

## MINUTES

### Board of Trustees Meeting

Thursday, December 5, 2024 – 9:30 AM

**Participating Board Members were:** Donald L. Hense, Chair; Gregory Prince, Vice Chair; Victor Long, Secretary; Patricia Brantley; Carol Thompson Cole; Jeanette Mendes; and Anise Walker participated in person. Darrin Glymph, Treasurer; Unique Fullmore; Eric McKinley King; Deborah McGriff; and Chris White participated by Zoom.

Staff Members in attendance were: Catherine Somefun, Chief Financial Officer; Zac Morford, Chief Performance Officer; Ken Cherry, Chief of Staff; Kimberly Campbell, Strategic Advisor; and John Glover, Chief External Affairs Officer participated in person. James Waller, Chief of Schools; Dylan Gruver, Chief People Officer; Candice Tolliver-Burns, Strategic Advisor; and Monique Miller, Director of Performance Reporting and Evaluation participated by Zoom.

**Call to Order.** The meeting was called to order at 9:32 AM.

**Executive Session.** On a motion by Anise Walker and second by Victor Long, the board voted unanimously to go into Executive Session at 9:33AM in accordance with DC Code §2-575(b)(10) to discuss the appointment and resignation of officials of the board of trustees of a public charter school. On a motion by Victor Long and second by Anise Walker, the board voted unanimously to close Executive Session at 9:55 AM.

**Approval of Minutes.** On a motion by Gregory Prince and second by Anise Walker, the board voted unanimously to approve the October 24, 2024 board minutes.

**Nominations and Governance Committee Report.** Mrs. Carol Thompson Cole, Chair of the Nominations and Governance Committee, introduced the committee report previously reviewed and approved by its members and included in board materials. Mrs. Thompson Cole reviewed the board composition requirements and details of the slate. Mrs. Thompson-Cole noted that Tracy Gray opted not to renew her term, which results in an even number of trustees. Moreover, we have 60 days to vote on a new member or develop a plan of action, which the Nominations and Governance will do, and submit the plan to the DC Public Charter School Board.

On a motion by Jeanette Mendes and second by Chris White, the board voted unanimously to approve the slate of re-elections.

On a motion by Jeanette Mendes and second by Anise Walker, the board voted unanimously to approve the committee assignments and meeting calendar.

**Finance Update.** Darrin Glymph, Finance Committee Chair, introduced the committee report previously reviewed by members of the Finance Committee and included in board materials. Mr. Glymph turned the report over to Catherine Somefun, Chief Financial Officer, to review details of the report.

Mrs. Somefun stated the FY2025 budget forecast is strategically aligned with Friendship's academic goals and long-term viability and she reviewed the budget allocation percentages. Mrs. Somefun reviewed the first quarter balance sheet and noted that Friendship's year-to-date net income is \$2.9M. Long-term debt decreased by \$3.1M due to principal payments made. In the year over year comparison, Mrs. Somefun stated increased revenue was due to the increase in the UPSFF and the Facilities Allotment. The decrease in grants compared to the prior year is primarily due to the discontinuance of ESSR and the one-time OSSE teacher pay support. Salaries and benefits are higher, driven by increases in teacher pay; other expenses are in line with the prior year.

Mrs. Somefun stated that Friendship's reserve is projected at \$63M by year-end. Ms. Brantley directed the board's attention to the footnote about the 60 days unrestricted cash we must maintain because of bond requirements, and also the amount we maintain (days cash on hand) to stay BBB rated by Standard and Poor's. Because of our BBB rating, Friendship's debt percentage is about 3.1% compared to unrated debt for charters, which is about 5.7%. This savings allows Friendship to invest in additional staffing and other resources for academic support to students who need it most.

Mrs. Somefun provided a finance compliance update and reviewed the Financial Audit Report received from the DC PCSB, which indicated that Friendship continued to demonstrate robust financial health, with all six key financial indicators above target. Mrs. Somefun also stated for FY2024, all bond compliance requirements were completed and Friendship held its Annual Investor Call as scheduled. For FY 2025, Friendship is on target to meet all bond covenants and fully funding reserves based on bond and FPCS BOT requirements. Mrs. Somefun turned the report over to James Waller, Chief of Schools to provide a facilities update.

Mr. Waller stated the Southeast construction is scheduled for occupancy in winter 2024. Mr. Waller provided an update on the leases for Collegiate and the Nicholson facilities, which require Fair Market Value be assessed for DGS to set new rent amounts. Friendship completed the appraisal for Collegiate and has begun the appraisal for Nicholson. DGS requested 24 years of rent payment documentation, which Friendship provided.

On a motion by Gregory Prince and second by Victor Long, the board voted unanimously to accept the Finance Committee report.

**School Performance Committee Report.** Deborah McGriff, co-chair of the School Performance Committee, introduced the School Performance Committee report previously reviewed by the committee and included in board materials and asked Zac Morford, Chief Performance Officer to present the report. Before presenting the details of the report, Mr. Morford shared that OSSE released its DC Report Cards to schools this morning and noted that Friendship PCS - Ideal Middle earned the highest score of all middle schools in the city.

Mr. Morford continued the report stating that Friendship PCS campuses were 25% of the 12 campuses/schools recognized as Bold Performers by EmpowerK12. Blow Pierce Middle, Ideal Middle, and Woodridge International Elementary were the three campuses whose DC CAPE proficiency rates were 13.5 percentage points higher than similar schools and improved student

achievement three – four times faster than the state average. Anise Walker raised a question about how staff planned to leverage these results for Edfest. Staff stated that messaging is under development to share with not only families at Edfest, but also our current families.

Mr. Morford provided a more detailed analysis of MAP performance by campus and grade bands and stated that the results suggest Friendship is on track to meeting spring DC CAPE goals. Mr. Morford also reviewed first quarter attendance data benchmarked against the goal of achieving a chronic absenteeism rate lower than 30%. The majority of campuses have rates lower than the prior year. The report concluded with a review of Friendship's outcomes on OSSE's School Climate Survey Pilot. Friendship exceeded the OSSE Pilot Cohort in six of seven topics with students responding favorably to questions in these areas.

On a motion by Gregory Prince and second by Anise Walker, the board voted unanimously to accept the School Performance Committee report.

**Adjournment.** On a motion by Anise Walker and second by Jeanette Mendes, the board voted 10 to 1 in favor of adjourning the meeting at approximately 10:57 AM.