

**Elmwood Village Charter Schools
Board of Trustees Meeting
Wednesday, February 16, 2022
Meeting Site: EVCS Days Park**

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

Trustees Excused: Ken Gholston

Trustees Absent: Matt Ryan

Others Present: Danielle Bruno, Director, EVCS Days Park; Liz Evans, EVCS Director of Operations; Dave Phillips, Assistant Director, EVCS Days Park; 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 6:05 PM. She presented the agenda. There were no changes.

MINUTES

The Minutes of the Elmwood Village Charter Schools Board of Trustees meeting held on January 19, 2022, were presented. There were no changes.

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

FINANCIALS

Lisa Kirisits presented the Financial Report. For the seven months ended January 31, 2022, EVCS showed a decrease in net assets of (\$10,500) vs. a budgeted decrease in net assets of approximately (\$824,300). The result was a favorable variance of approximately \$813,300.

Lisa explained the assets to liabilities ratio. The current ratio is the ratio of the schools current assets (e.g., current assets consisting of cash, receivables and prepaid expenses = Approx. \$8,176,100) to current liabilities (e.g., consisting of accounts payable, deferred revenue, accrued expenses, current portion of long-term debt = approx. \$3,003,400) and measures the school's ability to meet current obligations as they become due. The school's current ratio on January 31 2022 was 2.72 to 1. A current ratio in excess of 2:1 is considered favorable.

Josh moved and Lacoie seconded that the financial report be approved. Approved unanimously.

LAWSUIT UPDATE

Jacob moved and Josh seconded that the Board enter executive session to have a discussion with the School's Attorney, Andrew Freedman, regarding potential litigation. Approved unanimously.

Explanations and discussion ensued.

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

DIRECTORS' REPORT

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

Reopening Update

Challenges Updates:

-Health and Safety

EVCS has continued to perform contact tracing for staff and students, but has reduced close contact identification to those sitting close to students at lunch and other times at which students are unmasked. The Governor and Erie County Executive have discontinued the mask mandate for indoor spaces except for schools. The school mask mandate is in place until March 7th, after which time the Governor will make a decision regarding continuing the requirement. The EVCS Leadership Team and Health and Safety Teams continue to meet regularly to discuss changes in guidance, new protocols and procedures, and how EVCS can better communicate with families and staff. Efforts are being made to ensure compliance with regulations and to keep students and staff safe.

-Staffing

EVCS has continued to hire more substitute teachers and has been using stipends to fill extra duties and coverage. The Leadership team is looking at the stipend structures in light of the upcoming budget year. It will be necessary to ensure that enough is allocated to continue to provide adequate staffing and supervision of students throughout the school day.

-Vaccines and Testing

EVCS is in the process of applying for a limited Laboratory Services License and is discussing the best use of staff to determine the type of testing programs the school should offer.

Operations/Facilities

Hertel: Clean-out of the spaces that will be renovated will begin shortly. Extra furniture that does not fit in classrooms due to physical distancing requirements, as well as classroom supplies, will be temporarily stored in other available spaces. The construction project is anticipated to begin in April, after bidding and application for permits.

Days Park: Nothing to report.

Shared: Nothing to report.

Admissions/Student Enrollment

EVCS continues to be slightly under enrolled, but efforts continue to enroll students. EVCS continues to receive applications for next year through Enroll Buffalo Charters. Below is the number of applications to date for each campus:

	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Totals
EVCS	132	24	17	19	23	20	13	26	15	289
Days Park										
EVCS	135	22	11	22	21	21	10	21	n/a	263
Hertel										

Last year at this time (2/22/21) EVCS had received 294 applications at EVCS Days Park, and 250 at EVCS Hertel.

On March 19, EVCS will participate in an in-person charter school fair organized by the New York Charter School Association. The school is heavily engaged in outreach throughout the community. The Lottery will be held on April 5, this year.

Technology

Nothing to report.

Grants

EVCS has applied for a grant from the Cullen Foundation for RELAY Graduate School of Education training for Hertel Administrative Team and new Instructional Coaches. A “site visit” meeting is planned for March 2, 2022.

HR Updates

Position	Name	Campus	Qualifications
Receptionist	Meriah Millner	Hertel	Medaille College: Bachelor’s Degree; Business Administration
Substitute Teacher	Haley Atkins	Days Park	SUNY at Buffalo: Bachelor’s Degree; Psychology
Substitute Teacher	Andreas Queen	Days Park	SUCB: Bachelor’s Degree; History
Substitute Teacher	Jayla Florence Reed	Days Park	SUCB: Bachelor’s Degree; Childhood Education
Day Porter/Custodian	Juan Green	Days Park	High school Diploma; Bennett County High School

Pam moved and Ed seconded that all proposed hires be approved. Approved unanimously.

Currently Hiring: Custodians, Social Worker, Middle School Spanish Teacher, Special Education Teacher, Middle School Social Studies Teacher, Instructional Assistant

Academics

The Academic Excellence Committee met. (See Committee Reports)

Professional Development/Strategic Planning

- A practice clinic on implementing the “Cold Call” was held for all general education teachers at each campus.
- An optional workshop on using STAR data to drive instruction will be held on 2/17.
- Recent Topics of special education clinics have been: IEP Progress note writing, Writing IEPs, Program Modifications and Accommodations.
- There will be a 1/2-day for professional development on March 25th. The focus of this will be unit development. Teachers will be able to choose from a few options: Pathways Projects, Social Justice Units, Critical Inquiry Projects (with Dr. Hunter), infusing marginalized voices into units across the curriculum.

Culture

- Mid-year SEL survey data meetings were held. Results were used to plan classroom inventions intended to support student social-emotional health.
- Staff Morning Meeting Culture Clinics continue (most recent topic: Classroom Energizers)
- Brown Bag lunches continue monthly. Admin is present in the cafeteria during teacher lunch periods to for informal conversation.
- Spirit Week is being held at each campus this week.

Other Business

The New York Charter School Association (NYCSA) is holding their first working group for charter school board members on February 24th around budgeting procedures. The link for registration is available from Liz Evans.

NYCSA is also organizing and sending out advocacy materials pertaining to the NYS budget process. EVCS will be sharing talking points and letter and call templates with all stakeholders in the next month and a half.

HERTEL RENEWAL UPDATE

The Hertel renewal meeting has been rescheduled for Thursday, March 17, 2022.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

- Space Planning: The Space Planning Committee has not met this period. Vendors have been visiting new building spaces to assess needs.
- Finance: Finance Committee has not met this period
- Nominating: Nominating Committee has not met this period.
- Academic Excellence: The Academic Excellence Committee met on February 15. Several
A number of parameters were discussed:
Attendance - Average Daily Attendance (ADA) has historically averaged around 95%. This period the ADA was 90.5%. The drop was considered to be related to COVID factors (illness, quarantines, parental fears of exposure, etc.) The past week attendance has jumped to 94-95 %.
Student Performance - Evaluation used fall and winter grade equivalents on the STAR assessments measured against the stated goal “to have, each year, 100% of students make 1-year growth or more in both Math and ELA.” At the halfway point in the year 57% of students were projected to meet the 1-year growth in ELA; 61% projected to meet the 1-year growth in math. Factors impacting growth included remote learning, chronic absences, and lack of connectedness. The fact that student growth percentile has improved is a testament to the teachers and reflects the success of the new reading program.
School Culture - Measures of School Health - Percentage of students feeling capable, connected and contributing (EVCS’s three C’s as stated in the Charter) was in the 65 - 72% range.
Other Factors influencing above include:
- absence of Responsive Classroom morning meetings due to social distancing requirements.
- teacher shortage, keeping salaries commensurate with districts.
- impact of social/emotional issues on instruction.
- teacher coaching and supervision needs increase due to staff changes.
- gaps in growth correlated with POC and chronic absence
-continuity of instruction impacted by remote learning, disconnect from school and chronic absences.
- Fundraising: The Fundraising Committee has not met this period.
- EVCS Culture: The GLYS event was postponed until March. Both CAs will participate. Other items of discussion included Student Heritage and Culture and Social Justice.

COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

Jacob reported from the Days Park CA. Only 8 people were in attendance at the last meeting. Weather and Covid may have been at least partially responsible for the low numbers. Using parents to assist with recess has been approved. No parent will be left to cover without a responsible staff member. Sign ups for recess duty and other teacher assistance activities will begin on 2/17 using "Sign-Up Genius". The School is planning a one-day, outdoor book sale. Social connections are being maintained with virtual BINGO and other activities. Days Park is planning a shared Chocolate Sale with the Hertel Campus.

Anna also reported that Hertel is seeking parent volunteers to assist teachers with recess and field trips. They are hoping to promote better family engagement using a survey. Another Chiavetta's Chicken Dinner fundraiser is being planned for May.

Ed moved and Jacob seconded that the Board enter executive session for discussion of legal and personnel matters. Approved unanimously.

Discussion ensued.

Lacole moved and Jacob seconded that the Board exit executive session. Approved unanimously.

ANNOUNCEMENTS/NEW BUSINESS

There was no additional business and nothing to announce.

Lacole moved and Jacob seconded that the the meeting be adjourned. Approved unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:25 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Pamela Pollock

Future Meetings: Mar. 16, 2022; April 20, 2022; May 18, 2022; June 15, 2022; and July 20, 2022.

All meetings begin at 6:00 PM.

