

True North Rochester Prep Charter School
Board of Trustees Meeting - Minutes
September 21, 2018

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Rosenberger at 11:00 am.

Roll Call

The roll call was taken and a quorum was found present.

Trustees Present: Geoffrey Rosenberger
James Ryan
Rebecca Sumner
Ron Zarrella (via video conference)
Ebony Miller-Wesley
James Costanza
Josh Phillips
Jean Howard

Trustees Absent: James Barger

Also Present:

Brett Peiser	Chief Executive Officer, Uncommon Schools
Tara Marlovits	Chief Advisor, Uncommon Schools
Paul Powell	Assistant Superintendent, Uncommon Schools Rochester
John Claypool	Associate Chief Operating Officer, Uncommon Schools Rochester
Christy Hendler	Director of Strategic Initiatives, Uncommon Schools Rochester
Eric O'Connor	Regional Director of Special Projects, Uncommon Schools Rochester
Shane Dunn	Director of Advancement Strategy and Regional Development, Uncommon Schools
Ted Eckert	Principal, Rochester Prep High School
Chassity Wells	Director of Operations, Rochester Prep High School

Approval of May 2018 Minutes

The following motion was made to approve the minutes from the May 30, 2018 meeting.

Motion: Rebecca Sumner
Second: Jim Costanza
Vote: Approved unanimously

Approval of August 2018 Minutes

The following motion was made to approve the minutes from the August 24, 2018 meeting.

Motion: Jim Costanza
Second: Rebecca Sumner
Vote: Approved unanimously

Public Comment

No public comments were made.

High School Campus Update

Given that this was first full Board meeting held at Rochester Prep High School since Ted Eckert has been Principal, Ted introduced himself to the Board.

Chassity Wells then discussed the growth of the high school, noting the student enrollment and staff additions and continued on to share efforts to ensure strong staff and student culture. Ted then detailed the High School's focus on "breakthrough" academic results, which include quarterly exams, PSAT and SAT, GPA, and AP exams. Both leaders shared how the launch of the 18-19 school year has gone, starting with planning and alignment over the summer, staff professional development in August, and orientation for the new 9th grade students. Chassity concluded by sharing her excitement at the High School now being able to offer an even more robust sports program.

Organization Update

Brett shared an organizational update to the Board. First, he quickly summarized the locations, number of schools and growth plans, noting that the hope is to grow to 63 schools across all regions. He continued by detailing the increasing alignment across instruction that has taken and is still taking place. This is reflected in improved performance across regions and school levels. Brett explained that this alignment now needs to take place across the operations and external affairs side of the work as well. There will be two new leadership roles focused on School Operations and External Affairs, Managing Director of Operations and Senior Director, respectively. There will be a Managing Director of Operations for the three New York regions and Senior Director dedicated just to Rochester. Brett expressed his belief that this matches much more closely to the instructional alignment.

To conclude his presentation, Brett discussed the proposed revisions to the Memorandum of Understanding with Uncommon Schools, highlighting the rationale for the proposed changes. These

changes include an evolution of the fee model and increased scope of services. He shared goals for the revised MOU, which are:

1. Fully reflect the complete and updated range of services provided by Uncommon Schools and the Home Office
2. Fee supports the services provided
3. Construction of agreement allows for easier revision

Teacher Retention Strategy Update

Geoff Rosenberger shared context for why teacher retention strategy is on the Board agenda, noting that staff attrition is over 20% and that in meetings with school leaders they expressed staffing as their major concern. Highlighting one piece of the problem, he noted that there are only two daycares with hours which accommodate the staff working hours and as staff members have children there is a significant risk that they will not return to Rochester Prep.

Building on that context, Paul Powell updated the Board on efforts to improve teacher retention. First, he noted that the talent landscape for teachers nationwide continues to tighten. His presentation focused on both recruitment and retention.

The Uncommon vision for recruitment is: quality, quantity, diversity, timeliness, and efficiency. Paul shared outreach strategies and noted that referrals are consistently the strongest source of hires and Indeed.com is the second most successful. Paul also shared two exciting new partnerships: the Uncommon – Morehouse College partnership should create a pipeline for great teachers and leaders of color and the Rochester Prep – Relay GSE partnership should help develop current teachers with Teacher Residency and Masters in Arts of Teaching options.

These initiatives have yielded some important results. For the first time, more than a third of Rochester Prep staff and 29% of teachers identify as people of color. Furthermore, Rochester Prep was fully hired for all core teaching roles on the first day of school. Finally, the recruitment efforts are better normed across all Uncommon regions and recruiters have optimized the selection process.

Regarding teacher retention, Paul shared some structural changes and leadership development efforts including several flexible scheduling options as well as simplified curriculum, lesson plans, and HR processes to save teachers administrative time. Substitute teacher coverage is another structural change that will create Teacher Assistant positions for schools that are under hired. Lastly, Paul anticipates that on-site daycare may become an option with this perhaps being a task of the new Regional Senior Director.

Lastly, Paul detailed efforts towards leadership development including professional development, leader retreats, and external opportunities such as the Leadership Institute at RELAY.

Comptroller Audit Update

John Claypool updated the Board that Rochester Prep continues to cooperate fully and that there is no further substantive update at this time.

High School Facility Committee Update

Geoff Rosenberger updated the board regarding high school facility options. He summarized why some previously discussed locations are not promising and mentioned two other options the Board will pursue. Geoff Rosenberger and Josh Phillips requested that if the Board has any other options to consider, to please engage with either of them first to ensure consistent communication.

Meeting adjourned

There was a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Motion: Jim Ryan

Second: Josh Phillips

Vote: Approved unanimously

Time: 12:34 pm