

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

Tuesday, June 9, 2020
1:00 pm

John C. Dunham STEM Partnership School, Easley Education Center
405 S. Gladstone Ave., Aurora, Illinois 60506-4892

1. Call to Order

Dr. Sullivan call the meeting to order at 1:05 pm

2. Roll Call

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

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

Dr. Norrell left the meeting at 1:24 pm

3. Public Comment

No public comment

4. Consent Agenda

Dr. Hichens motioned and Dr. Craig seconded to approve the consent agenda items 4.1 and 4.2.

Ayes: (5)

Nays: (0)

5. Action Items

Dr. Sherrick motioned and Dr. Hichens seconded to approve action item 5.1 Approval of the FY21 budget for the John C. Dunham STEM Partnership School

Ayes: (5)

Nays: (0)

Dr. Sherrick motioned and Dr. Hichens seconded to approve action item 5.2 Governing Board meeting dates for FY21: August 11, 2020, November 10, 2020 February 9, 2021, and May 11, 2021.

Ayes: (5)

Nays: (0)

Dr. Craig motioned and Dr. Norrell seconded to approve action item 5.3 Acceptance of gifts/donations report.

Ayes: (5)

Nays: (0)

Dr. Hichens and Dr. Sherrick seconded to approve action item 5.4 Approval of Employment contracts for 2020-21 as follows:

- Art – 0.3 FTE: Linda Ball
- Music – 0.3 FTE: Meg Papadolias
- PE – 0.8 FTE: Jenna Parham

- Interventionist – 0.5 FTE: Mary Jelden

Ayes: (5)

Nays: (0)

Dr. Norrell motioned and Dr. Hichens seconded to approve action item 5.5 Election of Officers F21:

Dr. Craig for President

Ayes: (5)

Nays: (0)

Dr. Sherrick motioned and Dr. Hichens seconded to approve action item 5.5 Election of Officers F21:

Dr. Norrell for Vice President

Ayes: (5)

Nays: (0)

Dr. Hichens motioned and Dr. Craig seconded to approve action item 5.5 Election of Officers F21:

Dr. Sherrick for Secretary

Ayes: (5)

Nays: (0)

6. Information/Presentation/ Discussion

6.1 John C Dunham STEM Partnership School Report

6.1.1 Engagement Letter

The engagement letter for this year is the same as every year. President of the Board Dr. Sullivan will sign the letter and mail it to the STEM School.

6.1.2 Remote learning

Arin Carter shared with the Board that 100% of the feedback regarding remote learning was positive and students and parents were happy with the process. All students passed all classes. Some students had difficulty with the remote learning and the teachers are taking suggestions to improve.

6.1.3 Planning for Fall 2020

There will be staffing changes. There are 3 teachers returning to their districts. The current 5th grade teacher will move to teach the 6th grade for the upcoming school year.

The vacancies will be posted in the two districts for which the teachers are returning, these positions may be difficult to fill. There is the option to open the vacancies to the other two school districts. Mrs. Carter will work on a plan to advertise the positions.

Mrs. Carter asked the Board whether a nurse may be needed for the upcoming school year. At this time the STEM school has student nurses only. Dr. Sullivan expressed that could be of concern, she also mentioned the need for a space for isolation for students presenting symptoms or that are sick for the upcoming school year. Dr. Sherrick said that there is the possibility the university could share a nurse on call for the student nurses at the STEM school, since AU is increasing the number of nurses on campus for residents.

Dr. Sullivan felt that a nurse on call is a great solution. Dr. Sherrick shared that they are increasing testing capacity and possibly adding thermal imaging to the university. Dr. Sullivan asked if we are using this capacity for STEM students, and that if we are that we receive an acknowledgment from parents.

Dr. Sherrick mentioned that STEM students share the cafeteria with AU students. There is no time to properly clean in between, so STEM students may be held to the same standards than everyone in campus including possibly requiring the STEM students to wear mask at all times while in campus. They are looking at the possibility to implement grab and go meals. Dr. Sullivan acknowledged that this is a discussion to be continued due to the changing nature of the pandemic.

Mrs. Carter also shared with the board that she will have meeting with the teachers during the summer to plan for the fall. Sullivan suggested to focus first on remote. Dr. Hichens shared that a blended approach is difficult and remote learning is a priority.

Dr. Sherrick shared that AU is doing large format classes via Zoom and that small labs will be held in small groups. They are reducing the capacity of the classrooms and holding longer days to finish the semester earlier. She also expressed that AU is requiring mask for everyone. She offered to share the communications that have been shared with AU parents to the district representatives so they are informed as to what the university is doing.

Dr. Craig closed the discussion expressing that any action taken will be challenging to execute.

6.1.4 STEM Evaluation Report

Dr. Patel shared the results of the STEM Evaluation with the Board. The report consisted of feedback from students, parents, teachers, alumni, partners, and AU faculty. There were some difficulties with the focus groups but the evaluator was able to gather feedback holding the focus groups through Zoom meetings.

Some of the highlights include: the teachers enjoy freedom and collaboration when teaching and they enjoy that the STEM school is inquiry-based and student-centered. Parents and alumni also highlighted the communication skills gained while at the STEM school.

Dr. Patel shared that overall the feedback was very positive.

It will be the decision of the Board Members to continue the evaluation for next year. Dr. Sherrick asked what information from the report is actionable. Mrs. Carter shared that for the past few years the focus has been in content but that the new focus is to contribute more back to the districts. Dr. Sherrick shared how much she enjoys listening to the speeches of the 8th graders at the STEM school and how they are comparable to the speeches of students of Bachelor's and Master's degrees at AU. She praised the STEM school students' communication skills.

Dr. Patel answered Dr. Sherrick's question by expressing that the students at the STEM school are able to make connection to the real world with the help of the partners involved with the school. She also said the STEM school will continue to working with district teachers.

Arin closed the discussion letting the board know that she will work with the districts for fall planning. Dr. Sullivan said that there will be a leeway with the calendar for the upcoming school year.

6.2 Future Meeting Date: August 11, 2020

7. Adjourn

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

Ayes: (4)

Nays: (0)

The meeting was adjourned at 2:00 pm.

Ana K Buenrostro

Administrative Assistant to the Director

John C. Dunham STEM Partnership School