

**Alexandria Country Day School
Minutes of the Board of Trustees
October 19, 2021 (DRAFT)**

A meeting of the Board of Trustees of Alexandria Country Day School was held on October 19, 2021, upon notice duly given, at ACDS Dining Hall.

Members Present (#): William Wallace, Ben St. Romain, Betsy Mayes, Kai Wicker-Brown, Francesca Randall, Jarred Tarver, Lauren Laborde, Jeni Gilchrist, Martha Crenshaw, Dustin Matthews, Brad Smith, George Fine

Staff Members Present (2): Bill Bridges, Angela Guillory

Other Attendees (0): None

Board Chair William Wallace called the meeting to order at 7:50 am. He asked for approval the September 2021 Minutes. Dustin made the motion and Jarred seconded. Minutes were approved.

Betsy Mayes, Finance Committee Chair, presented the monthly financials. There were no questions.

Bill Wallace began his presentation by announcing that the auditor, Kayla Holloway, for the 20-21 audit from Payne, Moore, and Herrington wanted to go back and amend the audit to include the funds raised from Cenla Giving Day put on by the Community Foundation in April and May of 2021. She concluded that although notice was not given until June of the total amount raised, that ACDS did have access to the account holding the funds and the amount was known, therefore, the funds should have been included in the 20-21 fiscal year audit. He stated that new audit reports will be created and distributed and that it is important to destroy current copies handed out at the last Board Meeting.

Francesca Randall, Development Committee Chair, presented information regarding the upcoming Monster Dash event. She reported that there are currently 30 sponsors (ten more than last year) and there are also a total of 297 race entries (176 race entries and 121 sponsorship entries). She commended Anna Van Mol on her excellent radio interview regarding Monster Dash on Q93. She said there are 30 total Trunk or Treat Volunteers for the event (18 voluntary and 12 sponsors). She updated the percentage totals for the CDF – Annual Giving Campaign. Currently, 23% giving for main campus and 5% for upper school campus with an overall giving of 16% overall. She indicated that the Board gave a total of \$18,000 and that faculty has given a total of \$6,000 which is up \$500 from last year. Bill Bridges announced that the total money raised so far is \$48,538.

Bill Bridges, Head of School, spoke about ACDS diversity. He stated that total diversity of the school is 27.35%. The main campus has 26% and the upper school campus has 31%. Of those, 13.68% are made up of African Americans, 8.17% are considered Asian, and the remaining 3.37% are multi-racial students.

He then spoke about introducing continuous enrollment contracts beginning next school year. He said that, over the last 4 years, the school's overall retention rate has been 93% which is very high, considering most independent schools retain less (about 88%) of their re-enrollment each year. He indicated that, although the contract was unusually long, it would be signed and agreed to only one time and then would not have to be signed again each year. He would like to have the tuition decided and approved before Christmas if possible so that the school can potentially put the contract on the ACDS website, along with some information on FAQs and parents/guardians could read it all the way through at their leisure. He also spoke about how this contract will free up the Admissions Office to spend more time contacting new and potential families and less time hunting down families that simply have not had time to go through the entire re-enrollment process. He said that the "Opt-Out" process would be very simple and as long as families filled out the simple form within the 2-week timeframe to drop, there would be nothing more that families would need to do. He also informed the Board that the main campus has gained one student and potentially two more would be starting in November. Also, he said a new student on the upper campus is also a possibility. Ben St. Romain asked if current 8th graders would need to fill out the "Opt-Out" form if those students choose not to attend the upper school. Bill Bridges stated that this year only, current 8th graders would not need to sign the continuous enrollment contract and therefore would not need to Opt-Out. Lauren Laborde asked about how tuition deposits would be handled with continuous enrollment. Bill stated that after the deadline to Opt-Out, the FACTS accounts would be invoiced for the deposits and that the funds would be drafted out of their FACTS accounts on a date to be announced later.

Next, Bill gave a brief update on the Makers Space renovation. He said that if all goes well, construction will begin this winter and hopefully be complete by the spring. He said that the awning outside the library will be enlarged and that the gate outside the library will potentially have to be pushed back to make room but stated that there will be no major structural changes. Also, because venting will be needed for some of the equipment that will be purchased, the architects are working to strategically place those items within the correct space. Jeni stressed that spot-lighting the creation of the Makers Space should be a priority during the enrollment season.

Bill updated the Board on the commercial kitchen, stating that the measurements for the hood had to be re-taken because it will have to be a custom hood and should be ordered by the end of next week. He was asked about whether the cost of the Meal Plans would go down once the school was able to utilize its own equipment. Bill said that costs would more likely increase due to the hiring of an additional cook and cleaning staff that would be necessary.

The next item addressed was the need to replace the flat roof between the main building and the gymnasium on the main campus. There are significant leaks from poor roofing in that area which is affecting the hallways, concession stand and the locker rooms in that area. The current roof is holding water, bubbling up, and the nails holding it together are actually coming out which will likely cause even more damage in the near future if not corrected soon. He has currently received 1 quote for \$25,750 from Hahn Roofing (which is the roofer that re-roofed all of the roofs on campus after the tornado 2 years ago). He will get one more before a final decision is made.

Finally, Bill spoke briefly about the complexity of increasing tuition. He said that the upper school campus would be losing 48 Seniors next year, leaving only 107 remaining students (assuming no other students decide to leave). The culture of the upper campus is not the same as the main campus and so increasing tuition too much could be detrimental to that campus. He is currently working on several different models for the increase and will present them to the finance committee for further discussion.

No old business was brought up for discussion.

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Bill Wallace called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ben made the motion and Dustin seconded it. The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 a.m.