



# FREIRE

## CHARTER WILMINGTON

### MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**FEBRUARY 18, 2021 | 8 AM**

**VIA ZOOM VIDEO CONFERENCE CALL**

**MEETING ID: 830 8456 9211 | PASSWORD: 491496**

Board Members Present: Robert Blanchard, Sheela Dattani, Evelyn Davies, John Kane, Nathan Moser, David Singleton, Mark Stellini, Tara Terry, Clint Walker, Nathan Will, Christian Willauer

Others Present: Leigh Botwinik, Olivia Burgess, Kelly Davenport, Nate Durant, Ami Irvin, Maxwell Matthews, Seamus McAllister (Current Freire Wilmington 10<sup>th</sup> Grade Student), Johnny Mills, Melanie Reiser, Bill Ray, Maddie Weckel, DJ Wright (Current Freire Wilmington 10<sup>th</sup> Grade Student)

8:01 AM, Meeting Start

- I. Public Comment
  - a. There was no public comment.
- II. Review and Approval of Minutes
  - a. Minutes from Board Meeting on December 17, 2020
    - i. The board reviews the minutes from the board meeting on December 17, 2020.
    - ii. Mark Stellini makes a motion to approve. Nathan Will seconds.
    - iii. Robert Blanchard, Sheela Dattani, Evelyn Davies, John Kane, Nathan Moser, David Singleton, Mark Stellini, Tara Terry, Clint Walker, Nathan Will, and Christian Willauer vote in favor of the motion. There are no votes against and no abstentions.
- III. School Report
  - a. COVID Update
    - i. COVID Operations and Relief Funding Summary
      - Max Matthews shares Freire Wilmington's received \$200,000 in relief funding through round one of the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) funding and \$806,000 through round two of the ESSER II Allocation. Max notes the that the Freire Schools Operations Team is working with Finance to determine how to best spend these funds over the coming years.
    - ii. COVID Testing
      - Ami Irvin, Operations Coordinator at Freire Schools, shares that Freire Schools has been partnering with the Department of Public Health and has secured three Antigen testing kits for Freire Wilmington. Using this test will help identify those who are positive with COVID-19 and if asymptomatic traits are present.
      - Progress Toward in Person Learning
        - Max Matthews notes since reopening to students with IEPs, only 5-10 students and teaching aids are allowed back into the school.
        - Maddie Weckel shares that only stage one individuals (small group), are back and will not be allowing stage two (full staff/students) back into the school until state guidance changes.
      - Vaccination Update
        - Maddie shares that, to-date, 6 staff members have received the COVID-19 vaccine.
      - After School Programs

- Nate Durant shares the current after school programs at Freire Wilmington are managed by students. The newest clubs include K-Pop Club and Dungeons & Dragons Club.
- b. 2020-2021 Network Priorities
    - i. Leigh Botwinik reviews the newly updated Network Priorities Dashboard with the board.
    - ii. The five key domain metrics on the dashboard include: achievement, progress, attendance, college, and teacher recruitment/retention.
    - iii. Leigh takes time to review the newly updated domains in-depth.
  - c. 2020 Admissions Dashboard
    - i. Johnny Mills shares that the admissions team has been using a database to track applications, enrollment, and monitor student turnover from year-to-year. Johnny reviews the 2020 Admissions Dashboard which explains the total number of applications received during any year by grade and how many applications roll over into unit count eligible enrollments.
  - d. Heads Report
    - i. Maddie Weckel shares that since February 4, 2020 Freire Wilmington has been open to small groups of special education students on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Maddie shares that all students are following the safety precautions, wearing masks during the day, and staying socially distant.
    - ii. Nate Durant shares how nice it has been connecting with the students in person again and seeing them use their voices to advocate for one another.
    - iii. Maddie shares that recently the staff have implemented a new ELA pilot curriculum that will start at the end of Q3. This new curriculum allows for additional opportunities for students to analyze the texts.
    - iv. Nate shares that Freire Wilmington recently held a professional development where staff learned how to approach and foster relationships with students, parents and each other during this difficult time.
  - e. Staff Update
    - i. Nathan Moser shares that staff recently met and discussed a few ways school culture could be improved at Freire Wilmington, especially while participating in virtual learning. Although virtual learning has been difficult, Nathan shares that the work has also been rewarding because of the high amount of communication and interactions the students and staff have while online.
    - ii. Although the overall response to the Cameras On initiative has been positive, Nathan shares that many students take pride in their appearances and since COVID has forced everyone inside, some students are finding it difficult to find the motivation to put the same amount of effort into their appearance knowing they have nowhere to go. Students have expressed feeling self-conscious during the school day because they are required to keep their camera on.
  - f. Student Update
    - i. Seamus McAllister, a 10<sup>th</sup> Grader at Freire Wilmington, shares he enjoys the family atmosphere that Freire Wilmington offers him and his fellow classmates.
    - ii. DJ Wright, a 10<sup>th</sup> grader at Freire Wilmington, shares how much Freire Wilmington has challenged him compared to his previous school. He also agrees with Seamus, that virtual learning is difficult at times due to not having that interpersonal relationship with the teacher/staff.
  - g. Anti-Racism Update
    - i. Kelly Davenport shares that Freire Schools Network has been committed to training over 40 network leaders through Just Instruction. Kelly notes that the training has spurred additional work within each campus to reexamine practices that could allow for unintentional racial biases including within hiring, performance reviews, curriculum, etc.
    - ii. Kelly notes that the instructional leaders are examining the curriculum and expectations for students to ensure it aligns with the network's anti-racism efforts and the needs of Freire students.

#### IV. Financials

- a. Barclay's Loan Refinance
  - i. Bill Ray shares the action for the refinance repayment on the two term loans with approximate balances of \$662,000,000 and \$268,000,000 but Freire Wilmington has agreed to a principal paydown of \$300,000,000 to ratify the release of lease assignment.
  - ii. David Singleton makes a motion to approve. Mark Stellini seconds.
  - iii. Robert Blanchard, Sheela Dattani, Evelyn Davies, John Kane, Nathan Moser, David Singleton, Mark

Stellini, Tara Terry, Clint Walker, Nathan Will, and Christian Willauer vote in favor of the motion. There are no votes against and one abstention.

- b. January 2021 Financial Report
  - i. Bill Ray shares that Freire Wilmington's cash on hand as of January 31, 2021 is \$ 4,470,000 and Freire Wilmington is currently projected to end the year with approximately \$1,100,000 in cash which represents a decrease from 61 days to 49 days of cash on hand. This decrease is due to a one-time debt service repayment of \$300,000 as part of the school's loan refinance.
  - ii. Bill also states that based on the school's final budget, Freire Wilmington will not meet three of its financial ratios, which includes days with cash on hand, debt service coverage, and the annual margin.
  - iii. The \$300,000 loan repayment was a strategic decision by the school leadership which caused the drop in both cash on hand and debt service coverage. When ratios are not met due to one-time strategic decisions, the State allows the school to provide an explanation of the strategic decision in its annual performance framework report.
  - iv. David Singleton makes a motion to approve. Robert Blanchard seconds.
  - v. Robert Blanchard, Sheela Dattani, Evelyn Davies, John Kane, Nathan Moser, David Singleton, Mark Stellini, Tara Terry, Clint Walker, Nathan Will, and Christian Willauer vote in favor of the motion. There are no votes against and no abstentions.
- c. CBOC Update
  - i. No update at this time.

## V. Advancement

- a. Advancement Report
  - i. Melanie Reiser shares that Freire Schools has raised \$137,007 in donations and pledges toward our \$525,000 network-wide goal for unrestricted fundraising but Freire Wilmington, specifically, has raised \$66,917 in donations and pledges toward its \$150,000 target for unrestricted fundraising.
  - ii. Melanie shares that on February 5, Freire Schools submitted a grant application to the Delaware Department of Education, requesting \$75,000 for 2021-22 to expand the Teacher Residency program in partnership with Relay Graduate School of Education. Freire Wilmington currently has 1 resident, and this grant would fund 3 additional if awarded.
- b. Talking Points
  - i. Melanie Reiser reviews the talking points with the board.

## VI. Governance

- a. Board Clearances
  - i. Olivia Burgess notifies the board of a new plan to submit completed board clearances.

## VII. Midtown Brandywine Committee Update

- a. Robert Blanchard shares the committee is still focused on completing the road work within the community.
- b. At this time, there are no other community concerns to bring to the school.

9:22 AM, adjourned