



**Social Justice Public Charter School Inc.
Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes
August 30, 2023**

Board Members Present: Derrick Johnson (DJ), Pat Brantley (PB), Tammy Tuck (TT) Neils Ribeiro-Yemofio (NRY), Meenakshi Nankani (MN), Aaron Stallworth (AS), Eric Goldstein (EG)

Board Members Absent: Maia Shanklin Roberts (MSR), Dionne McDonald (DM)

Staff Members Present: Myron Long (ML) Executive Director

Guests Present: Caitlin Campbell-Hahn (CCH), Joel Smith Goering (JSG)

A. Meeting Opening

Roll Call; Establishment of Quorum; Call to Order, Approval of Minutes

DJ called the meeting to order at 6:16 pm and established quorum with 6 board members and 1 staff member present.

DJ shared the May 2023 board meeting minutes for review and requested a motion to approve. NRY moved to approve and MN seconded. The motion carried with none opposed and no abstentions.

B. Activity - Mission Moment

ML shared updates on SJS's first class of 8th graders who are now in HS, a snapshot of the first three days of the 23-24 SY, and a snapshot of titles, themes and student work for fall social justice learning expeditions

C. Executive Director Updates

ML shared that on the first day of school, SJS welcomed 135 scholar activists into our building and the building was alive with joy and learning.

He also shared the following data points around student enrollment:

- Our enrollment target is 150 scholar-activists for the 2023-2024 school year.
- We currently have 135 scholar-activists who have accepted their seats and or

started the enrollment process.

- We still need to recruit an additional 20 scholar-activists in order to hit our target and account for possible attrition that could happen prior to count day in October.

He then shared that currently SJS has three open positions with two pending offer letters, and the pending positions are for two Inclusion teachers, one ELA and one Math.

C. Committee Updates

DJ transitioned the meeting to committee updates.

- **Executive Committee**
 - DJ asked the board candidates observing the board meeting as visitors to introduce themselves and share why they are interested in a board position at SJS.
 - CCH shared that she is a senior manager focused on the schools portfolio at Education Forward DC and was also a middle school teacher at E.L. Haynes PSC when ML was principal. CH shared that she had the chance to experience some of the social justice work that ML was piloting at E.L. Haynes and in her current role with Education Forward DC was able to provide early financial support for SJS.
 - JSG shared that he is currently at Briya Public Charter School leading their finance and administration. Previously, Joel spent nearly 12 years as a school finance officer at EdOps where he first met Myron during the charter application process before SJS opened. He also helped found a Children's Defense Fund Freedom School similar to the Freedom School that SJS has operated in the summer. He formerly was on the board at Briya PCS so has familiarity with the role of a board in DC's charter school context.
 - DJ expressed appreciation for each candidate and shared that as MN and DJ transition off the board and we add new board members, the SJS board will start the year with a majority non-founding board members for the first year.
 - DJ shared some sentiments on his and MN's transition off the board.
 - DJ shared that the board is seeking a trustee willing to take on the role of Secretary of the Board. This role is currently held by Tammy Tuck, who will lead our Board on an interim basis. Crucial to this role is maintaining accurate records of meetings and ensuring effective communication among trustees.

- DJ shared that last SY, the board agreed to combine our governance committee with our executive committee and create a new committee focused on engaging external stakeholders (i.e., community leaders, funders, parents, and other current and partners). He reiterated the importance of this work as we prepare for our charter review in the fall of 2024. He suggested a name of Community Relations or Community Engagement.
 - ML thanked DJ for his leadership and support.
 - DJ asked for comments on the new committee name and charge.
 - NRY offered support for “Community Engagement” and also offered “External Affairs”.
 - CCH suggested Community would be more inclusive of parents.
 - NRY moved to name the new committee “Community Engagement”
 - AS seconded the motion.
 - DJ called a vote.
 - EG clarified if the committee and its name would be internal vs. externally facing.
 - The motion passed with none opposed and no abstentions.
- **Finance Committee**
 - DJ transitioned to Finance updates and directed board members to the packet with SJS’s current standing. He stressed that the report showed SJS is in a strong financial position.
 - JSG asked about financial contingency for enrollment and asked whether or not the updates from the finance committee were for 23-24 SY or 22-23. ML and DJ confirmed that those updates were for the 22-23 EOY close out.
- **Student Performance Committee**
 - DJ transitioned to student performance updates.
 - TT shared that the Student Performance Committee had not met in the new year to discuss the student performance results ML shared by email last week and asked ML to share highlights with the board for discussion.
 - ML shared that he and the staff are very proud of the growth, specially the number of students meeting growth to proficiency targets. He also shared that SJS has started connecting with families and students about their scores which has been energizing and reflecting on how to make similar shifts in math.
 - ML shared that Empower K-12 wants to make sure that SJS focuses on 3+ as an important metric. The prediction is that within 3 years ELA will see

achievement and growth pre-pandemic but it will take longer for math, which makes the case for sector-wide math strategy.

- DJ referred trustees to the board packet which students are served across groups. School with $\frac{2}{3}$ of students designated at risk and showing up in top of list for growth, and outnumbering by 20 points. He noted that to have that growth be consistent across subgroups is helpful and shows we are not contributed to an achievement gap. He shared that SJS wants to get to the point where absolute performance is matching but in this post-COVID phase, this is important. He shared that SJS Principal Brandon Johnson attributed that growth to the coaching and leadership of ML and celebrated ML and his work.
- DJ also noted that SJS is serving cohorts better over time which shows that year over year SJS is improving in its ability to meet students' needs, and that the context that our first cohort started in SY20-21 with significant interruptions is important.
- RBY shared that this is an opportunity for SJS to talk unashamedly about this success and that he is excited for the newsletter.
- PB referred to $\frac{2}{3}$ designated at-risk and 40% citywide, and stated that SJS proves that kids can "do it" regardless of what we deem of them based on characteristics that they are coming with. It needs to be shouted from the rooftops that students can be successful at SJS regardless of the labels that have been put on them.

D. Committee Breakout Discussions

The board elected to move committee discussion points to email over the next 48 hours rather than meet given the time needed for the discussion. Committees are to determine monthly meeting calendars for the year.

E. Executive Session

ML left the meeting and DJ transitioned to executive session.

F. Closing

DJ reminded the board that committee and board meetings will return to a monthly schedule, and will be in-person moving forward.

ML shared that a staff would send calendar invites for the remainder of the year.

ML requested support from the board to cover the alcohol costs for the mid-year and end-of-year staff celebrations. Last year he covered these costs out-of-pocket as not to use school funds to pay for alcohol. DJ has also covered alcohol costs in the previous school year.

DJ thanked the board for their partnership during his tenure and expressed excitement for what the board will continue to do to support SJS and ML as its leader.

PB thanked DJ for being a great chair.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:50 pm.