day on the Governor’s daily Covid press conference. MB reported on participating in numerous webinars on continuing services to students and families via remote education. NJPCSA has been holding weekly call-in events to keep members informed.*

*8. Report on School Days, Student Achievement, Attendance and Enrollment. (a) MB reported that students were focused and learning during April. 100% of students have been contacted for digital classes, with 90% of parents/students participating on a regular basis, are on-line and submitting work. Parents must support the transition to an online school for it to be successful. (b) Fourth Quarter Report Cards will indicate “complete” or “I” for Incomplete content work (c.) Attendance and online participation are strong and we continue to be fully enrolled. Attendance is monitored through submitted school work and logs from digital websites. 2020-21 is unknown because schools remain closed. Fortunately MB held the ICST lottery in January. Many CSs have not yet held their lotteries.*

*9. Report on Facility. (a)* *The building is mostly empty. There are no students inside the school building. Food is distributed at the rear entrance to about 25 participating families. Food waste has been kept to a minimum. (b) Keep It Clean continues to sanitize, but at a reduced cleaning schedule.*

*10. School Operations (a) The ICST teachers have successfully adapted to the use of interactive online technology to educate the ICST students during this emergency, but not without difficulties. (b) MB said there were no HIB reports for May. ICST staff continues to monitor on-line activity to the extent possible. (c) MB reported that no emergency drills were conducted this past month due to the school being shut down for Covid. School districts and CSs are still awaiting NJDOE guidance on this.*

*11. Old (unfinished) Business. None discussed. 12. Correspondence review, if any. Letter from Senator Shirley Turner. 13. Trustee business and announcements. Upcoming scheduled BOT 5:15 meetings: 07/01, 08/05. 14. Adjourn. 6:35 PM*