

**Elmwood Village Charter Schools  
Board of Trustees Meeting  
Wednesday, September 21, 2022  
Meeting Site: EVCS Hertel**

**Trustees Present:** Jennifer Bernacki-Smith; Mimi Barnes-Coppola; Lacle Brumfield; Ed Castine; Kathy Franklin-Adams; Ken Gholston; Joshua Pennel; Jacob Piorkowski; Pamela Pollock; Anna Sotelo Peryea

**Trustees Excused:** Matt Ryan

**Trustees Absent:** None

**Others Present:** Danielle Bruno, EVCS Director of Schools; Liz Evans, EVCS Director of Operations; Anne Wechsler, EVCS Director of Curriculum and Instruction; Lisa Kirisits, CPA, of Kirisits & Associates, EVCS Accountants

**CALL TO ORDER**

Jennifer Bernacki-Smith called the meeting to order at 6:10 PM. She presented the agenda. There were no changes.

**MINUTES**

The minutes of the Elmwood Village Charter Schools Board of Trustees Meeting held on Wednesday, August 17, 2022, were presented. Liz Evans noted that the name of David Phillips, Principal, EVCS Hertel, had been omitted from the list of those attending. **Jake moved and Kathy seconded that David Phillips' name be added to the list of attendees and that the minutes be approved as corrected. Approved unanimously.**

**TREASURER'S REPORT**

Lisa Kirisits presented the Financial Statement. For the two months ended August 31, 2022, EVCS showed a decrease in net assets of of \$(1,343,900) vs. a budgeted decrease in net assets of approximately \$(1,374,000). The result was a favorable variance of approximately \$30,100.

As of September 18, 2022, There were 18 student vacancies at the Hertel Campus and 12 student vacancies at the Days Park Campus. Each vacancy represents dollars in per pupil funding from NY State. It was explained that these vacancies were due to delays in filling openings from the lottery lists and should be filled soon. \*

Papers were signed to authorize movement of invested funds from Northwest bank to Merrill-Lynch. This action was authorized by a resolution passed at the meeting of the Board of Trustees at its meeting on August 17, 2022. Lisa stated that she would make the calls to facilitate this transaction.

**Ed moved and Mimi seconded that the Financial report be approved. Approved unanimously.**

\* See Admissions/Enrollment Update 9/22

## DIRECTORS' REPORTS

The Director's Reports were prepared jointly by Danielle Bruno, Liz Evans and Anne Wechsler.

### **Director of Schools**

#### **School Leadership and Culture**

Strong Start: Both Hertel and Days Park are off to a very strong Start for the 22-23 school year. For the first six weeks, school leaders are focused on leading and monitoring the systems and routines that set the foundation for the rest of the year. Their visibility and presence has been noted by staff and parents.

Steering Committee: Each campus has established a steering Committee. The purpose of the Committee is to work collaboratively for the overall good of the school. The committee is comprised of representatives from each grade level and department. The committee meets once a month to discuss ideas or problem-solve concerns together.

School Culture: For the first time since 2019, EVCS held an in-person Meet the Teacher Night. Families came to their respective campuses on Thursday 9/15. Two informational sessions were held to accommodate families with more than one child. Each session began with a video message from the school leadership, followed by a presentation by teachers, which included information about Responsive Classroom, academic curriculum, and elements of the EVCS Way. Specialists held an "information fair" in the gym, and we also had staff members from Buffalo Prep present to provide information to families.

Each campus will be hosting its first Whole School Morning Meeting of the year this month.

The health offices and school leaders have been making a push to receive all necessary health forms from families so that field trips can begin.

The Community Associations at both campuses will be hosting a shared event - Trunk or Treat event in October.

## HR/Hiring

<b>Position</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Campus</b>	<b>Qualifications</b>
Instructional Assistant	Mary (Claire) Franczyk	Hertel	Bachelor's Degree - University of Richmond Art History and English  Master's Degree - Canisius College (In Progress) Childhood Education and Special Education
Special Education Teacher	Kathryn Meyers	Hertel	Bachelor's Degree - University at Buffalo Health and Human Services, Early Childhood  Master's Degree - D'Youville College Elementary Education  Certifications: Childhood Education Grades 1-6 Students with Disabilities Grades 1-6

Middle School Math Teacher	Alexandria (Lexie) Ferrentino	Hertel	<p>Bachelor's Degree - SUNY Geneseo Mathematics Adolescent Education</p> <p>Master's Degree - University at Buffalo (in progress) Mathematics Education</p> <p>Certifications: Mathematics Grades 7-12</p>
School Librarian	Dianna Urbanski	Days Park	<p>Bachelor's Degree - Buffalo State College Anthropology</p> <p>Master's Degree - University of Buffalo</p>

			<p>Information and Library Science</p> <p>Certifications Library Media Specialist New York State Public Librarian</p>
General Education Teacher	Daniel Schwach	Days Park	<p>Bachelor's Degree - University at Buffalo Music Performance</p> <p>Master's Degree - Buffalo State College Childhood Education</p> <p>Certifications Childhood Education Grades 1-6</p>

Instructional Assistant	Donna Ajaero	Days Park	<p>Bachelor's Degree - Canisius College Finance and Economics</p> <p>Master's Degree - Canisius College (In Progress) Childhood Education and Special Education</p>
Special Education Teacher	Jeffrey Bednarchak	Days Park	<p>Bachelor's Degree - University of Buffalo History</p> <p>Master's Degree - Medaille College Adolescent Education, Social Studies</p> <p>Certifications: Social Studies Grades 7-12</p>
General Education Teacher	Katrina DiGennaro	Hertel	<p>Bachelor's Degree - University at Buffalo Psychology</p> <p>Master's Degree - University at Buffalo Early Childhood/ Childhood Education</p> <p>Certifications: Early Childhood Education Birth - Grade 2 Childhood Education Grades 1-6</p>
Instructional Assistant	Jessica Szabo	Hertel	<p>Bachelor's Degree - Medaille College Psychology</p>

			<p>Master's Degree - Buffalo State Childhood Education</p> <p>Certifications: Childhood Education Grades 1-6 Early Childhood Education Birth - Grade 2 Students with Disabilities Birth - 6 (pending)</p>
Special Education Teacher	Rachael Blaszak	Hertel	<p>Bachelor's Degree - Buffalo State Childhood Education</p> <p>Master's Degree - Medaille College Students with Disabilities</p> <p>Certification Childhood Education Grades 1-6 (in process) Students with Disabilities Grades 1-6</p>

General Education Teacher	Elizabeth Quinlan	Hertel	<p>Bachelor's Degree - University at Buffalo Psychology</p> <p>Master's Degree - University at Buffalo Early Childhood and Childhood Education</p> <p>Certifications:          Early Childhood Education Birth - Grade 2          Childhood Education Grades 1-6          Students with Disabilities Grades 1-6          Students with Disabilities Birth - Grade 2</p>
Instructional Assistant	Adrian King	Hertel	<p>Associates Degree - Erie Community College          General Studies - Childhood Education</p>
Instructional Assistant	Alan Whitney	Days Park	<p>Bachelor's Degree - Buffalo State College          Childhood Education</p>
Middle School Special Education Teacher	Mark Reiford	Hertel	<p>Bachelor's Degree - Western Carolina University          History</p> <p>Certification:</p>
			<p>Middle and Secondary Teaching (North Carolina)</p>

Substitute Teacher	Paul Gath	Hertel	Bachelor's Degree - Medaille College Business  Master's Degree - Canisius College (In Progress) Childhood Education and Special Education
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**Promotions:**

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<b>Name</b>	<b>Former Position</b>	<b>New Position</b>
Kelly Norlen	Transportation Coordinator and Office Manager	Transportation, Communications, and Special Projects Coordinator
Desiree Samuel	Health and Safety Attendant	Front Office Administrative Assistant

**Ed moved and Josh seconded that all hires and promotions be approved. Approved unanimously.**

**Director of Curriculum and Instruction**

**Academics**

K Camp - We had another successful year of Kindergarten Camp. Meet the Teacher Night was held 9/15/22.

Beginning of the year assessment:

- RGR Screeners - Our AIS teachers started pulling students for one-on-one foundations skills surveys the 2nd week of school.
- STAR Assessments - Fall STAR Assessments begin on 9/19.

Parent-teacher conferences - coming up on October 13



## **Professional Development**

- August Professional Development - For the first time ever, we differentiated PD by bringing in new teachers (<3 years at EVCS) for two weeks, and veteran teachers for one week. The first week of PD was focused on school culture with four days of Responsive Classroom training. We received lots of positive feedback around this, from veteran teachers, and new teachers, alike. During the second week, we had a mix of team-building, curricular-based PD, and planning time.

- Practice Clinics - We held our first Practice Clinics this week on Routines & Procedures. Our Practice Clinics are essentially a mini 30 minute PD session about practical teaching skills. We explain the why, show an exemplar, identify the criteria for success, and give teachers a short amount of time to plan, practice, and receive feedback.

- 1/2 day PD on September 16th - Topics included planning inquiry projects with Dr. Hunter, planning for small group reading, and standards-based grading in PowerSchool

## **Director of Operations**

### **Operations/Facilities**

**Hertel:** Construction on the arts building is complete, except for a few punch list items. Certificate of Occupancy

was received prior to the start of the school year and all renovated spaces are being utilized.

Vendor was unable to schedule repaving of parking lot before PD began mid-August. They needed three full days in warm weather temperatures in order to fully prep, pave and stripe the lot. They will schedule the work for next summer as soon as the lot becomes available.

**Days Park:** AC was installed in the Days Park gym and it is currently being utilized. Blinds will be installed beginning October 10th.

**Shared:** Staffing updates, facilities manager and operations manager.

## **Admissions/Student Enrollment**

Offers are continuing to be made and there is a push for the end of September to reduce under-enrollment in various grade levels at both campuses. Additional information will be presented as well as up to date numbers.

\* See Admissions/Enrollment Update 9/2022.

## **Technology**

EVCS is working to replace Chromebooks that are approaching end-of-life by purchasing about 100-150 devices each year over the next 5 years to stagger end use dates for classroom devices.

## **Grants/Finance**

Grants: EVCS submitted the final report to the Cullen Foundation for its 3 year replication grant which covered salaries and benefits for instructional coaches, the Operations Manager and Data Manager. EVCS is also continuing to work with Cullen on Relay grants to cover PD for Hertel building leaders and instructional coaches.

Finance: EVCS Days Park and Hertel were selected for desk audits for the federal ESSER funding. Lisa Kirisits indicated that many charter schools they work with were identified for this remote audit and we are working with them to coordinate this look into our spending, which they coded and reported on to NYSED.

## **HR Updates**

HR Manager is upgrading payroll and time tracking system to allow for easier tracking of employees, stipends, and reporting. She negotiated that there be no additional cost for this improved system.

## **Other Business**

The New York Charter School Association is holding its annual Charter School Conference in Buffalo, NY on October 19-21. EVCS Staff and Board may attend for free. You can find more information about the conference and register for your complimentary tickets. Use the discount code NYCSA2022 at checkout to access free tickets.

**\*Admissions/Enrollment Update 9/22**

At the start of the 2022-2023 school year EVCS’s Admissions Coordinator reported that both campuses would be under enrolled: This was due to:

- Families that accepted spots, filled out some/most/all of the paperwork, and then did not appear when school began.
- Buffalo Public Schools making very late offers to criterion schools (city Honors, Olmsted) resulting in late transfers.
- Problems with lottery/enrollment program that did not give proper priorities to siblings of accepted students. This software is what is used by Enroll Buffalo Charters- the common application used by most Buffalo Charter Schools. We are deciding whether we can afford to stick with EBC or should do stand alone admissions in future years.

Ways that we are addressing the shortage:

- Putting extra staff on making offers and communicating with families on the wait list to make a September push for enrollment, divided by grade level and campus. We have had 10 spots accepted in the past week and are moving those students through the enrollment and classroom assignment process.
- Continuing to make offers past the September push with the aim of full enrollment (or as close as possible). Families are reluctant to switch their child’s school once school has begun, so we are moving through wait lists.
- Creation of a plan for 2022-2023 which includes a communication coordinator to provide more communication and touch points with prospective and applied families to ensure accurate enrollment projections for 2023-2024.

Waitlists: Some of our waitlists are short, but we have the advantage of having two waitlists. When one runs out we coordinate on pulling from the bottom of the other campus’ list for that grade level.

WAITLIST										TOTAL									
										767									
										HERTEL					DAYS PARK				
DATE	Total	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Total	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9/21/22	321	79	37	1	37	45	52	23	47	446	14	64	53	38	41	81	37	54	64

## SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

<b>Space Planning Committee</b>	Small groups are being given tours of the newly completed spaces.
<b>Finance Committee</b>	Nothing new to report.
<b>Nominating Committee</b>	Nothing new to report.
<b>Academic Excellence Committee</b>	Meeting will be held in late October or early November to review the results of the STAR Test.
<b>Fund Raising Committee</b>	Jake has contacted Sharon DeTamble. No Evening with EVCS has been planned for this year. The possibility of a Meat Raffle has been discussed.
<b>EVCS Culture Committee</b>	The group has started to discuss candidates for new members to the EVCS Board.

## LAWSUIT UPDATE - 124 ELMWOOD

Liz Evans and Jennifer Bernacki Smith have had a conference call with Julia. Julia has taken pictures of the retaining wall and the electric room at the base of the stairs. The photos seem to indicate that the problems areas may be related to work done by the owner, Mr. Savarino.

## BOARD DEVELOPMENT REMINDER

Jen reminded Board Members that the Annual Board Retreat was Scheduled for this coming Saturday, September 24, 2022, from 9:00 am until 1:00 pm at the Days Park Campus. The discussion will be led by a representative from SUNY Charter Schools and will focus on Roles and Responsibilities of School Leaders.

## COMMUNUNITY ASSOCIATION

Jake reported that the Days Park CA has new Co-Directors. Their group will be cooperating with the Hertel CA to sponsor the Halloween Trunk-or-Treat event at the Hertel Campus on October 29. Both CAs are working to sponsor a social event to introduce new EVCS parents from both campuses to one-another and to the activities of the schools.

The Hertel CA is sponsoring another Chiavetta's Chicken Barbecue sale at the school on Thursday, September 22, 2022. Anna stated that the two groups have agreed to divide the holiday fundraisers. For Christmas, Hertel will sell poinsettias and wreaths. Days Park will handle candy sales. They are considering some possible outdoor activities and maybe dances.

## SCHOOL LEADERSHIP AND EVALUATIONS

**Ed moved and Ken seconded that the Board enter executive session to discuss personnel matters. Approved unanimously.**

Discussion ensued.

**Josh moved and Lacle seconded that the Board exit executive session. Approved unanimously.**

## ANNOUNCEMENTS AND NEW BUSINESS

There were no further announcements and no new business.

**Josh moved and Kathy seconded that the meeting be adjourned. Approved unanimously.**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:05 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Pamela Pollock  
Board Secretary

**Future Meeting Dates:** October 19, 2022; November 16, 2022; December 21, 2022; January 18, 2023; February 15, 2023; March 15, 2023; April 19, 2023; May 17, 2023; June 21, 2023; July 19, 2023; August 16, 2023

**All meetings begin at 6:00 PM**