

**MASTERY SCHOOLS OF CAMDEN
MINUTES
May 15, 2018
5:30-8:00 pm**

**Held at McGraw Elementary
3051 Fremont Ave, Camden, NJ 08105
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING MINUTES**

Adequate notice of the meeting has been provided to the Courier Post, Daily News – New Jersey edition, and the Camden City Clerk and posted at all Mastery Schools of Camden locations and website.

DISCUSSION 5:30-6:30pm

- Dr. Saliyah Cruz, Deputy Chief of Student Development, presented on FY19 proposed school culture changes
- Mastery aims to balance structure with a joyful learning environment and to provide clarity and consistency across schools
- To get to that system, we will employ four strategies:
 1. Creating a strong classroom culture
 2. Standardizing and simplifying discipline response policies (behavior, attendance, and uniform)
 3. Standardizing and simplifying dean response
 4. Streamlining the student support process
- Re: strong classroom culture, we'll have professional development for teachers over the summer; we believe that good teaching & classroom management should address most issues
- A board member asked about outlier schools that have difficulties implementing these changes.
 - Dr. Cruz noted that we are frontloading strategies for teachers to manage their classrooms and implementing a clear system to identify teachers who are still struggling in order to provide them extra supports.
 - For already successful schools, the changes are not a shift in spirit. There will be a shift in execution strategy and efficiency. We believe that all campuses can improve.
- A board member asked how new culture policies fit into Mastery's teacher recruitment strategy.
 - Scott Gordon noted that there is now a scorecard for interviewing potential hires. Teachers are expected to be the authority in the classroom and build relationships with kids.
 - Scott presented all proposed FY19 changes (school culture and academic) to current staff, who rated the changes at an average of 7.7 out of 10.
 - On the margins, some teachers are uncomfortable that culture will become their problem and on the other end of the spectrum some teachers believe the changes are too strict
 - While we anticipated this up front that some teachers might leave, our retention numbers are on par with last year.

- To streamline the process for supporting at-risk behaviors, we will provide a list of supports that teachers can practice and a list that the culture team can do.
 - The changes may increase the number of students who need alternative placements, but overall the shift is not radical.
 - Mastery was a no excuses school, critique was that it wasn't thoughtful to kids with trauma, we introduced a range of options under 3.0 but that range was too large, now we are narrowing down.
- We do not have an alternate placement in Camden for students who have discipline problems; Mastery's counsel will provide a memo on options.
- Board members noted that the changes feel like a step in the right direction.
- Management will provide the changes for board approval at the June meeting.

Roll Call

- Jim Sheward called the meeting to order at 6:21pm.
- **Attendees:** Jim Sheward, Jamie Reynolds, Sharell Sharp; Judy Tschirgi (by phone); Absent: Reuel Robinson; **Quorum:** 4/5 members
- **Staff present:** Scott Gordon, Joe Ferguson, Chris Barts, Jessica Varevice, Yonca Agatan, Suzanne McKenna, Thomas Greenwood, Madison Gould, Saliyah Cruz, Shaneka Boucher, Lauren Ziegler, Michael Patron (by phone), Tom Johnston (counsel; by phone)

- **Action Resolutions**

10 minutes

- **Approval of the Minutes from April 24, 2018**

Pages 4-6

R-051518-01

Resolved, to approve the minutes from the meeting held on April 24, 2018 as presented.

Motion to approve R-051518-01: Jamie Reynolds; Second: Sharell Sharp; Motion passes unanimously

- **Human Resources**

Pages 7-8

R-051518-02

Resolved, to ratify Mastery Schools of Camden staff hired between April 14, 2018 to May 4, 2018, as presented.

R-051518-03

Resolved, to ratify the \$13,438.90 of "other earnings" compensation paid during April 2018 for Mastery Schools of Camden staff, as presented.

- **Compliance and Policy Updates (Monthly Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying (HIB) Report – May is attached separately)**

R-051518-04

Resolved, to accept the HIB Board Report for May as submitted.

- **Disbursement Approvals**
(Separate attachment for payroll, Separate document for invoices)

R-051518-05

Resolved, that the Mastery Schools of Camden Board of Trustees ratifies the payroll in the amount of \$700,720 for April 6, 2018 and \$695,292 for April 20, 2018.

R-051518-06

Resolved, to approve payment of \$1,847,864.47 for operating expenses as detailed in the invoices listing (Board Document 051518-01).

Motion to approve R-051518-02, R-051518-03, R-051518-04, R-051518-05, R-051518-06: Jamie Reynolds; Second: Sharell Sharp; Motion passes unanimously

- **Finance Committee Report** **20 minutes**
Pages 9-14
 - Enrollment Update
 - Proposed Budget Transfers & the FY18 Budget Revision

- Management provided an overview of enrollment and FY18 financials:
 - Enrollment:
 - We have 2,051 students which is 98% of our target
 - YTD average enrollment is on track with budget
 - FY 18 Budget
 - We have an improved bottom line by \$250k
 - We have a \$600k surplus (1.5% of total revenues)
 - Revenues are on track with budget
 - We have seen regular education savings since Jan (coming from salaries and benefits tracking lower)
 - We increased the SpEd budget because actual enrollment is higher than budgeted
 - We have seen savings in culture and community advocacy and engagement due to openings during the year as well as lower admin costs: insurance and after school costs
 - There is an increase of \$265k for PP boiler maintenance project and higher utilities costs

R-051518-07

Resolved, to approve the execution of contracts with vendors for services to Mastery Schools of Camden as presented below.

Contractor / Service Provider	Description of Services	Term of Contract	Contract Amount
Bradley Sciocchetti	Boiler repair and replacement - Pyne Poynt	May 2018 to August 2018	\$270,000
Parsons Environment & Infrastructure Group, inc	Facility Condition Assessment	May 2018 to August 2018	\$13,000 per building, \$78,000 total

R-051518-08

Resolved, to approve the proposed budget transfers and the FY18 Budget – May Revision for Mastery Schools of Camden as presented (Board Document 051518-02).

R-051518-09

Resolved, to approve and accept the Mastery Schools of Camden Auditors Management Report (AMR) on Administrative Findings, Compliance and Performance for the Year Ended June 30, 2017, distributed to the board during the November board meeting (i.e., Board Document 111417-04).

R-051518-10

Resolved, to acknowledge AMR Finding 2017-01 and approve the Corrective Action Plan (CAP) as submitted to the NJ Office of Fiscal Responsibility and Compliance (Board Document 051518-03).

R-051518-11

Resolved, to approve the establishment of a new petty cash fund for emergencies and small purchases for Mastery High School of Camden in the amount of \$2,000.

Further Resolved, that no single expenditure shall exceed \$250 and all expenditures must be authorized by the Assistant School Leader for Operations or the School Business Administrator.

Motion to approve R-051518-07, R-051518-08, R-051518-09, R-051518-10, R-051518-11: Jamie Reynolds; Second: Sharell Sharp; Motion passes unanimously

- **Camden City School District Agreements**

R-051518-12

Resolved, to approve the lease extension for the Molina Annex through July 31, 2020. (Separate document – Molina Annex Lease Agreement)

Motion to approve R-051518-12: Jamie Reynolds; Second: Sharell Sharp; Motion passes unanimously

- **CEO Report**

**45 minutes
Pages 15-35**

- Enrollment Update
- K-8 Math Curriculum & Remediation Strategy
- Salary Scales
- 2018-19 Calendar

Enrollment:

- COO Joe Ferguson introduced his team, Madison Gould, Network Director of Operations, and Shaneka Boucher, Director of Enrollment.
- Mastery’s student recruitment strategy centered (1) Focus on K; (2) Ensure transition from 8th to 9th grade; (3) Retain existing students grade 1 thru 11.

- Kindergarten Updated:
 - We are ahead of where we were last year (81% of our goal vs. 65%) and are most concerned about the gap at McGraw
 - We already targeted early childhood centers and are now doing door knocking and looking to partner with healthcare providers
 - A board member asked about the demographics of McGraw and whether the pool is shrinking
 - Management noted that Cramer Hill gets headlines for being new; Molina K-2 has resonated with families that want a separate building; McGraw doesn't have those advantages.
 - We did a parent focus group, are trying to build our partnership with a local head start and are asking families to refer others.
- 8th to 9th grade transition update:
 - We have collected 92% of re-enrollment forms, higher than our original goal plus we have a healthy waiting list.
- Grade to grade retention update:
 - Mastery receives over 50% of the application pool in Camden; our competition tends to be magnet and vocational schools.
 - Just 9% of our students have applied out, of those, only half have matched; and just half of the matched students have accepted their seats.
 - A board member asked whether we track the 9% number.
 - Joe noted that we do track this and can send this to the board.
 - Despite excitement around East Camden high school, both the middle and high school are lower than where we want to be, this may in part be due to EC having a bad reputation under the district
 - We have been holding events, such as block parties to change perceptions.
- Overall, Joe feels like we have turned a corner but McGraw and East Camden have a longer road and it's never really over
- The board chair acknowledged significant progress made on enrollment

K-8 Math:

- CAO Jessica Varevice presented on proposed math changes for FY19
- Eureka math is a highly rated K-8 math program that would replace Envision with a track record of getting results in urban districts and also used by CCSD
- We are currently conducting field testing in 3 grades and have received positive fdbk
 - 1st, 4th, 7th grades @ 12 campuses in PA and all Camden schools
 - We will have assessment data on how kids have mastered the standards being taught and will get feedback to feed into July network training
- Management asked for a commitment from the board to move forward because we are convinced that based on the experience of other school districts and our implementation efforts so far that this is our best option
- Second proposal is a Foundations program, a remedial program for our students who are significantly behind
 - This is an exciting opportunity for our students and has never been done before at this scale; we are hiring a highly qualified consultant to help
 - Some students may need to be in the course for all years and some may be able to transition back to the core math class

- A board member asked whether teachers will teach both courses and have double prep periods?
 - Based on our staffing configuration, teachers will likely teach both courses, which is not uncommon in other schools/networks
 - Our contract allows for up to two preps and our Chief Talent Officer is exploring options for additional compensation
- A board member asked about growth expectations
 - At the end of this year, we will have growth data from the MAP that we can use to compare; we want kids to grow above the national average and having a more aligned program to the Common Core will promote growth
- The board chair noted that we want all kids moving but we should be thinking soberly about what minimum performance level we can move forward with and at what point will we say we have to stop
 - Management responded that the floor is kids' current growth rate: 40th percentile, we want to get to at least the 50th percentile
- The board chair noted his support of these resolutions and would like to add an addendum that notes at what timeframe to change course if this isn't working and what metrics will be used to measure success, including implementation success;
 - Management agreed to provide the board with this information by the start of school

R-051518-13

Resolved, to approve the 2018-19 school year salary scales for teaching and admin staff.

- Management noted that there were slight adjustments from last year, there is overall fluidity between Philadelphia and Camden Mastery schools, and that we are told by teachers that we are reasonably competitive

R-051518-14

Resolved, to adopt the school calendar for 2018-19 as presented.

- Management explained that to produce the calendar senior leadership met, discussed with principals, and sought feedback from parents and teachers
- The general shift to move the year earlier is generally approved by everyone
- Spring break had some disagreement from stakeholders:
 - Management does not recommend we follow CCSD spring break
 - Parents want Thurs, Friday, Monday, Tuesday because families in the Latino community want the Thursday holiday; management recommends this.
 - The board made the decision to go with principal suggestion of Friday-Wednesday and noted that the board is uncomfortable with granting a new holiday that was previously not a holiday even though management recommended it

R-051518-15

Resolved, to adopt Eureka as the K-8 math curriculum to be implemented in fall 2018.

R-051518-16

Resolved, to adopt a “Foundations” math course to serve the needs of students significantly behind grade level in grades 5, 6, 7, and 8 to be implemented in fall 2018.

Motion to approve R-051518-13, R-051518-14, R-051518-15, R-051518-16, as amended: Jamie Reynolds; Second: Sharell Sharp; Motion passes unanimously

- **Closed Session:** No session
- **Public Comment (3 minutes per public comment):** No public comment
- **Other Business:**
 - Management provided an update on the Social Security Administration:
 - Management has communicated to staff that it has not yet happened and we will have expended all of our funds by August
 - At this point we don't expect it to happen, we are not removing our application, we're just not hopeful
 - If it happens teachers can keep their catch up payments, if the state asks them to make payments, we will have a problem that we'd need to address at that time
- **Adjourn all Boards**

Motion to adjourn: Jamie Reynolds; Second: Sharell Sharp; Motion passes unanimously

Jim called the meeting to close at 7:22.