

Board of Trustees
Meeting Minutes ~ Regular Meeting
Tuesday, October 26, 2021 – 5:30 p.m.
Collegiate Charter School of Lowell
1857 Middlesex St, Lowell, MA 01851

I. Call to order – Walter McGrail – President

President Walter McGrail called the meeting of the Collegiate Charter School of Lowell Board of Trustees at 5:41 pm on Tuesday, October 26, 2021 at the school. (1857 Middlesex St. Lowell, MA 01851)

II. Roll Call – Vanessa Pileggi conducted a roll call.

- a. President Walter McGrail – Present (remote)
- b. Vice President Kathleen McCarthy – Present
- c. Treasurer Alan Miller – Present
- d. Secretary Erika Souza – Present
- e. Board Member Pravin Patel – Present
- f. Board Member Brian Chapman – Present
- g. Board Member Sathya Pholy – Present (remote)

Guests: **In Person:** Dr. Laurie Hodgdon, Amy Wesley, Carl Nystrom, Lara de Almeida, Vanessa Pileggi, Ashley Bailey, SLO students. **Remote:** Christi Seiple-Cole, Ryan Meek

III. School Mission: Entire Board recited the mission.

IV. SLO Update:

The SLC presented a recent schedule changes to the SLO period and shared information about the current clubs. Additional academic support is being provided to students during SLO. Once students show consistent 80% average, they can transfer into a club.

An update regarding events/trips was provided. The school is planning for an 8th grade semi-formal Boston dinner cruise. The SLC is also reaching out to Nature's Classroom for a possible overnight stay. The senior trip options include Barcelona and Madrid 7-9 days, or a U.S. based option in NYC. Additional information will be provided to the board in upcoming meetings.

V. Approval of the Agenda as presented – October 26, 2021

Motion to approve the October 26, 2021 meeting agenda was called by E. Souza
Seconded by B. Chapman.

Yes=7 No=0. Motion approved.

VI. Approval of Minutes – September 28, 2021 Regular Meeting

A motion was made by E. Souza to accept the September 28, 2021 regular meeting minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by A. Miller.

Yes=7 No=0 Motion approved.

Approval of Minutes – September 28, 2021 Annual Meeting

A motion was made by A. Miller to accept the September 28, 2021 annual meeting minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by B. Chapman.

Yes=7 No=0 Motion approved.

VII. Committee Reports

a. Finance

- i. Budget v. Actual was reviewed.

A motion was made by A. Miller to accept the budget v. actual as stated. The motion was seconded by B. Chapman.

Yes=7 No=0. Motion approved.

- ii. Audit Presentation and Vote

MP Group presented the FY21 audit. There were no findings, the audit went very well and Collegiate remains a low risk auditee.

A motion was made by A. Miller to accept the draft audit statement. The motion was seconded by E. Souza.

Yes=7 No=0 Motion approved.

A motion was made by B. Chapman to have Alan Miller sign the acceptance letter on behalf of the Board of Trustees. The motion was seconded by E. Souza.

Yes=7 No=0 Motion approved.

b. Governance

i. Proposed Committee Meetings Calendar - vote

A motion was made by E. Souza to approve the proposed committee meetings calendar. The motion was seconded by A. Miller.

Yes=7 No=0 Motion approved.

c. Outreach

Communication continues with Middlesex Community College and the possibility of dual enrollment. Collegiate will look into participating in the November City of Lights parade.

d. High School Construction

Items on the punch list are still a work in progress; six out of the sixteen items have been completed. Funds are being withheld pending completion of the punch list.

The invoice received for police detail needed prior to the traffic light will be shared with the board lawyer who will draft a response.

VIII. Unfinished Business

a. Update on Athletic Field Restoration

The field is now available for use. Students have had access to the field to use during recess, for soccer practices, and flag football.

b. Update on Middlesex St Signage

Installation is expected by the end of November.

IX. New Business

a. Review Uniform Policy/Special Event Dress Codes

The board reviewed the current uniform policy and discussed having a special events dress code. Dr. Hodgdon will discuss with the SLO students and provide a proposal at the next meeting.

The board discussed including sneakers (black or brown) in the uniform policy.

A motion was made by A. Miller to allow the black or brown shoes to be inclusive of sneakers. The motion was seconded by B. Chapman.

Yes=7 No=0. Motion approved.

b. Follow-up on MA Teacher Retention Article and Accuracy of Data on DESE website

The October 4, 2021 *MassLive* article took teacher retention information available on DESE's website and framed their article around the challenge of teacher retention and provided a list of 50 schools (one being Collegiate) which had the lowest percentages of teacher retention. This information disproportionately represents charter schools, which are single districts vs. a large public school district.

The board discussed options for a Covid bonus to help improve teacher and staff retention.

P. Patel made a motion to provide a Covid bonus in the amount of \$1,000 for all teachers and staff who have been at Collegiate since the last academic year new hires for this academic year should get \$500. These amounts would be prorated based on length of employment and type of employment (part-time/full-time). B. Chapman seconded.

Yes=7 No=0. Motion approved.

X. Director's Report

a. Latest Commissioner Guidance

The Commissioner extended the mask mandate through January 15, 2022. Currently, 350+ students and staff at Collegiate are participating in the Test and Stay program; 150+ students and staff are participating in pooled testing.

b. Academic Update

Internal academic results were shared in English, math, science, and social studies. Students who are scoring below 80% are receiving additional academic support during the SLO period. MCAS results compared to local area charter schools were reviewed and discussed.

c. Enrollment Update

Enrollment currently stands at 1,107. During the period of June 30 – August 30, 2021, the grades with the highest numbers of withdrawals were grades 5 and 9. Additional follow-up will be conducted regarding the fifteen fifth graders who withdrew and an update will be provided to the board.

After further discussion with DESE, for 2022-2023 Collegiate will accept applications for grades K-10.

d. Student Management Update

Reviewed current discipline infractions in the period from September 27 – October 13, 2021. The highest number of infractions are in Grades 6 and 8. Infractions for Grade 6 and Grade 8 overall are the result of a concentration of students requiring redirection and behavioral support in one of the grade level's sections.

The concern around cell phone use was raised. The board would like to see more signs, reminders, and zero tolerance for cell phone use during school hours.

e. Staffing Update

Dr. Hodgdon presented data around teacher and staff turnover at the end of 2020-21. Among the 15 teachers who left at the end of 20-21, 40% had been at Collegiate for less than a year. As of August 31, 2021, teacher and staff turnover involved 9 individuals, 44% had been at Collegiate for less than a year. Efforts are underway to positively impact retention.

f. Upcoming Events

Parent-Teacher Conferences will be held the afternoon of October 27. November 2nd will be a full-day staff professional development day.

XI. Marketing Report

Seven new applications were generated since the last BOT meeting on September 28, 2021, all of which were referrals. For 2022-2033, 43 applications have been generated.

The 3rd annual International Festival was held on October 9 and was a huge success.

XII. SABIS Support Report

An overview of SABIS support since the last board meeting in September was provided.

XIII. Floor Open to the Public – No comments.

XIV. Executive Session – N/A

XV. Adjournment

A. Miller motioned to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by B. Chapman.

Yes=7 No=0. Motion approved.

Meeting adjourned at 8:41pm.

Meeting Documents:

1. September 28, 2021 regular meeting minutes
2. September 28, 2021 annual meeting minutes
3. Budget v. Actual
4. Draft Financial Statements
5. Board Communication Letter
6. Proposed Committee Meeting Schedule
7. Collegiate Uniform Policy
8. Director's Report
9. Marketing Report
10. SABIS Support Report

Minutes prepared by Vanessa Pileggi.

Respectfully Submitted,

Erika Souza, Secretary

Collegiate Charter School of Lowell Board of Trustees