

#### Board of Trustees

Gabrielle Apollon (Vice President)  
Ankur Dalal (President)  
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Salone Kapur  
Jennifer Ng  
Bianca Peart  
Elizabeth Phillips (Secretary)  
Caitlin Robisch  
Sarah Yan



## St. HOPE Leadership Academy Board of Trustees Board Meeting

### **MINUTES**

February 25, 2021 from 6:30-8:00 pm  
Meeting Conducted Virtually

- **Welcome**

#### Call to Order

Gabrielle Apollon	Present
Ankur Dalal	Present
Maureen Higgins	Present
Kristopher John	Present
Salone Kapur	Present
Jennifer Ng	Present
Bianca Peart	Present
Elizabeth Phillips	Present
Caitlin Robisch	Present
Sarah Yan	Absent (Excused)

Also present at the meeting: Meghann Persenaire, Principal; Max Hoover, Assistant Principal; Collin Raymond, CBSM; and Marissa Goulbourne. Due to the COVID-19 outbreak and closing of the SHLA building, the meeting took place via video conference. The meeting is being recorded and will be posted, along with a transcription, to the SHLA website.

- **Public Comment**

No requests for public comment were received.

- **Consent Agenda**

Minutes from the January 21, 2021 Board meeting were unanimously approved by the Board.

- **Finance Committee**

- Ms. Persenaire presented a budget analysis prepared in January 2021 containing projected surplus. The current projected surplus is approximately \$950,000. She discussed potential uses for the funds, including on new desks and shelves for classrooms, new computers for teachers, etc. Mr. Raymond discussed the use of funds for capital improvements and the impact of that spending on the balance sheet during the current and future fiscal years. The Board discussed and asked questions regarding the possibility of spending \$500,000 on capital improvements and the impact on cash surplus this year. **After additional discussion, the Board unanimously approved a motion to spend up to \$500,000 on capital improvements, including new desks, bookshelves, white boards, and laptops.**
- Ms. Persenaire reported that the scholarship account has been moved to the life fund, as previously approved by the Board.
- Ms. Persenaire and Ms. Goulbourne discussed the HARLEM and Journey scholarship application and interview process. Interviews are scheduled for Saturday, March 13. There were five applicants this year for

the HARLEM scholarship and two applications for the Journey scholarship, and Ms. Goulbourne discussed the number of applicants.

- Ms. Goulbourne also discussed the generally lower trends in college applications this year. For example, SUNY's applications are down about 20 percent relative to last year. Applications for black and brown students, first generation, and low income students are particularly low this year. Ms. Goulbourne noted the cost of application fees and suggested that SHLA may be interested in a program to help subsidize the costs of college application fees for alumni. For example, this would be \$15,000 to cover about 3 applications for each of the 100 alumni in given class year. Ms. Goulbourne will prepare a proposal for a pilot program for the current year.

- **Accountability Committee**

- Ms. Persenaire provided state updates, and discussed the Biden administration's announcement that state testing should be conducted this year. The Board discussed how testing may be done and the flexibility guidance that has been offered by the administration.
- Ms. Persenaire updated the Board on the reopening plan. There were 100% negative results during the three weeks of learning centers. SHLA is currently doing in-person learning with 30 staff members and 87 scholars. Mr. Hoover discussed how the scholars and staff have been adapting to being in person.
- Ms. Persenaire and Mr. Hoover reported on the monthly dashboard, including testing results. SHLA adapted the testing conditions to shorten the test (while maintaining the same level of rigor) and saw an improvement in NY Ready Interim 2 relative to NY Ready Interim 1 results, particularly in ELA. For math, there was also an improvement among both 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders.
- Ms. Persenaire provided a charter renewal update. SHLA had a positive visit with Regent Mead yesterday. SHLA is slated to be on the Board of Regents agenda for the March 15 meeting. The Board reviewed changes to SHLA's charter goals. The proposed changes include:
  - To remove the following goals:
    - Each year, the percent of scholars performing at or above Level 3 on the State ELA exam in each tested grade will exceed comparable DOE-defined comparison group rates.
    - Each year, the percent of scholars performing at or above Level 3 on the State Math exam in each tested grade will exceed comparable DOE-defined comparison group rates.
    - Each year, 8th grade scholars will complete a 2000 word historical research paper. 90 percent of scholars will meet or exceed the academic standards measured by this assignment.
  - To replace the history goal with the following:
    - Each year, 75% of 8th graders who have been at St HOPE Leadership Academy Charter School for at least two years will pass the New York State U.S. History Regents.

The Board unanimously approved the changes to the school designed goals.

- Ms. Persenaire reported on high attendance rates at student-teacher conferences.

Meeting adjourned at 8:13 pm.

I, Elizabeth Phillips, do hereby certify that I am the duly qualified and acting Secretary of St. HOPE Leadership Academy, a New York education corporation and that the above is a true and complete copy of the minutes of the meeting of the Board of Trustees of the said corporation held on February 25, 2021 at which quorum was present throughout. (February 25, 2021)