

**Sussex Academy**  
**Executive Board of Directors Minutes**  
**November 15, 2023**

**CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL**

Jennifer Donahue, Board President, called the meeting to order at 4:11 p.m.

*Board Members Present:* Jennifer Donahue, Ed Hale, Patches Hill, Chris Moody, Board Member Emeritus, Brittany Burslem, Sara Messina, , Erin Perchiniak, Justina Thomas (via ZOOM), Jill Green (via ZOOM), Chris Brown, Lance Manlove, Amy Goodhue, Uday Jani, and Joe Schell, Board Member Emeritus.

*Board Members Absent:* Shante Hastings

*Staff Present:* Eric M. Anderson, Head of School, Janet Owens, Asst. Head of School, Sherry MacBury, Director of Student Services, Tom Peet, Director of Special Services, Connie Hendricks, Director of Elementary School, Michelle Haiste, Business Manager (via ZOOM), Franny Silcott, Director of Human Resources, Andi Davis, Finance Manager, Jeff Shade, Director of Technology & Building & Grounds, Sade Truiett, Director of Communications, Lydia Schmierer, Aquatic Director, and Andrea Rogers, Board Secretary.

*Board Members Absent:* Shante Hastings

*Faculty Present:* Jennifer Leonard, Stephanie Sherman, and Jessica Love

*Visitors:* Tim Sawyer, CPA of Barbacane, Thornton & Company, LLC, Nicole Lehman, parent/sports boosters, Carrie Hudson, parent, Stacy Lawson, parent/sports boosters, Meg Lawson, parent, and Becky Ghabour, parent, Dr. Patricia Oliphant, citizen, and Don Tollett, parent.

**MODIFY AGENDA**

A motion was made by Chris Brown to move Financial report to directly after Public Comments followed by Executive Session. Brittany Burslem seconded; the motion carried. The motion passed unanimously (12-0).

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A motion was made by Chris Brown to approve the minutes of the October 18, 2023 Executive Board meeting. Ed Hale seconded; the motion carried. The motion passed unanimously (12-0).

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Stephanie Sherman, Team Leader/Teacher/Parent, read a statement of behalf of the faculty to be considered in the search process for a new Head of School.

**AUDIT REPORT**

Tim Sawyer, CPA of Barbacane, Thornton & Company, LLC reported on the SY23 audit. A motion was made by Patches Hill to table the audit report until the January 24, 2024 meeting so that board members have time to review. Chris Brown seconded; the motion carried. The motion passed unanimously (12-0).

**MONTHLY BOARD FINANCIAL REPORT**

*Michelle Haiste reported:*

A motion was made by Chris Brown to approve the October 31, 2023 Financial Report as presented. Amy Goodhue seconded; the motion carried. The motion passed unanimously (12-0).

## **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

A motion was made by Chris Brown at 4:54 p.m. to enter into Executive Session. Brittany Burslem seconded; the motion carried. The motion passed unanimously (12-0).

A motion was made by Ed Hale to return to regular session at 6:39 p.m. Uday Jani seconded; the motion carried. The motion passed unanimously (12-0).

A motion was made by Patches Hill to hire an instructional specialist and a speech instructor to serve the needs of Sussex Academy. Chris Brown seconded; the motion carried. The motion passed unanimously (12-0).

## **HEAD OF SCHOOL REPORT**

*Eric Anderson reported:*

10/20 – Hosted a Principal of the Day. Katie Wilkinson was invited to shadow Mr. Anderson.

10/20 – Dr. Davis' class took part in a poetry outload competition.

10/23 – 10/27 – College application week

10/26 – Choice Open House

10/27 – SA Elementary Halloween costume day

10/27 & 10/28 – Drama Dept. performed Carrie the musical

11/1 – SA hosted a 4-D Leadership learning walk

11/1 – SnapRaise fundraiser began (\$4K into our \$13K goal)

11/2 – Sports Boosters hosted a fundraiser at Revelation Brewery

11/6 – 11/17 – 29 Students visiting from France

11/14 – SA Elementary school held their Healthy Food for Healthy Kids ribbon cutting and first harvest for grades K-4.

Fall Sports Recap:

- SA hosted 2 conference championship games and 3 DIAA state tournament games
- R.J. Dina and Hailee Gooch were both named Henlopen Coach of the Year
- 14 students received 1<sup>st</sup> Team All-Conference, 10 receiving 2<sup>nd</sup> All-Conference, and 6 Honorable Mention
- Boys XC Team placed 3<sup>rd</sup> and Girls XC Team placed 1<sup>st</sup> in the conference
- XC team competed on 11/11 for the state championship. Girls placed 5<sup>th</sup> Division II
- Girls Field Hockey completed their regular season 9 – 6
- Volleyball completed their regular season 10-5 – Named Henlopen Conference Southern Champs
- Boys Soccer completed their regular season 13-2 and are playing IR @ Milford in the semi-finals tonight.

*Andi Davis reported:*

Andi Davis, Financial Manager, spoke to the board regarding school policy changes and additions that need to be considered for insurance purposes.

*Lydia Schmierer reported:*

Lydia Schmierer, Aquatics Director, would like to request someone from the board to be a liaison. Erin Perchiniak has volunteered to take on that role.

## **FOUNDATION REPORT**

*Joe Schell reported:*

There is a balance of \$1.6M in the SA Foundation account.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **Executive/Nominating/Succession**

No report presented.

### **Finance**

Presented under Monthly Board Financial Report. CBOC meeting was held October 24

### **Outreach**

Amy Goodhue reported on a request she submitted to have Jimmy Allen perform a 3<sup>rd</sup> show for Sussex Academy and having the proceeds donated back to the school. She is hoping to have an answer soon.

### **Building & Grounds**

*Lance Manlove reported:*

- Metal roof repair has been completed.
- More information on the baseball field is being gathered and will be presented to buildings & grounds at a later date.
- Mr. Schell reported they are pursuing a consultants report for a track to be placed on school grounds.

### **Governance (Policy & Legislative)**

No report presented.

### **School Performance Committee**

No report presented.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **Finalize Committee Membership List**

Jennifer Donahue requested the Committee Membership list is not finalized. The list will be updated within the next couple of weeks.

### **National Alliance Visit**

Mr. Schell gave an update on the National Alliance visit. Unfortunately, Nina Rees, the President and CEO of the National Alliance is retiring and will not have time to visit SA before her official retirement. In the meantime, we will wait and see who her replacement will be and set up a visit in the near future.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **Policy 801 – Head of School\***

Tabled until the January 24, 2024 meeting.

### **Adjourn Meeting**

A motion was made by Ed Hale at 7:33 p.m. to adjourn the meeting. Erin Perchiniak seconded; the motion carried. The motion passed unanimously (12-0).

Respectfully submitted,

Andrea Rogers, Board Secretary