

**Elmwood Village Charter Schools
Board of Trustees Meeting
Wednesday, March 17., 2021
Meeting Site: Zoom Online Meeting**

Trustees Present: Mimi Barnes Coppola; Jennifer Bernacki-Smith; Lacoie Brumfield; Ed Castine; Kathy Franklin-Adams; Evelyn Kerney; Matt Moscati; Joshua Pennell; Pamela Pollock; Matt Ryan; Liz Santacrose; Anna Sotelo-Peryea

Trustees Excused: Jamie Smith

Trustees Absent: None

Others Present: Danielle Bruno, Director EVCS Days Park; Liz Evans, EVCS Director of Operations; Liz Fisher, Acting Director of EVCS Hertel; Anne Wechsler, EVCS Director of Curriculum and Instruction; Lisa Kirisits, CPA, of Kirisits and Associates, EVCS Accountants

CALL TO ORDER

Liz Santacrose called the meeting to order at 6:04 PM. She presented the agenda. There were no changes.

MINUTES

The minutes of the Elmwood Village Charter Schools Board of Trustees Meeting held on February 24, 2021, were presented.

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

TREASURER'S REPORT

Lisa Kirisits presented the Treasurer's Report. For the eight months ended February 28, 2021, EVCS showed an increase in net assets of \$435,600 vs. a budgeted decrease in net assets of approximately (\$575,100). The result was a favorable variance of approximately \$1,010,700.

Budget lines showing significant favorable or unfavorable variances were explained and discussed:

- Although the school is currently significantly ahead of budget, there is a trend toward loss in the area of State funding.
- Hybrid instruction reduced the need for substitute teachers resulting in a positive variance on this line.
- Professional fees are over budget due to legal fees associated with the attempt to recoup special education funds from NY State.
- EVCS is in the process of filing for forgiveness of the COVID related PPP Loan.

Matt Moscati moved and Matt Ryan seconded that the Financial Report be approved. Approved unanimously.

Regarding the consolidation of certain financial matters, the following was proposed:

RESOLUTIONS OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF ELMWOOD VILLAGE CHARTER SCHOOLS

The Board of Trustees of Elmwood Village Charter Schools, a New York education corporation (the “School”), does hereby adopt the following resolutions at a duly held and noticed meeting on the date set forth above, at which a quorum was present.

WHEREAS, Northwest Bank, a Pennsylvania chartered financial institution and a wholly-owned subsidiary of Northwest Bancshares, Inc., a Maryland Corporation (“Northwest”), issued a commitment letter dated August 4, 2020 (the “Northwest Commitment”), pursuant to which it agreed, subject to certain terms and conditions, to provide one or more loans in the approximate principal amount not to exceed \$6,211,739 (collectively, the “Loan”) to the School; and

WHEREAS, the School desires to accept the Loan, or such lesser amount of the Loan as the School deems satisfactory;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the School borrow the Loan from Northwest on substantially the terms and conditions described in the Northwest Commitment, with such changes as may be required by the Northwest Commitment and approved by the School; and it is further

RESOLVED, that, in connection with the Loan, the School (i) enter into certain mortgages encumbering the School’s property located at 665 and 667 Hertel Avenue, Buffalo, New York 14207, 40 Days Park, Buffalo, New York, 14201, 29 Saint Florian Street, Buffalo, New York 14207 (collectively, the “Property”), promissory notes, loan agreements, assignments, security agreements, and environmental indemnity agreements (collectively, together with all other documents, instruments and agreements evidencing or securing the Loan, the “Loan Documents”), and (ii) further secure the Loan with all or substantially all assets of the School; and it is further

RESOLVED, that the Loan Documents and all other documents necessary to effectuate the issuance of the Loan and to carry out the intent of these resolutions be executed in the name and on behalf of the School and contain such terms and be in such form, as the School may determine, with advice of counsel, as conclusively evidenced by the execution thereof, to be advisable and in the best interests of the School; and it is further

RESOLVED, that all action taken and all instruments and documents entered into by the School prior to the adoption of these resolutions with respect to the Loan are hereby ratified, confirmed and approved; and it is further

RESOLVED, that, in addition to and without limiting the generality of the foregoing resolutions with respect to the Loan, Elizabeth Santacrose, Board Chair of the School, or Elizabeth Evans, as Authorized Representative, are hereby authorized and directed to take such further action with respect to the Loan and to execute and deliver the Loan Documents on behalf of the School and such instruments and documents as may be appropriate to carry out the foregoing resolutions, including, without limitation, any amendment, extension, restatement or modification of any such instrument or document; and the taking of such action or the execution of such instruments and documents shall be deemed conclusive evidence of the determination that such action or execution was appropriate and in the best interests of the School; and it is further

RESOLVED, that Elizabeth Santacrose, Board Chair of the School, and Elizabeth Evans, as Authorized Representative, are hereby authorized and directed to execute any and all promissory notes in connection with the Loan.

Matt Ryan moved and Mimi seconded that this resolution be approved as proposed. Approved unanimously.

DIRECTORS' REPORT

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

School Reopening Update

Current enrollment:

	Days Park Hybrid	Days Park Remote	Hertel Hybrid	Hertel Remote
Jan-Mar	247 (55%)	195 (45%)	187 (62%)	114 (38%)
April-May	289 (64%)	153 (36%)	225 (75%)	74 (25%)

EVCS Days Park and Hertel will welcome 59 more students (42 at Days Park and 17 at Hertel) to the hybrid model on April 19 or April 22.

Based on declining positivity rates, availability of the vaccine, data on transmissions in schools, and fidelity to health and safety practices, we propose the following change to our metrics: Eliminate the metric of campus closure based on 3 positive cases in three separate classrooms in a two-week period. Instead, EVCS will follow the recommendation of the Department of Health for class/cohort quarantines and shifts to remote instruction. These recommendations will be based upon contact tracing and the identification of close contacts of individuals who have tested positive for COVID-19.

Schools are now required to report on the vaccination status of instructional staff to the state Department of Health. Currently, 41% of the staff is fully vaccinated. By the end of spring break, 63% will be fully vaccinated.

There have been many questions about a return to full in-person instruction. Unless the 6-foot distancing regulations are reduced or eliminated, our classroom capacities cannot accommodate full classes. We are currently conducting measurements in classrooms to determine what the capacity of each room would be if the distancing requirement is reduced to 3 feet. A priority list is being compiled for special populations who may need more intensive instruction.

Operations/Facilities

Days Park– The addition has finally been completed, the Certificate of Occupancy received, and the spaces are being put into use.

Hertel – Nothing new to report.

Shared -- Facilities staff reinstated use of Asset Essentials program in which maintenance, repairs and other facilities issues can be reported, assigned and tracked. It has greatly improved communication within the facilities staff and simplified the process for staff to report any conditions that need attention.

Action Item: NYS Education Department required district and charter schools to add a **“Pandemic Addendum”** to their District Safety Plans. This addendum is a very high level overview on the school’s first steps in the case of district-wide closures. The draft plan was developed by the EVCS Safety team and based on steps taken in March 2020 and its elements are required by New York State. The draft plan was shared with the staff, staff feedback was collected and incorporated into the document. The addendum must be approved by the board of trustees before it is added to the District-Wide Safety Plan and submitted to the New York State Education Department.

[2020-21 District Safety Plan Pandemic Addendum - Google Docs](#)

Mimi moved and Lacle seconded that the “Pandemic Addendum” be approved and duly added to the District-Wide Safety Plan. Approved unanimously.

Admissions/Student Enrollment

EVCS remains slightly under-enrolled (6 students-5 at Days Park and 1 at Hertel). Our Admissions Coordinator has begun the re-enrollment process with current families, and has been working hard on the first virtual open house for prospective families, which is live on our website:

<https://sites.google.com/elmwoodvillageschool.org/openhouse2021/home>

Lottery Applications 2021-2022 as of 3/17/21										
	K	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th	Total
Days Park	165	26	27	28	23	37	15	15	5	341
Hertel	165	19	29	30	19	33	14	NA	NA	309
Total	330	45	56	58	42	70	29	15	5	650
* Sibling and employee application numbers will be available by April 1st.										
Lottery Applications for 2020-2021 as of 3/18/20										
Campus	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Totals
Days Park	161	38	35	43	35	34	37	21	11	415
Hertel	132	32	33	33	39	24	Not available at Hertel			293
Total	293	70	68	76	74	58	37	21	11	708

The number of applications above do not reflect siblings or staff applications, so they are on par with applications from last year.

Technology

We have begun planning for 2021-2022. Our technology hours with Station 28 are currently at about 100 hours over contract due to the increased support that has been needed this year.

HR Updates

Staff Considerations

We are asking teachers to re-submit consideration/accommodation forms in early April to help us make updated staffing decisions.

Personnel: Action Item:

Position	Name	Campus	Qualifications
Evening	Aneesha Hugley	Hertel	High School Diploma
Custodian			Charter School of Applied Technologies

Pam moved and Matt Ryan seconded that the proposed hiring of Aneesha Hugely be approved. Approved unanimously.

Currently Hiring: Substitute Teachers, Isolation Room Attendant, Day Porter, PT Custodians

Academics

Instruction

Beginning after Spring Break teachers will add one period of high-leverage, targeted synchronous instruction on Wednesday morning. Originally our asynchronous day, the addition of this period ensures that all students have a minimum of 3 synchronous periods on Wednesdays.

NYS Assessments

Grades 3-8: If the assessment waiver request is not granted by the USDE for the Spring 2021 administration, schools will be required to administer Session 1 of the ELA and Mathematics assessments to students.

Schools are not expected to bring students into the building if they are learning remotely.

Professional Development

EVCS has a half day for professional development on March 26th. The topic will be Culturally Responsive Teaching and the Brain: Promoting Authentic Engagement and Rigor Among Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Students.

Other Business

Anne Wechsler has been investigating Possibilities for summer programming for EVSC students. Cullen Foundation is offering some financial aid for some special programs such as the National Summer School. There are some neighborhood programs where students could walk. At this time it does not appear that any summer transportation is available. The Leadership Team is looking at the various levels of need and thinking about the possibility of small scale, targeted intensive training for some students.

Considering the recent computer hacking incident that disrupted instruction in the the Buffalo Public Schools, Liz Santacrose raised the question of malware insurance. **Pam moved and Matt Moscati seconded that Liz Evans be authorized to investigate the cost and advisability of purchasing insurance against ransomware. Approved unanimously.**

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

-Space Planning	The Space Planning Committee is scheduled to meet on 3/19/21
-Nominating Committee	No report
-Academic Excellence Committee	The Academic Excellence Committee will meet prior to the April Board Meeting in order to examine student performance indicators.
-Fundraising Committee	No report

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Kathy Franklin-Adams moved and Matt Moscati seconded that the Board move to executive session to discuss the matter of the search for a Principal for the Hertel Campus. Approved unanimously.

Discussion ensued.

Pam moved and Jen seconded that the Board Exit executive session. Approved unanimously.

Following the discussion at the Executive Session, **Jen moved and Pam seconded that the Board accept the recommendation of the Nominating Committee to offer the position of Principal of the EVCS Hertel Campus to Elizabeth Fisher. Approved with one abstention.**

COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

The Hertel Campus CA has completed its Easter Candy sale. Any additional pick-ups can be made at the school garage. There are plans for a Chiavetta's Chicken Barbecue later in the spring. There will be a rental sign advertising the event at the corner of Elmwood and Hertel. Pre-sales will be available online.

The Days Park Campus CA is still in the process of reorganization. Jamie was not available for additional information.

NEW BUSINESS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

There was no new business and no announcements. **Mimi moved and Josh seconded that the meeting be adjourned. The motion was approved unanimously.** The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted

Pamela Pollock

Future Meetings:

April 21, 2021; May 19, 2021; June 16, 2021; July 21, 2021

All meetings begin at 6:00 PM

