

MINUTES

Discovery Health Sciences Foundation Board of Directors Monday, August 16, 2021, 4:15 p.m.

Regular Board Meeting

A meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Discovery Health Sciences Foundation, Inc. is held electronically to discuss matters that are critical to continuation of the business of Discovery Schools and that are not able to be postponed due to legal requirements or other deadlines.

I. Call to Order

A. **Ms. Lynda Nugent Smith called the meeting to order at 4:20 PM.**

II. Roll Call

	<i>Board of Directors</i>	<i>Present</i>	<i>Absent</i>
1	Ms. Lynda Nugent Smith, Vice-chair	X	
2	Mr. Ronnie Slone	X - Virtual	
3	Mr. Wayne Thomas, Treasurer	X	
4	Ms. Diane Hollis	X	
5	Mr. Jim Hudson		X
6	Dr. Vinicio Madrigal		X
7	Ms. Jeanne Monte	X	
8	Mr. Joe Caldarera	X - Virtual	
9	Dr. Lacey Ellis	X - Virtual	
10	Mr. Henry Shane	X	
11	Mr. David Sherman	X - Virtual *4:25pm	
12	Dr. Patty Glaser, ex officio member	X	
13	Ms. Allison Sharai	X - Virtual	
14	Mr. Chuck Toney, Jr.	X - Virtual	
15	Ms. Beth Walker	X - Virtual	

16	Ms. Emily Arata	X - Virtual *5:00pm	
----	-----------------	------------------------	--

**Denotes time joined meeting*

Non-Board members in attendance: Kaytlyn Bourgeois (Accountant), Natalie Newton (development), Sharon Preen (CAO) (virtual), Jesse Watson (Middle School Principal) and Don Wheat (CFO), Carrie Comardelle (virtual)

III. Pledge of Allegiance, Ms. Jeanne Monte

IV. Public Comment

A. Ms. Smith explains the protocol for public comments for Board meetings. Public comments can be submitted prior to Board meetings by sending comments to public.comment@discoveryhsf.org. The public comments will be read aloud. In addition, as we move through the agenda, Ms. Smith will open public comments before all items that require a Board vote.

B. Ms. Smith opens it up for public comment. No public comments.

C. Natalie Newton noted no public comments were submitted prior to the meeting.

V. Approval of Minutes.

A. Ms. Smith opens the meeting up for public comment. No public comment. **Mr. Shane motions to approve the June minutes. Mr. Thomas seconds the motion. The June minutes approved by a unanimous vote.**

VI. CFO Report, Don Wheat

A. Don presented the June 30, 2021 financial statements. These financial statements have been submitted in compliance with the bond reporting.

B. The audit of the financial statements will begin next week. The final audit report is due to the district in October.

C. Mr. Wheat stated that we have received confirmation that the PPP loan has been 100% forgiven.

VII. Treasurer's Report, Wayne Thomas

A. Nothing to report.

VIII. Friends of Discovery Report, Wayne Thomas

A. Nothing to report.

IX. CAO/Asst. Head of School, Sharon Preen

A. Professional Development from August 2nd through August 10th went very well and involved approximately 320 employees.

1. The Slone Group presented a very entertaining and involved session.
 2. The technology involved was crucial to the success of the PD.
 3. PD also included an important session on mandated reporting.
- B. We have implemented an internal teacher referral program to motivate people to help recruit for our open positions.
- C. We are excited about the school year that has just begun and the leadership we are instilling for this year.

X. CEO/Head of School Report, Patty Glaser

- A. Covid-19 updates: We have opened and have had good attendance, but we are back to tracking the data driven matrix. The positivity rates have increased in the past two weeks in Jefferson Parish. The Discovery Community spread has had little impact on staffing and has had minimal spread.
1. 74% of DHSF employees are partially or fully vaccinated.
 2. We are following CDC guidelines and have implemented safety guidelines, including wearing masks indoors and outdoors for vaccinated and unvaccinated.
 - a) BESE will hear constituents' concerns on masking on Wednesday morning, deciding if they want to leave masks up to local control as opposed to following the Governor's mandate.
 - b) The school nurses and relationships with Ochsner have had a very big input on these decisions.
 - c) Dr. Glaser will hold an action item to adopt similar policy to last year for families and employees
 - (1) Agreement to abide by our current COVID mitigation strategies which will change slightly during the year according to COVID data in our community and Jefferson Parish

B. IT Update

1. We have received part of our new student laptops this week. We ordered them early, however, we haven't received them all and we are getting them distributed quickly in case of going virtual again.

C. Accountability commission:

1. Scores from annual testing arrived in late July.
 - a) School letter grade assignments & SPS scores will likely be determined by BESE with a recommendation from LDE.

- b) Accountability formulas have proposed changes that will likely be voted on tomorrow at the BESE meeting.
- c) Data is best used to determine how each student performed in each class and how they should be taught this year.

D. LEAP 2021 Data:

1. KDHSA beat district and state LEAP scores; KDHSA is in the top 3-7 of JP open enrollment schools, number 4 overall of 69 3-8 schools - number 7 of the 79 schools.
2. DJOD beat district LEAP scores and was close to the state LEAP score numbers; DJOD is in the 15-22 of open enrollment schools, number 22 of 69 schools and number 15 of 79 schools.
 - a) Discovery remains an ELA strong school; Math and Social Studies took a hit, so we will be focusing on these scores this year
3. Challenges: Discovery has 900 new students since 2019 testing, since there was no testing in 2020, all DJOD 3rd and 4th graders were new to Discovery last year, all 4th graders took the test online rather than paper and pencil for the 1st time, staffing issues due to the pandemic
4. We have added additional teacher support in curriculum:
 - a) K2 - Dr. Casbergue - contracted a retired early literacy professor
 - b) Moved a seasoned 3rd grade teacher to Division Head for 3rd/4th at DJOD
 - c) Planning now for after school tutoring for the most needy students
5. We did not receive any information on growth scores as opposed to assessment scores. Growth scores measure student progress from where they entered to where they tested and consider progress needed for Mastery by 8th grade. Discovery normally does very well with growth scores.

E. 2 New Charters

1. The virtual charter was turned down at the July JP School Board meeting with a recommendation from the Superintendent that it be considered for a statewide school
2. Discovery Virtual LEAP 2021 Data scores were higher than 2 other virtual charters that are designed for virtual learning with families who choose it, as opposed to quick design & families who chose it out of consequences of pandemic.
3. The data shows there is a place in East Baton Rouge for Discovery Schools.

F. New Charter Application Status

1. Action Item to be voted on:

a) Recommending that we withdraw the Discovery Fusion Charter App due to the statewide test scores, national push back on virtual learning, and learning loss work at Discovery Schools.

b) Plan: Open Baton Rouge Discovery in 2023

(1) Partnership with Ochsner is solid for the Baton Rouge charter

G. Events & Development

1. Events:

a) November 6th - Gala 2021 - Canceled

b) Thursday, November 4th - Loyola Campus Ribbon Cutting - not canceled yet

c) Monday, August 23rd - DJOD Ribbon cutting - canceled

d) Science Day was canceled & Back-to-School nights will be rescheduled

2. Waiting on ProBono grant and Soccer grant responses

H. Federal Funds

1. ESSER III Allocation - \$2.9M - ESSER III Allocation - \$6.5M - Planned use of funds

a) Hiring additional personnel and tutors to help learning loss

b) Upgrade facilities/infrastructure - to provide more indoor and outdoor space for social distancing

c) Adding 18 modular classrooms & 2 offices to Vintage campus (ESSER II) - Need RFP & bids - approximately \$2M

d) Received notification that we will receive ESSER II and ESSER III funds from the District for DJOD.

I. Construction:

1. DJOD campus was ready a bit late, but beautiful and up and running.

2. KDHSA - funding for A & A Performance Center - working on this and waiting for due date and approval for ESSER III funds.

J. Parking for HS Students

1. Discovery has 25 parking spots for student drivers. They are assigned to Seniors on a first come first serve basis.

2. This is the first year we have a full house on campus since opening the building.
3. Discovery is working with the City of Kenner to get a CEA to allow student parking in the gravel lot by the dog park.
 - a) Students would be required to walk to the light to cross with a crossing guard.
4. Carpool routing is being reconsidered for Loyola/Vintage campuses.

K. Sidewalks for traffic control: has been an approved project within the application.

L. Dr. Glaser gave a note of appreciation to all of the board members, acknowledging their support and expertise.

M. Challenges (prioritized):

1. 4th surge COVID numbers & the potential impact on children
2. Hiring final positions
3. Annual testing results & addressing learning loss
4. Diligence in spending ESSER II & ESSER III allocation
5. Affording Discovery Arts and Athletics Performance Center
6. Carpool as always at the start of a school year

XI. Action Items

A. **COVID Return to School Policy:**

Vote to implement the same policies as last year, including masks, water bottles, 3' apart for students, 6' apart, sanitation stations, masks on buses, seating charts in classrooms for contact tracing, subject to adjustment as data changes. **Dr. Glaser presented the policy. Motion made by Ms. Hollis to adopt the policy, seconded by Ms. Monte. All in favor, motion carries.**

B. **Discovery Fusion:**

Dr. Glaser recommends that we withdraw the Discovery Fusion Charter App due to the statewide test scores, national push back on virtual learning, and learning loss work at Discovery Schools. **Mr. Thomas makes a motion to withdraw the Discovery Fusion Charter App until further notice. Mr. Shane seconds. All in favor, motion carries.**

XII. Old Business

A. None noted.

XIII. New Business

A. None noted.

XIV. Executive Session - No executive session was entered.

XV. Adjournment

A. **Ms. Monte moved to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Hollis seconded the motion. Motion carries. Meeting adjourned at 6:20 PM.**