



New Heights Board of Trustees

January 6th, 2022

Starting Time: 5:30pm

Location: 1690 Main Street

Brockton, MA 02301

Join Zoom Meeting

Zoom Meeting:

Description:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/6822448291>

- I. Call to Order at
- II. Approved Board Members List
 - A. Mike Sullivan
 - B. Ollie Spears
 - C. Graham Bengen
 - D. Judge Phillips
 - E. Vinnie Marturano
 - F. Emmanuel Daphnis
 - G. Steve Bernard
 - H. Nicholas Christ
 - I. Kimberly Zouzoua
 - J. Christina Alves
- III. Roll Call
 - A. Board Members Present
 - 1. Ollie Spears
 - 2. Judge phillips
 - 3. Vincent Marturnao
 - 4. Pastor Manny (left @ 6:15)
 - 5. Christina Alves
 - 6. Mike Sullivan
 - 7. Steve Bernard
 - 8. Graham Bengen (@ 6:05)
 - B. Members Absent
 - 1. Nicholas Christ
 - 2. Kimberly Zouzoua
- IV. Reading and Approval of Minutes from Board Meeting from November 30th 2021
 - A. Moved by Vinnie
 - B. Seconded by Greg
 - C. Ollie-Aye
 - D. Vinnie- Aye
 - E. Mike-Aye
 - F. Christina- Aye



G. Passes unanimously

V. New Business

A. Vaccine Mandate

1. proposal by omair to mante vaccinations with exceptions for health and religious reasons
2. Mike asked Omari to go over the challenges we have had
 - a) when returning from COVID last year, staff asked the board the opportunity to be vaccinated, which they now have
 - b) Omari believes the vaccine has saved many lives over the past few years
 - c) reality is that if you are vaccinated and have a close contact then you can stay and test daily, but the unvaccinated must be out for 10 days
 - d) causing stress for those who are vaccinated and have to cover as numbers steadily increase
 - e) Omari asked the MCPSA to supply us with the template they had designed for other charter schools that explained a vaccine mandate and then our lawyer reviewed and made
 - f) The difference between the one we sent on Tuesday and the one we sent today is that the current version has remove the liability waiver
 - g) Mike emphasized that unvaccinated people have to be out while other vaccinated people can continue to work. unable to get that policy changed at this time despite the changing science. Keeping students in the classroom is key - can't replace in-person learning with remote. State is not allowing remote learning but are allowing remote teaching so we are being creative with teachers teaching from home when they are out due to the rules surrounding close contacts but are running out of people to monitor rooms as teachers teach virtually. Doing everything possible to keep the school open
 - h) Omicron widespread, appearing in the student population. This is a last resort to ensure we can keep the school open.
3. Questions:
 - a) Ollie- two waivers (religion and medical) but people are purchasing the cards online- how do we ensure the cards are real? how do we police people asking for religious exemptions?
 - (1) Omari: medical waiver- need a letter from a doctor. For religious purposes you would have to show that you have not received other vaccines due to

- religion. Nurse takes the vax card and verifies with the state that the numbers match with the state records. This is what we are doing with students
- b) Ollie: if an employee does give a fraudulent card, what is the repercussion?
- (1) have not discussed. can discuss to this meeting if you would like- Ollie agreed we should discuss tonight
- c) Vinnie: does DESE have a policy similar to this or any guidance?
- (1) Omari: DESE deals largely with union schools. would be very difficult to get passed through a union but charter schools are experiencing higher staffing issues- had to close school twice this week and we are in better shape than most charter schools- but the problem persists and charters are implementing this
- d) Steve: What is a close contact? how are they monitored and determined/
- (1) Omari: someone who was within 3ft of a person for 15 minutes or more in a 24 hour period with masks on. Masks off is a close contact.
- (2) We pull seating charts, address all students, then have to determine whether the child was within 3 ft of the child for too long but as numbers rise we cannot feasibly determine whether teachers were near a specific student. Then close contact vaccination status has to be uncovered, steps communicated. not a clear science especially with teachers. We have been erring on the side of caution if there is a chance the person
- (3) Mike: Off campus close contacts are handled the same way but what is causing the disruption is that students are being diagnosed on or after leaving campus and then you have to determine contact and close contact
- e) Mike: some teachers are teaching remotely and the students are in the classroom to help manage absences and putting another staff member into the room to manage the room but this is causing problems because we are losing teachers' aides to restrictions and more teachers are out than we can cover- is that correct?



NEW HEIGHTS

CHARTER SCHOOL

of **BROCKTON**

- (1) Omari: just implemented this policy this week and only had 2 days- people are currently covering classes as lead teachers in the class-29 were scheduled to be out today and more would need to be out due to the close contacts from today's testing
- f) mike: have you considered reaching out to MCC or BSU to supplement the staff since they have to be vaccinated to go to college?
 - (1) Omari: started that discussion today. Commissioner said he will allow schools to hire seniors to work. Shortage of staff everywhere
- g) Ollie: If we vote to implement the mandate, what time frame are we asking people to be vaccinated in?
 - (1) Omari: February 28th would be the date
- h) No provision in the proposal for an alternative of regular testing at someone's expense
- i) Vinnie: proposal is to help reduce the number of staff that may contract COVID
- j) Mike: The other part is to reduce the mandatory 5 days. Omari is trying to keep the school operational not about Omari's personal beliefs
 - (1) Omari clarified that its actually 8 days before they can come back
- k) Graham: Is there anything in place for students to be vaccinated?
 - (1) not at this time
 - (2) have a version of the test and stay policy
 - (3) supports the mandate despite his personal beliefs
 - (4) Steve thinks we will be able to overcome this and conquer
- l) What percentage of people are vaccinated? over 90% here - 12 staff not vaccinated, 8 are unwilling, 4 are considering
- m) Steve: Is there the possibility that people will quit?
 - (1) not sure at this time
- n) Vinnie: could we ask people to test instead as an alternative?
 - (1) Omari: does not help with close contact tracing
 - (2) Mike: if concerns as spread, then that might help but its the 8 days lost when unvaccianted have contact with infected people
- o) Mike: open the floor for staff
- p) Gergory: does this lead us to the point where we move to affirm the policy?



- q) Mike: yes- proposed policy latest version sent today- does not have specific date but we know it is 2/28
- 4. Motion to accept the proposed policy of the executive director with regard to the mandate for all staff to be mandated to be vaccinated against COVID-19 with a final due date of 2/28/22 to have both shots completed-made by Graham
 - a) Seconded by Gregory
- 5. Discussion:
 - a) How are we addressing liability?
 - (1) there is no language liability for either party
 - (2) earlier version of the policy had liability but the lawyer explained it was not necessary
 - b) Graham: why would we not want to limit liability exposure for the organization?
 - (1) Mike: language really does not work because it is a school policy
 - c) Accept the policy as recommended by the executive director- motion to accept made by Mike
 - d) Seconded by Gregory
 - (1) Ollie requested that new hires have 40 days to get vaccinated upon hire
 - (2) Graham suggested 45 for wiggle room to get the shots
 - (3) Ollie: Is Johnson and Johnson on the table?
 - (a) yes
 - e) Vinnie abstains from the vote
 - f) Ollie Spears- Aye
 - g) Gregory-Aye
 - h) Christina-Aye
 - i) Graham-Aye
 - j) Mike-Aye
 - k) Steve- Aye
 - l) Motion carried

Special Orders

- VI. Good of the Order
 - A. Announcements
- VII. Motion to adjourn by Judge Phillips
- VIII. Seconded by Vinnie
 - A. Ollie- Aye
 - B. Christina -Aye
 - C. Graham- Aye
 - D. Mike-Aye
 - E. Motion carried



Meeting adjourned at 6:35