

Uplift Michigan Online School
Board of Education Regular Meeting Minutes
Thursday, August 27, 2020
5:00 p.m. Eastern Time

601 Fifth St NW Suite 500
Grand Rapids, MI 49504

1. Meeting called to order by President Jeff Bell at 5:05 pm

Roll Call

- a. Board Members Present: Jeff Bell, Mary Harwood, Denise Kish, Brian Wood
 - b. Call-in: Robert Giordano, Travis Gostinger, Katie Jones, Jacci Leib, Tonya Lowry, Victoria, Malone, Doug McNeil, Max Shafik, Erin Terpstra, Tim Wood
 - c. In person: none
2. Pledge of Allegiance
 3. Statement of Purpose
 4. Adoption of Agenda
 - a. Motion to approve by Jeff Bell, seconded by Mary Harwood, all members – aye, motion carried
 5. Public Comment/Correspondence
 - a. No public comment
 - b. Received correspondence from HyperFocus. Legal counsel is currently reviewing.
 - c. Received notice from the Department of Education about the Corrective Action Plan that was submitted. It has been approved. All three CAPs have been sufficiently addressed.
 6. Approval of Minutes from the regular Board meeting from July 23, 2020 and the special Board meeting from August 6, 2020
 - a. Motion to approve by Jeff Bell, seconded by Denise Kish, all members – aye, motion carried
 7. Approval of Finance Reports
 - a. Motion to approve as presented by Jeff Bell, seconded by Denise Kish, all members – aye, motion carried
 8. Leadership Update
 - a. Management Update
 - i. Return to Learn Bills
 - Working with MAPSA and the Frederick Group to communicate to the state legislature the impact these funding changes will have on student learning.
 - Uplift is committed to providing high quality education to our students and will do everything we can with the funding we receive.
 - ii. Enrollment
 - In light of funding changes, marketing and follow-ups have been paused
 - Current enrollment: 532 students

- Recommending a cap of 500, projecting a 15% loss of enrollment. Superintendent Lowry would reach out to applicant families to notify them of the cap and add them to the waiting list.
- Denise Kish: How does this affect our contract with Grand Canyon University Marketing? Travis Gostinger: We will reallocate the funds use later in the year.
- Mary Harwood: Would it be better to cap specific grade levels? Doug McNeil: A cap can be placed for both grade level and school-wide enrollment.

b. K-12 Overview

- i. Enrollment specifics
 - 199 applicants (submitted enrollment form)
 - 269 interested (received enrollment packet, but haven't submitted it)
 - 1785 leads (asked for more information)
- ii. Superintendent Lowry reviewed grade level breakdown and demographic information with the Board
- iii. Mary Harwood: Have special education teacher positions been filled? Tonya Lowry: Related service providers can offer services to certain students. Three special education teachers on staff will provide the rest of the services.
- iv. Funding cuts will affect the programming and services we are able to offer but academic goals are in place and will be worked toward.
- v. Travis Gostinger: The numbers are not finalized since the final state budget is not known. Any additional funding will be put into school. Management is working diligently to get the funding situation changed.
- vi. Denise Kish: What happens if we cap and funding is increased/restored? Tim Wood: The Board can lift the cap if things change. Even if the Board caps at 500 students, this does not mean we need to have an enrollment of 500 students. If funding is restored, staff positions will be posted immediately.
- vii. Mary Harwood: Can a cap be set at 500 or does it need to be set at current enrollment levels? Doug McNeil: It can be set at 500 in light of the fact we anticipate about a 15% decrease in numbers. The enrollment percentage increase Uplift is experiencing is far above other schools in the state.
- viii. Mary Harwood: Would like to revisit the cap discussion at each board meeting.
- ix. Tim Wood: Waiting lists and lotteries are based on staffing.
- x. Mary Harwood: How much longer do we need to hold the money from the 18/19 school year? Doug McNeil: There was no contract which makes it an equitable claim. Under the circumstances the money is probably safe to be used and may be beneficial to not have that money separated from current funds. He would not have a problem using that money from a legal standpoint.
- xi. Motion to approve a cap in Kindergarten through 2nd grade of 40 students per grade and an overall cap of 500 students K-12 by Jeff Bell, seconded by Brian Wood, all members – aye, motion carried
- xii. Tonya Lowry: Recommending a delay start date from 9/1/2020 to 9/8/2020. This is due to delay in receiving tech and setup, delay in receiving records and additional staffing adjustments
 - The 1098 hours/180 days will be covered because Uplift's curriculum ensures the students receive those required hours.
 - Tonya will adjust the calendar

- Motion to delay the start date from 9/1/2020 to 9/8/2020 by Brian Wood, seconded by Mary Harwood, all members – aye, motion carried
- xiii. Superintendent Lowry reviewed District Provided Professional Development (DPPD) topics that took place on 8/24 and 8/25.
- Options were discussed to adjust our grading system. Would like to remove final exams in High School and instead grade students on the mastery of concepts. This will provide a more holistic grading approach.
 - Denise Kish: Instead of the 1-4 scoring, consider 50% bottom grade scoring.
 - Denise Kish: Will removing final exams adequately preparing students going into college? Tonya Lowry: Yes, students will have more frequent assessments instead of one huge end of semester assessment.
- xiv. Reviewed all compliance items that are coming due for state reporting.
- xv. Academic goals are set and staff will do their best to move forward with budget constraints.
- xvi. A school culture survey will be going out soon to make sure students are satisfied and are feeling supported by Uplift.

c. Handbook

- i. Same handbook as last year with the exception of the current year’s date, updated school name, this year’s school calendar.
- ii. Motion to approve the handbook by Denise Kish, seconded by Brian Wood, all members - aye, motion carried

9. Board Strategy and Planning

- a. Enrollment Discussion - Discussed previously in Management Update.
- b. COVID-19 Preparedness Plan
 - i. Board must approve on a monthly basis. The extended plan must be approved by October 1st.
 - ii. There are currently no changes to the current plan since it was just approved at the special board meeting earlier this month.
 - iii. Motion to recertify the COVID-19 Preparedness Plan as is by Jeff Bell, seconded by Denise Kish, all members – aye, motion carried

10. Adjournment

- a. Motion to adjourn at 6:45 pm by Jeff Bell, seconded by Denise Kish, all members - aye, motion carried

Respectfully submitted,



Mary Harwood, Board Secretary