

**Board of Directors Meeting  
April 19, 2022 @ 5:30pm  
Virtual Meeting Minutes**

**Directors in Attendance:** James Cobb, Fr. John Raphael, Dr. William Hytche, James Cobb, and Robert Taylor

**Corporate Membership in Attendance:** Mark Faulkner and Irene Boyd

**School Personnel:** Ahmed White, Executive Director and Lekita Stevenson, Board Liaison

Project Reflects Board of Directors Meeting was called to order at 5:41pm by James Cobb. Scripture reading from Psalm 118 was rendered by Fr. John Raphael.

**A quorum was established.**

**Approval of Previous Board of Director Meeting Minutes**

A motion to approve the minutes from the February 15, 2022 Board of Directors meeting submitted via email, was made by Fr. John Raphael. The motion was properly second by Dr. Christy Scruggs with no amendments. The minutes were approved as submitted. The motion carried unanimously.

**Corporate Membership Report presented by Mark Faulkner.**

- The Corporate member provided an update on Sister Sandra.
- Lily Hart had to step down from the Corporate members and by committee vote, Paul Nigh, an attorney here in town, who was a longtime supporter was voted by the Corporate members to replace Lily Hart.
- He was the one that constructed and negotiated with Metro for the first charter school contract that established Smith and Craig had Academy. And is he's known sister for certainly over 20 years, probably closer to 30.
- Membership wanted to acknowledge our support & appreciation of the organization & Mr. White setting up the Bible study and the moral development of the of the kids. One of the original programs of Project Reflect.
- Discussed how the cell tower can be removed from the school property & have the board consider on the radar screen of something that would help improve the asset of the property overall.
- Another affirmation of the fiscal soundness of the organization, the liquid assets, the revenue assets of the organization, appear to be quite solid, so good budgetary efforts on behalf of the organization
- Reading Success Software discussed in great details via email The corporate member will await the committee's deliberations.

## Executive Director's Report presented by Mr. Ahmed White

- This is testing season and on top of preparing for TCAP, which was pushed back a little bit, because of the state mandated assessments with our students recently completed
- My staff really been pulling really hard to get those things done with the students benchmarking. And then we have another one coming up. So for the next four to six weeks, we'll have some form of testing going on at the school, whether it be benchmarking for the state benchmark, I-Ready, or TN Ready itself.
- The work that we are doing is meaningful, and it's impactful. And I get the opportunity to see it on a daily basis. We are moving in the right direction and will continue to move in the right direction.
- Within the last week, the Scarlet Foundation, which does a lot of work with the charter sector, they actually ran some numbers just to see how charters are performing compared to traditional schools. Smithson Craighead is doing fairly well, comparative to a lot of schools,
- See attachment regarding comparative data
- Fr. John asked, what is the tool in the reading program that we're using now that you find getting these results with what tool is that?
- We added LIPS a couple years ago, that was for the phonemic awareness for our students. And then we added Wonders, another version of wonders this year, oh, last year and into this year. And that has really shown some great improvement because it aligns with reading 360,
- We are actually a training site for the state for Reading 360. It's a program that comes from the state on how to teach and how to maneuver through the manipulators of reading, to help our students get that full circle understanding of reading and goes through phonemic awareness and whatnot.
- We are actually going to drop LIPS this year and move to a different program that has better data points for our school, our teachers have vetted this program over the last few weeks. And they really like and are excited about it. And it does what lips will do. But it also comes with ongoing training. That aligns perfectly with 360. It's a state initiative.
- Is there a cost factor in any of those programs that you just mentioned?
  - Yes, that program will cost I believe, once we do the finances on I think it's \$11K for one year; \$22K for two years; and it'd be \$32K for a three year agreement, we're gonna to start with the one year
- First year hiring a teacher from Teach for America
- See attached Literacy Comparison data
- Host for the state for Reading 360 & Mr. Hill has taken on the responsibility
- One of the things I want to do is make sure we're empowering our parents to be able to speak up, as you saw from the fifth grade for all campaign, a lot of our parents were able to be there. And they were excited about that. We continue to have coffee with the principal on the last Friday of the month.
- We were given another \$10,000 grant that we did not apply for we were selected to get this, these monies for technology.

- Our finances for the school, we continue to be in a good place. Definitely, as always, to remind us that far better than when we arrived
- Our 12 month employees are able to get paid during the summer, we have a surplus within our money market account where we are hopefully going to carry over a good amount into the summer.
- From this our current projections, one of the things we have to look at and ask the board to remember is that in May, we do not get BEP funding. That doesn't come again till June. Whatever we have in our in our cash flow at this moment will cover us until that June 15 payment from the state.
- The first check for the school year will be August 15th. Some of the things that we had some of the monies that we have, were able to hopefully be able to use those monies to make sure we get through the summer and get through the things that we need to plus with some of the grants that we do have. They will be matching and some others we pay first and then we'll get our funds back based off
- Next year, we will add a third grade teacher, which is following the trend if you remember from our fifth grade from all campaign, so we're adding a teacher a year. We are excited about that we did hire a teacher for that area, we've had locked down a teacher for kindergarten were in the process of closing a first grade teacher. And we're in the process of closing in on another fourth grade teacher because we'll be moving one of our teachers into a coaching role which is much needed here at the school. So it's our first opportunity to add a coach to our school, which takes a lot of the weight off of administration on implementation of curriculum, so she'll be a coach for ELA. And then of course, we will need some other coaches in different areas. And that Chairman is my report.
- Father Raphael asked to identify 3 to 5 top priorities from the board:
  - In need of more personnel to lighten the daily stress from Mr. White & Mrs. Stevenson we need those positions would be like, outreach coordinator, we need someone to work with grant management, family engagement, we need to have a true recruitment, and PR plan and then be able to do advertising. Of course, we need new teachers. And we need those floating, floating to those extra personnel so that when someone's out, or two persons are out, we're not stretched thin as a staff.
  - We also need to improve our buildings, those things that we can & need to do outside of the grants that we were able to get from facilities. And we don't know where those facilities funds are going to be with the federal and the state government, how they're making some changes and looking at how they're funding charters. And working with facilities brands, though some of the things will be positive for us, but and is sometimes for profits more than nonprofits. And I can explain that later. But there are things that we have to do to get our school outfitted for next year. Next year, we're adding another grade level, we're trying to get classroom setup. Of course, we're moving in and expanding to another building. So we got that simple things like toilets raised, and you know, painting and those wonderful things that that doesn't seem like they're very minor. But now we have to make sure your school is fully up to codes on both sides for academic purposes

- In addition, we need to look at charter expansion, that's a priority of mine, of course, we expanded to fifth grade, but there are opportunities coming up within the next year or so where I would love to be able to get into Cheatham county or to Robertson County, because there are opportunities there. People have approached us, as you all know, about expanding into those areas and have a team to really look that.
- Review of the charter agreement that is coming up in a few years.
- Having covered walkways between buildings that will allow transporting children to the various buildings during inclement weather
- Empowering Parents: one of the things we want to do is give them back that power by educating them and helping them get to where they need to be to help them better, better serve them and deal with their with their family.
- With the budget is having the funds that we you know, looking at what funds are going to take to get that with the recruitment and to bring other teachers in and then look at the expansion. You know, if you look at what Mrs. Stevenson and I do on a daily basis, we're, we're doing about four or five people jobs a day and the Lekita was probably doing 10 of them. With that having that personnel that download some of that stuff onto it's going to cost me money that's not currently budgeted for, we could put some of it in our provisional budget, which I submitted and looked at some price points on those. But even adding another related arts class, you know, what is that going to take to get the quality in which I want for our school for our kids. I can easily throw in, you know, somebody said, we're gonna do computer technology, and we'll have an assistant do computer technology. But that's not good for our students. It'll fill a space, and it may help some of them. But it won't fill those gaps with that well trained person. Also, I believe music education is huge. And that's the next goal I have for us is to have a true music program for our students here at school.
- So with the music, that'd be at one point, but then, you know, reality is how do we look at the funds that we have to make the improvements cafeteria has to make some changes, you know, how do we we're already at the point. Now, if you come on campus, we just had a new sidewalk, next to the building, so that the milk truck, and the fresh food trucks being able to get product up to the school? Well, in that case, we had to buy now we have to attach a much larger crew coolers to our school. So that's more money that's not in our budget, that we have to spend to make sure the coolers ran for the expansion of walk-in cooler, so that we're able to keep our food fresh, because we do everything on site. also just looking at the expansion of the just the typical classroom things that we need.
- So again, a proven curriculum, in the attempt to continue to improve our curriculum, we have to make some of these purchases. And then those subscriptions that we do have will have to be rolled over yearly. Therefore, you know, we're looking at how do we continue to move to push the envelope and make sure that we're doing what's best with the funds that we do have in place. I want to make sure that we are focusing on how we do this. Also, I go back to something that Chairman Cobb said before having that rainy day when something happens right now, we've been blessed to have a lot of opportunities for grants because either performance, or

COVID, you know, those different things, but what happens are those things washed away, or if they do go away, we'll continue to push to try to get those things. But if you look at legislation as a whole, and this is definitely the James area over my over mine, but when I look at charter education and the work that we do, there's so many things going on, there's even an article we just read in the post concerning, you know, the attack on charter schools in our country and how they're doing things. They put a lot of money out there. And it sounds great. But there has there's some some language within those that legislation that actually would hurt, potentially hurt charter schools. And so that's kind of what I was looking at what our funding and our budgetary surplus, the surpluses that we that we currently enjoy, but also want to make sure we're playing safe.

*This concludes the Executive Director's Report presented by Mr. Ahmed White.*

### **Board of Directors Chairman's Report presented by Mr. Cobb**

James Cobb was happy to report that the school is doing a great job with managing finances. we are putting some things place in order to be able to start some strategic planning for the organization, so that we can have some big picture goals. And we can know where we stand when an opportunity comes, or something gets taken away, or we need to fight and we need to stand our ground with Metro, we can know exactly where we are, what we're trying to accomplish and what we need to do. He is going to be putting some things in place with some assistance, some from Mr. White, and a person that's going to be able to help us out and talk to all the board members and find out what is important, where are we going and what do we want to accomplish. If there's nothing else I can leave this organization with, I hope that we can at least start that process. So that we come out of out of a cloudy season, we can get goal oriented, we can have a focus, we can have a target, and we can accomplish some really big picture items that will change our community change our neighborhoods, and, you know, make a big difference overall. One other thing that is important to me is that I do want to grow the board. And new board members have something in a perspective that they can add to the equation, I need you to reach out, I need you to think about who is somebody that could benefit the board that has a perspective, that his life experience that has a drive and desire to help others that we can ask to come in to help lift us up and make our organization better. So please, board members, do what you can I want to be able to initiate some new board members this upcoming year. We are stronger together.

*This concludes the Chariman of the Board's Report presented by Mr. James Cobb.*

### **RS-IBC Exploratory Committee Report**

We did have a meeting on February 22, 2022. It was a fruitful meeting. We got some good things discussed. We have had some additional conversations post meeting that we are still working through some information/items that have come up. We need to get everything compiled and sorted through and so we can have some additional discussions in the committee meeting. I am hoping that now that we are on the other side of Easter that we can get another meeting on the calendar to have some additional conversations. We

will have more information coming but I do want to report that we did have a meeting and we are having some good conversation in email which I'm sure you are seeing.

### **Education Committee Report**

James Cobb has advised the evaluation to start sooner than later for Mr. White.

Dr. Hytche confirmed that Mr. White's evaluation should be completed in the next couple of months.

Dr. Hytche will be submitting a resume of a young man who is a grant writer and reader for the university.

### **Adhoc Committee Report**

James Cobb would like the adhoc committee to come together and see what they can do, to put a plan together in the next two months, at least for the next year, for how we're going to use our secondary building for our library for fifth grade. For sixth grade in the future, I know it's coming.

### **Fundraiser Committee Report**

No report.

### **Board Development Committee Report by Fr. John Raphael**

No report.

### **New Business & Open Items**

No report.

**A motion to adjourn was made by Dr. Christy Scruggs and second by Dr. William Hytche. The motion carried unanimously.**

**The Board of Directors Meeting was adjourned at 6:57pm.**

**Board of Directors Meeting minutes were taken and presented by Lekita Stevenson, Board Liaison**