



# MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**FEBRUARY 16, 2023 @ 8 AM**

**ZOOM: MEETING ID: 833 0389 0895 | PASSWORD: 631351**

**LOCATION: ZOOM**

**Board Members Present:** Kate Bayard, Lissa Brutus, Sheela Dattani, John Kane, Robert Mansell, Jilian Mackenzie, David Singleton, David Tuminaro, Clint Walker, Nathan Will

**Others Present:** Leigh Botwinik, Olivia Burgess, Tanza Pugliese, Melanie Reiser, Maddie Weckel, Nathan Yufer

**Meeting Start:** 8:03 AM

## I. Public Comment

A. No public comment at this time.

## II. Review & Approval of Minutes, December 15, 2022 (*Att. 2*)\*

A. The board reviews the minutes from the December 25, 2022 board meeting.

B. David Singleton makes a motion to approve. Jilian Mackenzie seconds.

C. Kate Bayard, Lissa Brutus, Sheela Dattani, John Kane, Robert Mansell, Jilian Mackenzie, David Singleton, David Tuminaro, Clint Walker, and Nathan Will vote in favor of the motion. There are no votes against and no abstentions.

## III. Resolutions

A. Approve Financing for Gym Project (*Att. 3*)\*

1. Update on Gym Progress

2. David Singleton shares with the board the resolution to approve financing for the gym project.

3. The design of the building is complete along with the graphic floor plans. The floor plans include layout of the fitness room, locker room, bleachers, concession stands and basketball court.

4. On March 1, 2023 a recommendation package will be distributed out from our general contractor company with a schedule and a variety of information about a price agreement which would ensure our gym project will not exceed the original projected \$5,000,0000 estimated budget. Freire Wilmington is prepared if the budget is exceeded and if some items can be deferred until more funds are available.

5. Fundraising for the project is coming to a close as Freire Wilmington needs \$200,000 left to reach the \$5,000,000 target (when factoring in the \$2.75m financing from LevelField). David shares that many items can be sponsored by board members, members of the community or a Freire staff member/family.

6. Freire Wilmington seeks to close on the \$2,750,000 loan from Level Field in March and the board must approve this loan for the financing of the gym project.

7. Nathan Will makes a motion to approve. John Kane seconds.

8. Kate Bayard, Lissa Brutus, Sheela Dattani, John Kane, Robert Mansell, Jilian Mackenzie, David Singleton, David Tuminaro, Clint Walker, and Nathan Will vote in favor of the motion. There are no votes against and no abstentions.

## IV. Governance

A. Clearances & Trainings Update

1. Olivia Burgess updates the board on completing clearances and governance tasks.

## V. School Report

A. Staff Update

1. There is no update at this time due to staff participating in Dragon Day.

B. Student Update

1. There is no update at this time due to students participating in Dragon Day..

## C. Heads Report

### 1. Admissions Update

- Admissions currently is following the process with the intent to enroll and recently Freire Wilmington held two open house events and the next will be held on March 4th. Freire Wilmington is currently on trend with the same numbers from last year's data.
- The admissions team is strategically planning on how to ensure students and their families stay at Freire Wilmington. Special interventions around credit recovery and the current growth and joy incentives are a part of the planning process for students who are potentially at risk.
- In March the staff are anticipating how to tell their prospective students and families about the gym project as well as those within the school community.

### 2. Freire Network Dashboard (Att. 5)

- The Attendance Team has been working diligently to ensure that attendance for all grades have been high. Maddie praises Katie Pollard and Kevin Lair for their hard work and dedication to ensuring all classes have full attendance.
- Second round benchmark testing recently passed and the current data shows improvement in math by 60% and over 37% of students are in the high growth range currently. School wide proficiency in reading is not higher but in the 9 & 12 grades are showing improvement for the subject.
- Over 400 applications have been submitted from the senior class which makes up 70%. About 50% have received \$4,000,000 in financial aid and scholarships which is higher than the data from last year's college report. The college team is helping students work on their financial aid applications before their deadlines.

### 3. Maddie Weckel shares Freire Wilmington is celebrating Dragon Day at the campus.

### 4. On Tuesday, February 14, 2023 a few Freire Schools Network members and Freire Wilmington board members met with WSFS bank at the Freire Wilmington campus and took a tour. The WSFS members were truly impressed by the staff, students and atmosphere of the school.

## VI. Financials

### A. December 2022 Financial Report (Att. 6)\*

1. Nathan Yufer reviews the December 2022 Financial Report with the board.
2. Nathan shares Freire Wilmington is projecting to end the year with \$9,000,000 in revenue. Additionally, Freire Wilmington has received \$30,000 in revenue for a school safety and security grant as well as a child safety awareness grant. State funding for Freire Wilmington is based on the enrollment number and since it is currently 450, the anticipated revenue is lower than originally anticipated.
3. Expenses are projected to total \$8,870,000 for the end of the fiscal year. Over \$14,000 has been used toward legal fees, which has been mostly used for the gym project. Other expenses such as maintenance, software, and non-capitalized instructional materials have been used.
4. Freire Wilmington's current cash on hand is approximately \$6,500,000 as of December 31, 2022. Freire Wilmington is projected to end the year with \$1,600,000 of cash which represents no increase from June 30, 2022.
5. Projections for financial performance framework ratios are strong.
6. Nathan Will makes a motion to approve. David Singleton seconds.
7. Kate Bayard, Lissa Brutus, Sheela Dattani, John Kane, Robert Mansell, Jilian Mackenzie, David Singleton, David Tuminaro, Clint Walker, and Nathan Will vote in favor of the motion. There are no votes against and no abstentions.

### B. CBOC Update

1. There is no update at this time.

## VII. Advancement

### A. Advancement Report (Att. 7)

1. Melanie Reiser shares the Advancement Report with the board.
2. Melanie shares Freire Schools has raised \$204, 480 network wide in unrestricted donations and pledges for FY23 toward our unrestricted fundraising target of \$400,000.

3. Freire Wilmington has surpassed their \$100,000 target for unrestricted fundraising and approximately Freire Schools needs \$210,000 by June 30, 2023 toward the Philadelphia schools. Freire Wilmington currently holds 85% completion for board giving.
4. Currently Freire Schools is tracking Freire Wilmington's Capital Campaign progress. To date, Freire Wilmington has raised close to \$2,000,000 in grants, donations and pledges including a \$1,375,000 grant from the Longwood Foundation, a \$150,000 Welfare Foundation and a \$35,000 grant from the Laffey McHugh Foundation.
5. With the current gym project, \$2,750,000 in anticipated financing from Level Field Partners and about \$314,000 in carry-over from our building purchase, we are now \$137,000-\$350,000 away from being able to start construction.

## VIII. Policies and Agreements

- A. Review & Approve Amended Family Involvement Policy (*Att. 8A*)\*
  1. Tanza P shares the amended policy to align properly with the board.
  2. Freire Wilmington is fully committed to finding meaningful and mutually enriching ways for parents to participate in our school to serve as partners in improving the quality of teaching and learning for all of our students and at every level. The School reviews the policy annually with families to solicit feedback. The proposed changes to the policy are meant to better align with current practices and continue to ensure compliance with Federal Programs requirements.
  3. David Singleton makes a motion to approve. John Kane seconds.
  4. Kate Bayard, Lissa Brutus, Sheela Dattani, John Kane, Robert Mansell, Jilian Mackenzie, David Singleton, David Tuminaro, Clint Walker, and Nathan Will vote in favor of the motion. There are no votes against and no abstentions.
- B. Review & Approve 2023-2024 Student & Family Handbook (*Att. 8B*)\*
  1. Leigh Botwinik shares the 2023-2024 Student & Family Handbook with the board.
  2. Delaware is changing how they handle charter enrollment for next year and we used this as an opportunity to make cosmetic updates to our handbook earlier than usual so that it is ready to go for newly enrolling students. There were no substantive changes though it is a living document so the newly approved Family Involvement Policy will get added in.
  3. David Singleton makes a motion to approve. Sheela Dattani seconds.
  4. Kate Bayard, Lissa Brutus, Sheela Dattani, John Kane, Robert Mansell, Jilian Mackenzie, David Singleton, David Tuminaro, Clint Walker, and Nathan Will vote in favor of the motion. There are no votes against and no abstentions.
- C. Review & Approve Annual Report (*Att 8C*)\*
  1. Leigh reviews the Annual Report with the board.
  2. Leigh notes the annual report is how the DE DOE reviews the school.
  3. Report addresses 3 frameworks for charter evaluation: Academics, Operations and Finances. Freire's 2021-22 data is included, with ratings, and then we respond and provide context.
  4. Due to the impact of COVID-19 on learning and learning environments, academic performance accountability ratings for school year (SY) 21/22 were not issued. That said, We observed a marked decline in attendance -- percent of students attending 90% fell from 75% in 2021 to 32% in 2022, and this, of course, impacted achievement on state assessments. An important point of context: entering 8th grade students during the 21-22 school year had the lowest entering Smarter Balanced scores (i.e. from when they were in 7th grade) than they have ever been. While we would expect to see a decline due to the impact of COVID, the average scale score that our students achieved the year prior to coming to Freire was 36 points lower than the entering students in 20-21 in ELA and 62 points lower in math. Statewide, the average score for 7th graders declined as well, but not as dramatically (25 and 40 points respectively)
  5. For organizational compliance Freire achieved a Meets Standard in every category except Educational Program 1c Students with Disabilities, where we received 13 of 14 points for an overall rating of Approaching Standard. This was due to metric 1c5 which measures implementation of IDEA Indicator 13: Transition planning in the IEP. Owing primarily to student attendance issues during the 21-22 school year, we were unable to complete the transition plans for a group of students. We have a two pronged approach for improving

performance in metric 1c5 during the 22-23 school year. First, we will closely monitor transition planning and progress monitoring via monthly data meetings. This will allow us to immediately intervene if we see any gaps in progress. Second, we will employ a range of tactics to increase attendance of all students, including students with IEPs, as chronic absenteeism was a root cause of the gaps in transition planning progress in 21-22.

6. Financial Performance: Freire achieved a Meets Standard in every category except Days Cash, where we had 67 days cash on hand, for a rating of Approaching Standard. The State increased the standard for Days Cash on Hand Ratio from 60 days to 75 days effective FY 2022, a year in which we incurred significant HVAC repairs costs in addition to the capital purchase of our facility and the adjacent building.
7. David Singleton makes a motion to approve. John Kane seconds.
8. Kate Bayard, Lissa Brutus, Sheela Dattani, John Kane, Robert Mansell, Jilian Mackenzie, David Singleton, David Tuminaro, Clint Walker, and Nathan Will vote in favor of the motion. There are no votes against and no abstentions.

#### **IX. Midtown Brandywine Committee Update**

- A. Kate Bayard shares last week the Midtown Brandywine Committee held a board meeting last week.
- B. There was discussion about neighborhood parking challenges more generally and potential impact of the gym.

Meeting Adjourned, 9:55 AM