

## MINUTES

### Board of Trustees Meeting

Thursday, May14, 2020 – 9:30 AM

Meeting conducted via Zoom

**Participating Board Members were:** Donald L. Hense, Chairman; Gregory Prince, Vice Chair; Darrin Glymph, Treasurer; Victor Long, Secretary; Patricia Brantley; Carol Thompson Cole, Eric McKinley King, Tracy Gray, Deborah McGriff, Jeanette Mendes, Anise Walker and Chris White.

Staff Members in attendance were: Vielka Scott-Marcus, Chief Academic Officer; Catherine Sanwo, Comptroller; Candice Tolliver-Burns, Chief Communications Officer; James Waller, Chief of School Operations; Zachery Morford, and Monique Miller, Director of Performance Reporting and Evaluation.

**Call to Order.** The meeting was called to order at 9:34 AM.

**Approval of Minutes.** On a motion by Anise Walker and second by Eric McKinley King, the board voted unanimously to approve the minutes from the March 12, 2020 board meeting.

**Update on COVID-19 Response.** Patricia Brantley updated the board on Friendship's ongoing response to the COVID-19 pandemic as well as the measures established to evaluate our performance. Ms. Brantley stated that staff continue to provide safe and effective distance learning opportunities while ensuring support services for staff and students that will continue through May 29, 2020. An intercession for student learning is planned for June 1 through June 12 to ensure students have as close to a full school year of instruction as possible. Technology and internet access was made available to every Friendship family that expressed a need. Friendship stakeholder supports include meal pick-up and delivery for families enrolled at Friendship as well as families across the city, and mental health supports for parents, students, and staff. Ms. Brantley transitioned the update to Vielka Scott-Marcus to provide a more detailed report on the implementation phases of Friendship's Education Plan.

Mrs. Scott-Marcus discussed the details of actions taken in each phase to ensure families had the technology and educational materials needed to transition to distance learning. Mrs. Scott-Marcus discussed the virtual school schedules for the various grade bands, professional development provided to teachers and parents to support teaching and learning in a virtual setting as well as at home, and continued instructional support to students receiving special services (including students with IEPs, English language learners). In addition, the [WeCare@friendshipschools.org](mailto:WeCare@friendshipschools.org) email account was set up to capture and respond to requests and/or concerns from the Friendship community. Tracy Gray recommended that staff establish a way to gather information proactively to inform planning. Staff reported that focus groups and town halls are occurring and that staff and families will be surveyed regularly in the coming weeks.

Candice Tolliver-Burns continued the update with a report on steps the Communications Department took to ensure students, families, and staff stayed connected to receive information in real time as COVID-19 developments occurred as well as Friendship's response. The Communications Department supported Friendship's desire to proceed with all planned in-person events by transitioning them to virtual events. These events included a teacher recruitment fair, Earth Day, and upcoming Commencement Ceremonies.

James Waller provided an update on the state of school facilities and facilities projects. Mr. Waller discussed steps taken to clean all Friendship facilities, establish safety protocols as recommended by the CDC, as well as plans to reconfigure spaces to account for social distancing. In addition, Mr. Waller shared the state of expansion projects at the Ideal and Southeast sites and the new Collegiate athletic field.

Ms. Brantley closed the discussion with an overview of lessons learned. Lessons included but were not limited to how some students thrive in a virtual environment; teachers were able to maximize instructional time due to the absence of typical building distractors; the benefit of having technology partners; and the greater need for mental health services for all Friendship stakeholders.

**Finance Update.** Darrin Glymph, Finance Committee Chair introduced the finance report approved by members of the Finance Committee and included in the board materials. Mr. Glymph turned the report over to Ms. Brantley who provided an overview of the report. Ms. Brantley reviewed expenses related to the COVID-19 response, which is projected at \$1.3M. Ms. Brantley stated that year to date net income is \$589,460 and Friendship is on track to meet end of year projected net income. Revenues and expenses are up \$1.8M over prior year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Ms. Brantley discussed with the trustees, FY2020-21 budget considerations that include enrollment projections and the DC government budget pressures resulting from COVID-19. Friendship will continue its response to the COVID-19 crisis in FY 2020-2021 through distance learning and operational enhancements required after schools reopen. Finally, Ms. Brantley reviewed budget scenarios based on enrollment projections and various outcomes of the District's approved budget for education. Donald Hense recommended to the board reconvene in two to three weeks after the Mayor's FY2021 budget is submitted to the DC Council, to approve Friendship's budget for FY2021.

**New Business.** Mr. Hense introduced a resolution to the Board to approve the submission of a charter amendment request to offer competency-based credits for the Friendship Collegiate Online Academy and to offer virtual educational programming for students in preschool and prekindergarten. After discussion of the resolution, on a motion by Anise Walker and a second by Deborah McGriff, the board unanimously approved the resolution.

**Adjournment.** On a motion by Eric McKinley King and a second by Anise Walker, the board voted to adjourn the meeting at approximately 10:57 a.m.