

# Truxton Academy Charter School

## Regular Board Meeting

**February 8, 2021**

Notice was provided on our website, [truxtonacademy.org](http://truxtonacademy.org) on Monday, February 1, 2021.

Join	Zoom	Meeting
<a href="https://zoom.us/j/98161711210?pwd=THIYdW5wOGttWnllWE9VU1MvVWxmZz09">https://zoom.us/j/98161711210?pwd=THIYdW5wOGttWnllWE9VU1MvVWxmZz09</a>		
Meeting ID:	981 6171	1210
Passcode: SSN9b7		

A quorum of 8 trustees out of 9 total number of trustees was present as follows:

**Members Present via Zoom Meeting:** Stuart Young, Cindy Denkenberger, David Amberg, Beth Klein, Tom Brown, Sarah Steven, John Tillotson. Krysta Austen joined at 7:14pm

**Members Absent:** Korinne L’Hommedieu

**Others present in person or via Zoom Meeting:** Sara Petit-McClure, Leaf Carmer, Patty Dawson, Kathie Arnold, and Jenny Hull.

President Stuart Young called the meeting to order at 7:05pm.

### Pledge of Allegiance

### Public Comments

Tom Brown spoke for PTO. He reached out to Save Around coupon book on their behalf and is hoping to move forward.

### Approval of Minutes

Stuart Young moved to accept the minutes for the BOT Regular Meeting January 11, 2021 and as emailed. Tom Brown noted one correction, noted. Hearing no additional corrections or additions, minutes are approved.

### Head of School Report’s

Sara reported that going forward, a teacher will be invited to highlight their class each month. Jenny Hull will be the first teacher presenting at next month’s meeting. Sara also reported that the students have started a PBL species survival project. They were tasked to start thinking about what land would have looked like before people – include plants and animals. Process: ask questions, do research, discover what’s endangered, their adaptations, then create public awareness. Using infographics. students at different reading levels can participate. Grade 3 students won first place, a \$250 cash prize, for their burrito bar project last semester. We will share this exciting news in the media. For Black history month, students will learn about explores Perry and Henson. Students will also celebrate “friendship love” for upcoming Valentine’s day.

Kathie Arnold mentioned that her niece works for the wolf sanctuary in Sherburne and could help plan/host a Field lesson. Sara advised that field lessons aren’t “outlawed”, but are frowned upon still. Local visits like the beaver observation can happen. Even Trout in the classroom will have to be different this year. We did get 150 fish and the kids are excited however they get to participate. Dave Amberg mentioned a local visit to Lab Pond might work, then. The yellow spotted salamanders migrate down the

hillside back to the pond they were born in and it is quite spectacular. He will connect Jenny with a contact.

Sara reported that we are sending home second marking period report cards tomorrow. She will have data for review next meeting from assessments as it was just completed at the end of last week. Jenny Hull will model PBL for part of Professional Development next month.

### **Board Committee Reports**

#### *Finance Committee*

Treasurer's report - Korinne L'Hommedieu was unable to attend. Tom reported that cash balance is on track. The decrease in cash position of 40K is due to spending down of the budget for the year. We will be allocating \$25K for dissolution fund in June.

Finance Committee report attached. Tom will be meeting with Sara and Leaf and reviewing accounts. We will get some reimbursement for COVID-19 related expenses, cannot conflict with CSP expenditures.

With no objection to reports as submitted, report is approved.

#### *Personnel Committee*

Report attached. Cindy reported that open positions are being advertised. Next year teachers will be advertised in March or April.

With no objection to reports as submitted, report is approved.

#### *Facilities Committee*

No report submitted.

#### *Curriculum Committee*

Report attached. Cindy shared a discussion about planning a community meeting including teachers, board of trustees, and administration, to discuss what our mission looks like in practice, and where we are looking to go, i.e. what we will look like K-6, how can we back plan to accomplish this and make sure we are meeting our mission. It should be a facilitated meeting and include local stakeholders. The Executive Committee should spearhead this event.

With no objection to reports as submitted, report is approved.

#### *Marketing Committee*

No Report attached.

### **Special Committee Reports**

#### *Nutrition Committee.*

No Report attached. Sara reported that 3<sup>rd</sup> graders were so encouraged by burrito bar success, they are looking to do more events – next will be breakfast.

#### *Professional Advisory Committee*

No report submitted.

#### *Transportation Committee*

No report submitted. Tom reported that insurance is quoted. Patty reported that lettering is still in process.

### *Fundraising Committee*

Report attached. Cindy mentioned a few grants they are working on. They are also looking at an ongoing fundraising event. Something low maintenance with decent ROI, using FB. They are open to suggestions.

With no objection to reports as submitted, report is approved.

### **Old Business**

Sara reviewed the Teacher Concerns Google Document and is asking for additional input so we can move forward on this. Tom commented that the document as it stands was good for him. He feels that finalizing the handbook and salary schedule will help, as well. Stuart mentioned that some of the issues were raised prior to recent staff changes and those changes should have alleviated some issues. Sara reported that they have helped, but she feels a clear chain of communication is needed as well as a clear complaint policy so the teachers feel heard. The suggested policy is to have the issue brought to Head of School, if not able to be resolved there, it would go to the Personnel Committee, then, if needed, to the Executive Committee for a final decision. We will also instill an annual meeting with teachers to review handbook, policies and provide new "offer letter" for next year. Teacher evaluations still need to be finalized and staff evaluations need to be built in, as well.

Sara also reported on Peaceful schools. Elaine Sturges started a grant application to help get Conscious Discipline more integrated in the school. We did not get the grant but were able to get contract in place thru CSP funds with Peaceful Schools. Peaceful Schools is a local organization in Syracuse with similar ideals. They agreed to take Conscious Discipline ideals and work within their program. Some work was done last fall – more will be done, such as additional work with new teachers and individual support. Sara will look for feedback from teachers thru a survey to see if we would want to pursue for next year with parents, as well.

Sara feels that sharing an action plan and discussing our growth plan will help ensure more understanding from the staff; that we do not plan to have math specialist, reading specialist, etc. Tom mentioned sharing info on what it means to be a charter school, why we are different. Dave mentioned to be sure there's an understanding on what it means to be salaried – shorter vs. longer days, also the difference in not being part of a teacher's union. We need to make sure that there is trust that we are all working our hardest putting students first.

Sara will update the document and email out to the teaching staff. We can plan to discuss it at the teacher meeting before the next board meeting.

### **New business**

Tom mentioned that he has heard from few parents that they are still looking for in person learning 5 days a week. He wondered if we should survey parents. Sara reported that even if we did and the majority wanted it, it is still not feasible because of staffing i.e., cleaning and disinfecting along with the teachers still teaching on two modalities. Thoughts around troubleshooting those issues are welcome.

### **School Events**

FEB 14 – PTO is holding a virtual dance and craft event at 1pm

FEB 15- 19 – no school Winter Recess

### **Adjournment**

Motion by John Tillotson, seconded by Tom Brown, that the meeting be adjourned at 8:57pm. Having no discussion and none opposed, the motion is carried.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Patty Dawson, Recording Secretary