

Sussex Academy
Executive Board of Directors Minutes
September 20, 2023

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Patches Hill, Board President, called the meeting to order at 4:05 p.m.

Board Members Present: Patches Hill, Jennifer Donahue, Chris Moody, Board Member Emeritus, Brittany Burslem, Shante Hastings, Sara Messina, Ed Hale, Erin Perchiniak, Uday Jani, Justina Thomas, Amy Goodhue (arrived at 4:07 pm), Jill Green, Chris Brown (arrived at 4:15 pm), and Joe Schell, Board Member Emeritus.

Board Members Absent: Lance Manlove

Staff Present: Eric M. Anderson, Head of School, Janet Owens, Asst. Head of School, Sherry MacBury, Director of Student Services/Admissions, Tom Peet, Director of Special Services, Connie Hendricks, Director of Elementary School (via ZOOM), Michelle Haiste, Business Manager (via ZOOM), Franny Silcott, Director of Human Resources, Andi Davis, Finance Manager, Sade Truitt, Director of Communication, and Andrea Rogers, Board Secretary.

Staff Absent: None

Visitors: Stacey Lawson, parent, Nicole Lehman, parent/sports boosters, Meg Lawson, parent/sports boosters, Chris Lehman (via ZOOM), parent, and Todd Lawson, parent (via ZOOM)

MODIFY AGENDA

A motion was made by Jennifer Donahue to move the Executive/Nominating Committee report to the top of the agenda. Shante Hastings seconded; the motion carried. The motion passed unanimously (11-0).

Oath of Office

Jill Green and Chris Brown were both sworn in and took the Oath of Office.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Shante Hastings to approve the minutes of the June 21, 2023 Executive Board meeting with one modification to the minutes under Old Business - Voting on New Board Members. The modification should read: The board voted on candidates for the two open vacancies. Amy Goodhue seconded; the motion carried. The motion passed unanimously (11-0).

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Jennifer Donahue read a public comment from Mack Lawson, student, in reference to adding an FFA chapter to SA. There were two additional letters of support from Tony Thompson, Coastal Equine, and the O'Day family that was read by Patches Hill.

HEAD OF SCHOOL REPORT

Eric Anderson reported:

During in-service, the faculty participated in a 2-day leadership training. This training was provided by a \$20K grant from the Dept. of Education and that is also a part of the work we are doing with our University of Delaware equity pipeline project.

Mr. Matt Keen, AD and Dean of Students, resigned mid-August. Mrs. Taylor Gibbs, was playing a dual role as middle school science teacher and the interim AD until she was selected for the full-time AD position.

During this year's in-service, the staff kicked off with a lot of meaningful sessions for teachers to attend for the start of the school year.

The first week of school we spent with the students getting reacclimated to the school and held grade level assemblies grades 6 – 12. The elementary school also held sessions with their teachers/students in the classroom.

On Thursday, September 7th, Sussex Academy held a tailgate during the first season opening soccer game.

The Head of Class emails will be sent on Mondays to start the week.

Coffee chats are held via ZOOM at 9:30 am every Tuesday.

Back to School Nights

- 9/19 – Elementary School
- 9/20 – Middle School
- 9/21 – High School

Friday, September 22, will be an in-service day for faculty and staff. We will be working a lot with Marzano this year to get our teachers into accessing with learning.

We held our first college workshop night in partnership with Stand By Me. There were approximately 70 in attendance. This was the first of many we will be hosting.

September 30 Unit Count – September 18 - 29

September 26 – Lifetouch picture day

Our partnership with Freeman Arts Foundation this year continues with an assembly with the high school on Tuesday, September 26 featuring the Twin Poets. They will also be returning with an exhibition that revolves around dancing with our middle school students.

Homecoming Soccer Game – Friday, October 12

Homecoming Dance – Saturday, October 13

Dr. Sherry MacBury, Director of Student Services & Admissions, reported on the following:

- Enrollment numbers
- Onboarding sessions
- Student services restructure
- School profile
- Student lounge fundraising support
- Schools 3 R's (Keep it Real, Be Respectful, & Value Relationships)

MONTHLY BOARD FINANCIAL REPORT

Michelle Haiste reported:

A motion was made by Chris Brown to approve the June 30, 2023 Financial Report as presented. Shante Hastings seconded; the motion carried. The motion passed unanimously (12-0).

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

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

A motion was made by Chris Brown to discuss hiring a CFO to take over the financial reports for FY25. Chris Brown seconded. Patches Hill made a motion to modify that motion to be discussed in executive session based on personnel related issues. The motion passed unanimously (12-0).

A motion was made by Ed Hale to move the Executive board meeting to the 4th Wednesday of the month starting in January 2024 to improve the decisions of our financial estimates, have an inclusion of summary notes, and have the report one week prior to the meeting. Chris Brown seconded; the motion carried. The motion passed unanimously (10-0).

FOUNDATION REPORT

Joe Schell reported:

There is a balance of \$1.65M in the SA Foundation account. Mr. Schell spoke in regards to adding a track on SA grounds and to start researching what the cost would be. Mr. Schell would also like to see SA invite the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools for a visit. The NAPCS is lobbying for charter schools that need more funding for capital needs.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Executive/Nominating/Succession

Moved to the beginning of the meeting.

Finance

Presented under Finance. Next meeting is in October.

Outreach

No report presented.

Building & Grounds

No report presented.

Governance (Policy & Legislative)

Jennifer Donahue reported on Policy 104. This policy is tabled to the October meeting for a vote.

School Performance Committee

No report presented.

OLD BUSINESS

No Old Business

NEW BUSINESS

Athletic Budget/Sports Boosters

Patches Hill is the liaison for the sports boosters. Mr. Hill reported on the following:

- Budget
- Rotation of Uniforms
- Facilities Use

- Coaches pay scale
- Social media
- Communication outreach
- Partner with businesses to reduce costs
- Charging for entrance to games/annual pass

Organizational Chart

Eric Anderson gave an update on the new SY23-24 Organizational Chart.

Student Attendance Policy and Procedure

Eric Anderson gave an update on the SY23-24 attendance policy. We want to create a culture of students attending school on a regular basis coming out of COVID. There is an academic review board for students that are chronically absent. This policy is located in our student handbook posted on the website.

Activity Fee Policy

Tabled until the October meeting.

Committee Membership

Tabled until the October meeting.

Upcoming Projects

- Roof
- Track
- Elementary School Expansion

EXECUTIVE SESSION

A motion was made by Uday Jani at 7:13 p.m. to enter into Executive Session. Ed Hale seconded; the motion carried. The motion passed unanimously (9-0). The board will not be returning to open session.

Respectfully submitted,

Andrea Rogers, Board Secretary