

**Elmwood Village Charter School
Board of Trustees Meeting
Wednesday, January 19, 2021
Meeting Site: EVCS Hertel**

Trustees Present: Mimi Barnes-Coppola; Jennifer Bernacki-Smith; Lacle Brumfield; Ken Gholston; Kathy Franklin-Adams; Joshua Pennel; Pamela Pollock; Matt Ryan; Anna Sotelo Peryea

Trustees Excused: Ed Castine; Jacob Piorkowski

Trustees Absent: None

Others Present: Liz Evans, EVCS Director of Operations; Liz Fisher, Director, EVCS Hertel; Dave Phillips, Temporary Acting Principal at EVCS Days Park; Anne Wechsler, EVCS Director of Curriculum and Instruction

CALL TO ORDER

Jennifer Bernacki-Smith called the meeting to order at 6:05 PM. She presented the agenda. There were no changes.

MINUTES

The minutes of the Elmwood Village Charter Schools Board of Trustees Meeting held on December 15, 2021, were presented.

Matt moved and Josh seconded that the minutes be accepted as presented. Approved unanimously.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Neither Lisa Kirisits, CPA, EVCS Accountant, nor Ed Castine, Chair of the EVCS Financial Committee was in attendance. Hence, the full Financial Report was deferred. Matt Ryan, long-time member of the Financial Committee, stated that the Committee had met recently with the Space Planning Committee to discuss finances for the upcoming construction/renovation at the Hertel Campus. Matt indicated that there were sufficient funds available for the project as some of the CDs had matured and extra money had been borrowed at the time of the Days Park construction. He believed that no additional borrowing would be necessary. The Board was also notified that the final intercept for the mis-directed BPS Special education monies had been submitted.

Mimi moved and Lacle seconded that the abbreviated Financial Report be accepted. Approved unanimously.

DIRECTORS' REPORT

The Directors' Report was prepared jointly by Liz Evans, Liz Fisher, David Phillips, Danielle Bruno and Anne Wechsler.

Reopening Update

EVCS continues to operate a full five-day in-person instructional program.

Challenges Updates:

Health and Safety

EVCS has continued to perform contact tracing for staff and students, which has been made more complex by vaccine status and COVID recovery status metrics that have been added to quarantine/isolation rules. New guidance has been coming from the County and State regularly. EVCS Leadership Team and Health and Safety Team continue to meet regularly to discuss changes in guidance, new protocols and procedures, and how to better communicate with families and staff. All are working to ensure compliance with regulations and maintaining safety for students and staff.

With the high rates of infection brought on by the Omicron variant, and the change to a 5-day quarantine period, EVCS has adjusted the focus of efforts to keep students and faculty safe in school. More energy and attention are now being given to preventative measures such as proper mask wearing, adequate distancing between adults and between students, proper ventilation in classrooms (especially during lunch), etc.

Staffing

EVCS Hertel had to remain closed one extra day after winter break due to staffing shortages. This decision was not made lightly, but the Leadership Team felt that student and staff safety was paramount and that regular school-wide routines couldn't be maintained with anticipated staff levels.

Vaccines and Testing:

Erie County implemented the "test to stay" program in schools. EVCS learned that the school was required to have its own LSL (Limited Service Laboratory) license in order to implement "test-to-stay". This is underway, but EVCS will also have to ensure adequate staffing in order to test students in a safe and timely manner. Updates will be shared with families as they become available.

New York State and Erie County have been issuing changes to regulations and guidance frequently. Based on multiple changes, The EVCS COVID team created the following chart for families which was shared on January 13:

EVCS Isolation & Quarantine Procedures Quick Chart

Updated as of **January 12, 2022** | The contents of this flow chart may be updated as information from either the CDC, NYSDOH, and/or ECDOH changes. All updates will be shared as they become available.

If You Test POSITIVE for COVID
Isolate and report your positive case to your school nurse AND Erie County Department of Health (ECDOH) by clicking this link to report your at-home test results: *

MUST-DO's:

- Stay at home for at least 5 days (with day 0 being the day of your positive test or the first date of symptoms)
- May return to school after 5 days only if:
 - You are fever free for 24 hours without medication
 - AND
 - are symptom -free

If You have COVID-like Symptoms
You **may have COVID** or another illness.

MUST-DO's

- May return to school after 5 days only if:
 - You are fever free for 24 hours without medication AND are Symptom free
- MAY RETURN EARLIER if:
 - All symptoms have resolved AND
 - You receive a negative rapid or PCR test completed by a laboratory

If you are a Close Contact
You have been identified as a **Close Contact** (exposed to someone who has COVID 19) and are **NOT fully vaccinated:**

MUST DO'S

- Quarantine for 5 days (day 0 is the date of last contact)
- If you develop symptoms** follow the center column for **COVID-like** symptoms

You have been identified as a Close Contact and you are **fully vaccinated:** You do not need to quarantine if you do not have symptoms. If you become symptomatic, quarantine immediately and seek COVID testing.

A COVID test is suggested on day 5 for all Close Contacts (regardless of vaccination status)

*<https://www3.erie.gov/covid/form-to-report-a-positive-covid->

Continue to practice masking, social distancing and good hand washing. For more information on vaccination locations, visit :

<https://ww3.erie.gov/covid/vax-calendar>

Operations/ Facilities

Hertel:

The custodial team has been operating short two members since the beginning of the year, but is continuing to keep the building clean and safe. All are thankful for their hard work and dedication throughout this difficult time.

Operations manager, Brittany Mez, has organized a “clean-out” of the two-story building which has been housing teacher supplies and extra furniture. This will take place in February.

Days Park:

The former evening supervisor, who has temporarily replaced Mr. G., has been installing Promethean Boards that arrived at the end of last year. All are grateful for his dedication to EVCS Days Park and for accomplishing so much in such a short time.

Shared: Nothing to report.

Admissions/Student Enrollment

EVCS remains slightly under enrolled, with EVCS Days Park being under enrolled by 10 students, and EVCS Hertel being under enrolled by 3 students. It is more difficult to get parents to switch schools for their children at this time of year. It is hoped that at least 5 spots at Days Park can be filled within the next month. The eighth grade at Days has only 40 students which accounts for part of the under enrollment there.

EVCS is continuing to receive applications through Enroll Buffalo Charters. Below is the number of applications to date for each campus:

	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total
Days Park	95	16	10	13	13	12	8	17	10	194
Hertel	95	11	5	10	10	11	5	12	0	159

Last year at this time EVCS has received 177 applications at EVCS Days Park and 134 at EVCS Hertel.

The Charter School Lottery is scheduled to be held on Tuesday, April 6, 2022.

Technology

After a shipping delay, 22 Promethean Boards have been installed - 3 at Hertel for new classrooms and 19 at Days Park to replace SMART boards.

Grants

EVCS was not awarded a grant from the Knox Foundation, which is now administered through the Community Foundation. Promethean Boards will now be covered through the ESSER ARP grant.

EVCS will be applying for a grant from the Cullen Foundation for RELAY Graduate School of Education training for the Hertel Administrative Team, and for new Instructional Coaches. The deadline is January 28, 2022.

HR Updates

Personnel

Position	Name	Campus	Qualifications
Substitute Teacher	Emily Michalski	Days Park	Bachelor's Degree: D'Youville College; Psychology
Instructional Assistant	Karissa Lichter	Hertel	Master's Degree: Canisius College; Education (in progress) Bachelor's Degree: Canisius College; Psychology
Substitute Teacher	Oscar Wilson	Hertel	Bachelor's Degree: Fredonia University; Criminal Justice

Currently Hiring: Custodians, Social Worker, Substitute Teachers, Middle School Spanish Teacher, Special Education Teacher, Instructional Assistants

Academics

The second round of STAR testing is now being completed. Data meetings with each classroom are scheduled for this week and next.

A meeting of the Academic Excellence Committee will be scheduled to review school-wide data.

Parent/Teacher conferences are scheduled for January 27. This will be a half-day for students.

Professional Development/Strategic Planning

- Book Study: ongoing, optional book study of Ghouldy Muhammad's Cultivating Genius with Dr. Jevon Hunter from Buffalo State College
- Admin Team Quarterly retreat - scheduled for two Half-days (1/27 and 2/1)
- Kathy Franklin-Adams continues to work with Liz Fisher and Catrice Huff.
- Applications will be sent to the Cullen Foundation to send new Admin and coaches to RELAY Leadership Training.

Culture

- Staff Morning Meetings continue (most recent topic, 1/26, "I Messages")
- Brown Bag lunches continue monthly - admin is present in the cafeteria during teacher lunch periods for informal conversation

- Spirit Week will be held the week before February break.
- An online or hybrid book fair will be planned for the spring.
- Recess Support - Parent sign-up lists have been created.

Other Business

The New York Charter School Association (NYCSA) is starting a working group for charter school board members. Their stated aim is:

The Association is looking to launch a working group of charter school board members who are interested in meeting quarterly to share their experiences and challenges serving in their governance role.

The link will be emailed directly to Board members by the end of the week. Interested members are encouraged to sign up directly.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

Space Planning: Liz Evans updated progress on the renovation of the empty two-story building at the Hertel Campus. Last month's cost estimates were incorrect. The new total projected cost estimate was \$879,600 (rounded up to the nearest \$100). Colby Smith, EVCS's Owner's Representative stated that he will waive his fee. It was the opinion of the Committee that EVCS has sufficient funds in the operating account to cover the costs without the need for borrowing.

Josh moved and Matt seconded that the plans for renovation at the empty two-story building at the Hertel Campus be approved. Approved unanimously.

Finance: Matt indicated that the Finance Committee had nothing else to report.

Nominating: The Committee had nothing to report.

Academic Excellence: The Academic Excellence Committee plans to meet in early February to discuss information from the STAR testing.

Fundraising: No report.

EVCS Culture: A group at the Hertel Campus is planning to schedule GLYS (Gay and Lesbian Youth Services) training in February for parents, mentors and adult caregivers.

LAWSUIT UPDATE - 124 Elmwood building

Board President, Jen Bernacki-Smith, has spoken with EVCS Counsel at Hodgson-Russ regarding the various possibilities of settling the dispute over who is responsible for paying for necessary repairs to the parking lot at the property which is owned by Sam Savarino, leased to Elmwood Village Charter School and sub-let to Autism Services. A pretrial conference with a judge has been scheduled for January 25, 2022. In order to facilitate non-trustees' schedules, further discussion on the lawsuit was delayed until the Executive Session taking place later in the meeting.

COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

Anna reported on behalf of the Hertel C.A.:

- They have been working on a Clean Loop Recycling Center. This allows recyclers to make their own drop-offs while giving the Credit to the school.
- A restaurant fundraiser is being considered.
- There will be no spring chocolate sale this year.
- The winter warmth fence has been popular again this year. Donated winter clothing items have been moving quickly
- Another Chiavetta's Chicken Barbecue sale is scheduled for May 25. Proceeds are to be dedicated to financing a basketball court for the school.

Jacob was not present this evening. Hence there was no update from the Days Park Campus.

ANNOUNCEMENTS/ NEW BUSINESS

There were no further announcements.

Matt moved and Pam seconded that the Board enter Executive session to discuss some legal and personnel matters. Approved unanimously.

Several items were discussed.

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

Ken moved and Pam seconded that the meeting be adjourned. Approved unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:05 PM.