



Abby Kelley Foster Charter Public School

10 New Bond Street Worcester, MA 01606

Phone: (508) 854-8400 Fax: (508) 854-8484

www.akfcs.org

Board of Trustees Meeting Agenda

Wednesday, September 23, 2020 / 6:30 p.m.

Meeting link:

https://akfcs-org.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_tokJEYrCS8SJNCjcyJ3U4g

- I. Call to Order- Celia Blue, Board Chair
- II. Attendance Recorded
- III. Faithfulness to Charter
 - a. Reading of the AKF Mission; “The Mission of the Abby Kelley Foster Charter Public School is to assist parents in their role as primary educators of their children by providing a classical liberal arts education grounded in the great works of Western Civilization and aimed at academic excellence, musical competence and character formation.”
 - b. Public Comments
- IV. Review of the Meeting Minutes from August 11 & 26, 2020
 - a. **Motion:** To accept the meeting minutes from August 11, 2020.
 - b. **Motion:** To accept the meeting minutes from August 26, 2020.
- V. Review of opening for the 2020/2021 school year - Ms. Paluk
 - a. Thank you to Dianne Firment
 - b. Welcome to Alicia Carpino, Director of Finance and Operations
 - c. **Motion:** To amend the school's enrollment policy by amending the withdrawal/transfer process as written to be included in the students handbooks, pending approval from DESE. The Board allows technical changes to be made by the school administration after tonight's vote per the recommendation of DESE.
- VI. Board/Committee Updates
 - a. Education - Ms. Yarnie
 - b. Educational Foundation - Ms. Zagabe-Ndiku
 - c. Facilities and Finance - Mr. Royce
 - d. Trustee Update
 - i. Election of Jie Park, Ph.D.
 - ii. Resignation of Ryan Kittredge
- VII. Executive Director Search Discussion
 - a. **Motion:** To determine next steps relative to the Executive Director position.
- VIII. Upcoming Board and Committee Meetings
 - a. Education Committee: Tuesday, October 6th / 7:45 a.m.
 - b. Board of Trustees: Thursday, October 22nd / 8:00 a.m.- Audit Presentation

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- c. Board of Trustees: Wednesday, October 28th / 6:30 p.m.

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XII. Adjournment

- a. **Motion:** To adjourn the Meeting.



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The meeting was Called to Order by Celia Blue, Board Chair 6:33 p.m.

Attendance Recorded (see attached list)

Board Members: Celia Blue, Patrick Royce, Shelly Yarnie, Bibiche Zagabe-Ndiku, Randy Schmid

Ms. Blue, in Faithfulness to our Charter read the AKF Mission Statement. There were no public comments.

Ms. Blue asked for a review of the Meeting Minutes from August 11 & 26, 2020. She then asked for the following motions, to accept the meeting minutes from August 11, 2020 and to accept the meeting minutes from August 26, 2020. Mr. Royce made the motion to accept the minutes from August 11th. Ms. Yarnie seconded the Motion. The minutes were approved, with Mr. Schmid abstaining. Ms. Zagabe-Ndiku made the motion to accept the minus from August 26th. Ms. Yarnie offered a second of that motion and the minutes were approved unanimously.

Ms. Paluk then reviewed the opening of the 2020/2021 school year. She noted our attendance numbers are good, which is encouraging to see, but it will sustaining that excitement and keeping the students engaged to keep those numbers up.

Ms. Paluk noted that Dianne (Bonaventura) Firmment would be finishing up her work in the role as Business Manager at the end of the month. Ms. Paluk, Ms. Blue and Mr. Royce expressed their appreciation for Ms. Firmment's support and seeing AKF through the hire of a full time Director of Finance and Operations. That position has been filled with Alicia Carpino having started recently. Ms. Firmment continues to be a resource to Ms. Carpino as she transitions into the role.

Ms. Paluk noted the Nutrition Services Departments had begun a meal pick up program for families qualifying for Free and Reduced Meals, and available for purchase for anyone wishing to do so. AKF is exploring the possibility of being able to offer Free and Reduced meals to all our students. Ms. Paluk noted that the City is, as well as AKF is experiencing Internet issues, due to the high demand throughout the City.

Ms. Paluk shared that the IT Department has been instrumental in getting the support our staff and students need, Hotspots are going out to families, Chromebooks are being used. Ms. Paluk noted the Department's initiative to become less paper dependent with our forms and policies.

To strengthen our security measures, AKF is now using specific passcodes for each individual and looking to future safety enhancements.

With respect to Worcester's status in the red, Ms. Paluk noted that DESE has encouraged districts to look at 3-4 weeks of data before making any decisions regarding changes to the educational models the district is using.

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In October AKF will open the Enrollment Lottery. Per DESE it was recommended that we review our policies, thus the motion on the agenda tonight. We want to assure we have some flexibility to update our policies per DESE's recommendations.

Ms. Blue and Ms. Paluk then moved to discuss the School's enrollment policy, which Ms. Paluk noted needs to be updated in our Student Handbooks. Following the discussion Ms. Blue asked for the following motion; to amend the school's enrollment policy by amending the withdrawal/transfer process as written to be included in the students handbooks, pending approval from DESE. The Board allows technical changes to be made by the school administration after tonight's vote per the recommendation of DESE. Mr. Royce made the motion, Ms. Zagabe-Ndiku proved a second on the motion. The Board unanimously approved the motion.

Moving to the Board/Committee Updates Ms. Blue asked each Board Members to update the Board on the work of their committees Ms. Yarnie noted that the Education Committee met, hearing about the priorities of our ELL programs, the outreach we are doing in the Worcester Community to share tutoring resources with our families as needed outside of school hours, a new relationship opportunity for AKF.

Ms. Zagabe-Ndiku shared that the Educational Foundation will not be in a position to to award grants this fall and is looking ahead to the Spring Cycle.

Mr. Royce there is a great deal of uncertainty relative to our the Finances with the CoVID costs and spending. Spending to date is near \$1 million dollars.

Ms. Blue noted that following the election of Jie Park, Ph.D. to the Board, her nomination was sent to DESE and we are awaiting her confirmation. Ms. Blue noted that Ryan Kittredge resigned as a Trustee for personal reasons.

The Executive Director Search was the next topic of discussion. Ms. Blue noted that it was important to have a process, but the decision was whether or not to engage an outside firm or to keep the process "in house". The Board talked through different ideas; a hybrid of some work by a committee, some by the search firm, sending the entire process out to a firm. Ultimately the Board agreed to make no formal decision at this time but to make some outreach (Mr. Royce and Ms. Blue taking that lead) to firms to discuss cost, options, timelines, processes.

Ms. Blue noted the Upcoming Board and Committee Meetings Education Committee: Tuesday, October 6th / 7:45 a.m., Board of Trustees: Thursday, October 22nd / 8:00 a.m.- Audit Presentation, and Board of Trustees: Wednesday, October 28th /6:30 p.m. She then asked for a motion to adjourn, which was made by Mr. Royce, seconded by Ms. Yarnie and the meeting was adjourned at 8:02 p.m.

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