

Board of Trustees

Gabrielle Apollon (Vice 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

July 23, 2020 from 6:30-8:00 pm
222 W. 134th Street

- **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	Absent (Excused)
Sarah Yan	Present

Also present at the meeting: Constance Bond, Executive Director; and Meghann Persenaire, Principal. 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 June 25, 2020 Board meeting were unanimously approved by the Board.

- **Nominating Committee**

- Ms. Persenaire informed the Board that Jennifer Ng has been approved by the authorizer as a Board member.

- **Finance Committee**

- Dr. Bond provided an update on the state budget and funds for the 2020-2021 academic year. Governor Cuomo has not yet announced funding for the next year. However, all Title I schools are entitled to receive ESSER funds through a separate grant; SHLA would be entitled to receive \$165,000. SHLA would have to apply for these funds; the application is very similar to the Title I and Title II applications. The deadline to apply is August 15. These funds, in addition to the projected surplus for the current fiscal year and the built-in 10% budget cut for the 2020-2021 budget, would provide SHLA with a cushion to weather a cut to

state funding of up to around 17%. The Board, Ms. Persenaire, and Dr. Bond discussed SHLA's financial condition and asked questions regarding potential unanticipated expenses for the 2020-2021 year.

- Ms. Persenaire reported on scholar recruitment and enrollment. At present, 115 students have been accepted for 6th grade, of which 106 have completed the registration process, 11 are in progress, and 1 has yet to start registration. In addition, there are 92 scholars enrolled for 7th grade and 94 enrolled for 8th grade.

- **Accountability Committee**

- Ms. Persenaire presented SHLA's current re-opening plan. New York State is requiring all schools to post and update a re-opening plan. SHLA's plan includes a hybrid model as well as a version of the plan that would allow for moving to distance learning. The plan emphasizes parent choice, and SHLA is conducting surveys to understand parents' preferences for a hybrid model versus a full distance learning model. The Board, Ms. Persenaire, and Dr. Bond discussed the success of distance learning during the spring and any potential concerns that families have been expressing regarding distance learning.
 - Ms. Persenaire discussed each section of the plan, and discussed measures that SHLA will be taking. For example, SHLA has received a space analysis and will be able to fit 14 desks, placed six feet apart from one another, in each classroom. Ms. Persenaire also described how food and water will be safely provided to scholars. The Board asked about whether SHLA has discussed the draft plan with legal counsel or its insurance company; SHLA will be speaking with legal counsel in the coming days.
 - SHLA does not expect to access the school building before the Department of Education opens it, so SHLA is preparing for new student orientation and other programming during the first week of the school year to be fully online.
 - The leadership team has discussed various hybrid models, and believes the safest will be to divide the entire school (teachers and scholars) into two teams, with one team attending during Monday – Thursday, and the other team attends Monday – Thursday; both teams will be full distance learning on Fridays and on all other days of the week.
- Dr. Bond presented SHLA's NYSED Annual Report, and discussed SHLA's goal report. A lot of goals relate to state exams, which did not occur this year; however, SHLA included available test scores and Achieve 3000 data. For example, the school grew from 18% to 40% in terms of college and career readiness in language arts. In addition, Ms. Persenaire discussed strategies to increase the attendance rate from 94% to above 95% for the 2020-2021 year, such as by having greater communications with parents. Dr. Bond discussed that all financial measures have been met.
- Dr. Bond reported on the Board bylaws and her discussion with legal counsel regarding potential language edits to be more consistent with other charter school bylaws, and discussed the proposed limit on the number of terms for a board member. **The Board unanimously approved the proposed changes to the bylaws, as presented.**
- In response to a request from the Board, Ms. Persenaire discussed how SHLA is addressing Black Lives Matter and issues of equity within the school. For example, SHLA has long employed listening circles in its culture; all staff are being trained to facilitate listening circles and conversations with scholars. The Board resolved to continue the discussion, including with respect to staff training, diversity, and plans for how to incorporate discussion of these issues into curriculum and programming for scholars.

- **Principal Update**

- Ms. Persenaire discussed attendance for summer school/enrichment.

Meeting adjourned at 8:00 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 July 23, 2020 at which quorum was present throughout. (July 23, 2020)