

True North Rochester Prep Charter School
Board of Trustees Meeting - Minutes
November 15, 2017

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Rosenberger at 12:10 pm.

Roll Call

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

Trustees Present: Geoffrey Rosenberger
 James Ryan
 Rebecca Sumner
 Jean Howard
 Ron Zarella
 Josh Phillips (via videoconference)
 James Gleason (via videoconference)
 James Barger

Trustees Absent: (none)

Also Present:

Anna Hall	Chief Operating Officer, Uncommon Schools Rochester, Troy, and Boston
Paul Powell	Associate Managing Director, Uncommon Schools Rochester
John Claypool	Associate Chief Operating Officer, Uncommon School Rochester
Christy Hendler	Director of Strategic Initiatives, Uncommon Schools Rochester
Eric O'Connor	Regional Director of Special Projects, Uncommon Schools Rochester
Jonathan Myler	Director of Operations, Rochester Prep West Middle School
Adrienne Sopinski	Principal, Rochester Prep West Middle School
Megan Maples	Associate Director of Operations, Rochester Prep West Middle School
Jesika Anthony	Network Special Projects Coordinator, Uncommon Schools Rochester, Troy, and Boston
Kelsey Smithendorf	Network Special Projects Coordinator, Uncommon Schools Rochester, Troy, and Boston

Public Comment

No public comments were made.

Approval of Minutes

The following motion was made to approve the minutes from the September 21, 2017 board meeting.

Motion: Ron Zarella

Second: Rebecca Sumner

Vote: Approved unanimously

Campus Update

Adrienne Sopinski provided an update to the Board on West Middle School, focusing on teacher effect and building secondary leadership. Teacher effect is an analysis of the impact teachers have on a cohort of students year over year. Ms. Sopinski was happy to report that two of the teachers performing well based on this metric are also the ones the school had identified for secondary leadership. Building secondary leadership expands the impact of the top teachers and involves training a new team of coaches for staff.

Jonathan Myler, Director of Operations, shared some additional school updates. He introduced Megan Maples to the Board and explained her Fellowship process. Mr. Myler then shared some ELA results for West Middle School to kick off his discussion of the literacy development programs taking place at the school. Scholastic Reading Counts is a school-wide reading program that works in conjunction with the classroom library books. The Dean of Curriculum and Instruction creates incentives to drive student reading. Mr. Myler explained some of these incentives, highlighting the Harry Potter themed incentive for the month of October. Additional support for the literacy initiative is provided by an Americorps Vista Fellow.

Assistant Superintendent Update

Assistant Superintendent Paul Powell provided an update to the Board on the initial rounds of assessments that have taken place so far this school year at the elementary and middle schools. Mr. Powell also showed high school results, including projected AP test performance based upon a recent round of interim assessments and updated SAT data for the 2018 class.

Operations Update

Anna Hall announced our intention to open Rochester Prep Middle School in Fall 2018.

Ron Zarella provided a brief update on the financial audit, concluding that the audit is clean.

There was a motion to approve the audit:

Motion: Jean Howard

Second: Rebecca Sumner

Vote: Approved unanimously

Anna Hall provided a brief update to the Quarter 1 financials as well, concluding that the financial situation for Rochester Prep is on par with expectations set at the beginning of the year .

DSI Update

Christy Hendler provided an update to several strategic initiatives. First, she shared the progress made on the joint minority teacher recruitment effort with the Rochester City School District, explaining the opportunity, the funding, and the team that will be involved. Second, Ms. Hendler discussed the online charter school application that is currently under development. The importance of the success of the charter school application for the Rochester charter school community was highlighted. Lastly, Christy Hendler shared with the Board some details of the recent Rochester Leader Retreat.

Revisions to By-Laws

Christy Hendler explained the proposed revisions to the By-Laws.

There was a motion to adopt the proposed revisions to the By-Laws:

Motion: Jim Ryan

Second: Jean Howard

Vote: Approved unanimously

Student Recruitment Waitlist Policy Change

Anna Hall shared with the Board a proposed revision to the Rochester Prep Waiting List. She shared the current waiting list operation and then explained the proposed change.

The Board was in agreement with the proposed change in policy but requested a modification to the document that was included in the Board pre-reading.

There was a motion to adopt the attached resolution and to accept the policy with the requested amendment.

Motion: Geoffrey Rosenberger

Second: Jim Ryan

Vote: Approved unanimously

New Board Member Recruitment

Geoffrey Rosenberger shared that Mr. Gleason intends to step down from the Board at the end of the fiscal year. Mr. Rosenberger explained the need to find board member candidates who fit the mission and are diverse. Varying backgrounds and skillsets are highly desirable as well.

Meeting adjourned

There was a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Motion: Jean Howard

Second: Jim Ryan

Vote: Approved unanimously

Time: 1:27 pm

Revision of the Admissions Policy to Give Preference to Wait Listed Siblings of Current Students and Children of Employees of Rochester Prep and Uncommon Schools

To: Members of the True North Rochester Preparatory Charter School Board of Trustees
From: Anna Hall, Chief Operating Officer, Uncommon Schools Boston, Troy, and Rochester
Subject: Revision of the Admissions Policy to Give Preference to Wait Listed Siblings of Current Students and Children of Employees of Rochester Prep and Uncommon Schools
Date: November 15, 2017

Resolution

I recommend that the Board of Trustees adopt the following resolution:

Whereas the current admissions policy for True North Rochester Preparatory Charter School (“Rochester Prep”) states, “Untimely applications received from siblings of students at Rochester Prep will also be added to the bottom of the waiting list based on the date and time the completed application is received; these completed applications will not be added to beginning of the waiting list.”; and

Whereas the children of employees of Rochester Prep and Uncommon Schools, Inc. only receive an admission preference at time of lottery as permitted by state law (S 3. Paragraph (b) of subdivision 2 of section 2854 of the education law, as amended by chapter 101 of the laws of 2010); now therefore be it

Resolved the Rochester Prep Board of Trustees requests a revision to the Admissions Policy of True North Rochester Preparatory Charter School to reflect that preference will be extended to siblings of current students and children of employees of Rochester Prep or Uncommon Schools, Inc. who are on the waiting list for admission, regardless of grade, to be added to the beginning of the waiting list and ordered by application submission date; and be it further

Resolved that the Board of Trustees authorizes the School, in conjunction with its management partner, Uncommon Schools, to complete and submit to the SUNY Board of Trustees on its behalf the request for the charter revision described herein.

Background

The current admissions policy permits enrollment preferences to be applied at the time of an admissions lottery only. Wait-listed applicants and other untimely applications are not given enrollment preference under any circumstances, with the result that siblings and children of employees may hold very high waiting list numbers with low chances of being admitted to Rochester Prep. The proposed admissions policy revision will allow sibling and children of employees to move to the top of our waiting lists, a change which we believe is in the best interest of our families and school.