

GOVERNING BOARD MEETING
FOR THE JOHN C. DUNHAM STEM PARTNERSHIP SCHOOL
Governing Board Minutes

Wednesday, October 30th 2020

1:00 pm

Virtual Board Meeting at Zoom by computer or smart phone:

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://sd129.zoom.us/j/84378260798>

Meeting ID: 843 7826 0798

Passcode: 182530

1. Call to Order

Dr. Craig called the meeting to order at 1:00 pm

2. Roll Call

Present: Dr. Sherrick, Dr. Craig, Dr. Talley, Dr. Hichens and Dr. Norrell

Also present: Mrs. Carter, Dr. Patel and Mrs. Buenrostro

3. Public Comment

None

4. Adjourn to Executive Session

4.1 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1) – Personnel

The appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees of the public body or legal counsel for the public body, including hearing testimony on a complaint lodged against an employee of the public body or against legal counsel for the public body to determine its validity.

4.2 Adjourn executive session

Dr. Talley motioned to adjourn the executive session and Dr. Hichens seconded

Ayes: (5)

Nays: (0)

5. Adjourn to Open Session

5.1 Roll Call

6. Information/Presentation/ Discussion

6.1 Return to in Person Learning Plan

Dr. Craig started the conversation by asking Mrs. Carter to go over the plan to bring kids back. Mrs. Carter explained that the plan is to bring kids back the week of November 30th. Dr. Craig asked if everyone was ok with that. Dr. Norrell asked if the chosen date has to do with arranging transportation. The board engaged in a discussion of transition to the second phase of the plan, taking into account that things can change with Covid-19 and how that will affect the current plan. Mrs. Carter clarified that the plan does not include providing food service and that Aurora University will stop in person attendance on Thanksgiving. Dr. Hichens questioned if the school is receiving feedback from parents regarding the

plan and she expressed concern that the plan may be worrisome in the sense that the plan and transportation arrangements will have to be reworked to transition to phase two or if things change with Covid-19. Dr. Hichens also shared that it seems like a lesser quality to accommodate 3 hours of in person instruction. Mrs. Carter shared that this idea came from West Aurora and their intention was to bring students back slowly by taking West Aurora's lead.

Dr. Hichens also asked what are the teachers thoughts regarding the plan. Mrs. Carter shared that she is having conversations with teachers and asking for feedback on the plan.

Dr. Hichens expressed that teaching and planning for hybrid is a challenge. Kids aren't doing the same thing in school than at home. Dr. Craig said students are struggling because there is not a good substitute for in person learning; however, the STEM school should do what is best for STEM and not necessarily follow West Aurora.

Dr. Talley shared that district 204 is still teaching remotely and that the earliest they may bring students back is November, but he supports students coming back to STEM. Dr. Norrell supports whatever is logistically easier; however, she does not support isolation of the districts. She wants students to continue collaborating with other districts' students.

Dr. Sherrick asked for the date of the end of first semester and when the STEM school would enter the second phase of the plan. Mrs. Carter shared that the end of first semester and the second quarter is on January 14th.

Dr. Hichens shared that she believes there should be less transitions. She does not support 3 hours once a week in person learning. She also recommended Mrs. Carter to come up with a hybrid plan that meets certain criteria. The board agreed that the criteria should be as follows:

- a. 5 hours minimum of in person school with lunch provided
- b. Have all districts together with a minimum of 2 days per week for each district
- c. One plan for the rest of the school year
- d. Submitted to the board by November 18th, 2020

Talley asked about lunch accommodations and Dr. Sherrick shared that lunch can be provided to STEM students in the university dining hall.

Dr. Sherrick asked the board who will be the contact person for Mrs. Carter while developing this plan. The Board decided to create a Task Force for that purpose with the following members representing all the districts and the university: Dr. Patel for the university, Doug Eccarius for district 204, Brent Raby for district 129, Dr. Hichens for district 101, Dr. Norrell for district 131, and Mrs. Carter and Ms. McAlpin for the STEM School.

Dr. Hichens suggested to allow Mrs. Carter to make the final decision with the taskforce regarding the learning model, Dr. Craig suggested to hold in place the current model until the end of the first semester. The Board agreed.

6.2 Review the External Evaluation & Program Mission

Dr. started the conversation talking about the recommendations made for the school. Dr. Sherrick spoke about the situation and the idea of providing a path to strategic conversations about the future of the school. Dr. Hichens talked about the goals and whether they still relevant and if the goals still align to the mission of the school.

Dr. Sherrick spoke about the history of the school, the "ecosystem" that should impact everyone, and the Dunham Fund.

Dr. Talley suggested a revision to the plan that the school is acting on. Dr. Hichens said that the plan was supposed to bring back the STEM model back to the district was huge for Batavia, but that is has been hard to bring back.

Dr. Sherrick reminded everyone that is supposed to be a collaboration. Dr. Norrell added that is supposed to unify the districts.

Dr. Talley suggested not to do an evaluation this year and to spend the year examining the program. Dr. Hichens added that we also should spend the time examining the vision and whether it has changed: “Why is the STEM school so special? what is working? what is not?”

Dr. Sherrick shared that there should be action steps starting with the goals and whether they still applicable and have validity and that there should be conversations among the district reps and Mrs. Carter. Dr. Craig suggested a revision, elimination or creation of new goals if needed.

Each goal will have a taskforce that will meet to discuss the goal and its relevance:

- Goal 1: Dr. Sherrick, Dr. Craig, Dr. Hichens and Mrs. Carter
- Goal 2: Dr. Talley, Dr. Patel and Mrs. Carter
- Goal 3: Dr. Norrel and Mrs. Carter

Future Meeting Date: January 6th, 2021

7. Adjourn

Dr. Sherrick motioned and Dr. Norrell seconded to adjourn the meeting.

Ayes: (5)

Nays: (0)

The meeting was adjourned at 12:56 pm.

Ana K. Buenrostro

Administrative Assistant to the Director

John C. Dunham STEM Partnership School