

Minutes of the Summit Charter School, Inc.

Board of Trustees

November 16, 2021

Report by: Erika Mason

Voting Members Attending: Betsy Helms (Chair), Boris Krueger (Vice Chair), David Billingsley (Treasurer), Erika Mason (Secretary), Ann Betty, Mark Letson, Elisabeth Hoffman, Collins Zimmer, Kristina Newsom, and Jason Chick

Voting Members Absent: Josh Crawford (Foundation Board Chair) and Tim Boeve

Non-Voting Members Attending: Kurt Pusch (Head of School), Cindy Gajda (K-5 Representative), and Orlando Buck (Middle School Representative)

Non-Voting Members Absent: Tracie Jernigan (SFA), James Stewart Payne (High School Representative), and Marie Starkings (Business Officer)

The November 16, 2021 meeting of The Summit Charter School, Inc. Board of Trustees was called to order at 4:33 pm with Betsy Helms, Chair presiding.

All attending recited the Summit Pledge.

Approval of Minutes: Mark Letson made a motion to approve the October meeting minutes as they stand. The motion was seconded by Jason Chick, and the minutes were approved unanimously.

Head of School Report: Kurt Pusch began by reviewing current Co-Vid numbers and operations on campus. Numbers have continued to decline on campus since September. Summit continues voluntary testing on campus, and through the first six weeks of testing there have been no positive cases. Kurt Pusch also shared Co-Vid numbers as they relate to Jackson County. There has been some fluctuation in the cases, but overall the cases are trending down over the last two months. Betsy Helms inquired about the participation levels with the voluntary testing on campus, and Kurt Pusch said that levels have remained the same.

Kurt Pusch reminded the Board that Summit is driven by three priorities in their strategic plan: Excellence in Academics, Strength of Identity, and Financial and Talent Sustainability. Summit is committed to providing mastery driven instruction, and as part of providing this instruction Andrea Chalker continues to lead a cycle of monthly data meetings with teachers to identify strengths and weaknesses in student learning. This will allow for adjustments to instruction when needed. Kurt Pusch also shared comparative State test results and where Summit stood in relation to area schools. In Reading, grade 3, Summit is currently ahead of area schools at 66.7%. Grades 3-8 Math are also strong. Kurt Pusch was very complimentary of Summit's ACT scores noting that Summit's ACT data is higher than other area schools. Summit is looking for continued improvement in high school math. Kurt Pusch also shared data from the ACT diagnostic test administered to 9th and 11th grade students on October 11, 2021. The 10th PreACT data was shared as well. The 10th grade composite score was a 17.2. ACT data will continued to be monitored.

ELA Curriculum Review: The faculty met on October, 22nd (Teacher Workday) to continue to review ELA curriculum. The teachers identified their prioritized material for the new curriculum. The Board Curriculum Committee will meet in March to take into account the faculty recommendations.

In math achievement WIN is working well with the 4th and 5th grade classes. Kurt Pusch credited Mrs. Iannacone in her efforts to work with students to help close any learning gaps in math. Middle School WIN has presented some challenges. Adjustments are being made to see that necessary staff is put into place in order to provide the appropriate program.

Writing Achievement: Kurt Pusch acknowledged there have been challenges in writing and the need to ensure that students are ready to move on to other grades and into college. Kristina Newsom inquired into the affect the new ELA program would have on the writing material.

College Admissions and Matriculation: Kurt Pusch praised Lauren Bennett and her efforts to help with the admissions process. Seven students have already submitted applications for early action. Three of the fifteen seniors have already been accepted into colleges.

Place-Based Education: Dr. Moody is continuing to work with TSS to provide place-based education opportunities for students. Summit is in their last year of a 3-year contract with TSS. Dr. Moody is currently working with the 3rd and 4th grade. Students have already participated in 14 trips.

Athletics: Kurt Pusch said they have kicked off the basketball season. Jeremy Robinson met with the parents earlier in the month to layout expectations for student athletes. There is a lot of excitement for growing the athletic program. Mrs. Hughes will be coaching the first cheer team.

New stage equipment will be put in place along with stairs. Kurt Pusch thanked Matt and Ann Betty for their efforts is helping with the project. There will also be wall to wall padding installed around the stage.

Fall clubs have wrapped up and winter clubs will begin in December.

Orlando Buck was excited to share that Summit will begin an archery program. The program will be integrated into P.E. and they will also offer a club for students prior to the start of the school day. It is still to be determined what grade levels will be able to participate.

No updates on budget. Summit is still waiting on the State to pass their budget. Once the State budget is finalized then Summit can finalize theirs. It is expected that there will be increases to the budget.

The family fund is currently at 21% participation after one month. Kurt Pusch reminded everyone that parents could give to the Family Fund through donations and gifts sold through the Festival of Trees. The goal is to wrap up on the Family Fund around the end of April.

There are currently 253 students enrolled at Summit.

Kurt Pusch reviewed the Faculty & Parent Quarter 1 Survey Data. 54 (roughly 30%) families completed the survey. Overall satisfaction is very high at 96%. He noted there are no major concerns from the survey.

Kurt Pusch completed his report and asked if there were any comments or questions. Ann Betty asked about following up on TSS in February or March to ensure Summit's three-year contract is obligated and fully utilized.

Mask Policy Recommendation: Kurt Pusch reminded the Board that Summit constantly monitors Co-Vid policies and protocols. After gathering information from medical professionals and his team the Summit administration recommends transitioning to a mask-optional policy. The recommendation was brought about by three main factors:

- The trending decline of case numbers and positivity rates in our community over the last two months
- The decline of case numbers on our campus over the last two months and 0 positive cases through 6 weeks of weekly voluntary testing on campus
- The opportunity for individuals aged 5 years and older to now be vaccinated if they choose to do so

Board members suggested a start date of January 14th. Kurt Pusch reminded the Board that this would continue to be a fluid situation and recommendations would be made off of current data. As the data changes the recommendations could change as well. Cindy Gajda and Orlando Buck welcomed the recommendation. Betsy Helms asked for a motion to pass the mask optional policy beginning on January 14th. Jason Chick made a motion to pass the mask optional policy and Mark Letson seconded the motion. Elisabeth Hoffman opposed the motion, and Ann Beaty abstained. The motion was passed.

Committee Reports:

-Treasurer's Report: David Billingsly reviewed the financial report as of 11/19/21. There are some variances that are strictly due to timing of funding. Summit had their annual audit and there was a question on how they accounted for their PPE funding and it was determined funds were accounted for appropriately.

-Facilities Report: Boris Krueger delivered his facility report. There are some beautification projects to be completed before Festival of Trees.

-Governance/Trustees Report: Betsy Helms said she is pleased with the growth of the Board, and they are still in search of an attorney or legal counsel to serve on the Board.

-Curriculum Report: The committee continues to work on the ELA curriculum.

-Strategic Planning: Kurt Pusch delivered the Strategic Planning report for Tim Boeve. The committee will meet in November to begin evaluate the teacher benefit packages.

Collins Zimmer SFA: Gratitude Round-Up is at the end of the week. There will be a nut-free table for all students with allergies. On December 4th is the Cashiers Christmas Parade.

Betsy Helms asked if there was any other business to be discussed.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:03 pm