



Board Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, June 15 at 6:30 pm

In Attendance: Robert Best (Chair), Patty Humphrey (Vice Chair), Scott Perron, Kimberly Lavalley, Frank Weiss, Susan Lawton (Secretary), Angela Seggie (as a non-voting member for tonight's meeting), Sabeena Mori (Student Rep), and Cassie Hayes (ex officio – arrived after an off site meeting of The Chamber of Commerce, Manchester)

Not in Attendance: Kyle Fox, Kate Robichaud (Faculty Rep)

Call to Order: (Bob B) 6:33pm

Pledge of Allegiance (Bob B)

Moment of Silence)Bob B)

Reading of the [Mission Statement](#) (Bob B)

Board Mission Discussion Question (Bob B) 8:23pm

What is the Founder's Academy vision of Student discipline? Do we believe there should be minimum expectations that every student must always meet from day 1, or do we expect students will learn discipline from us, or both?

- o If there are minimum expectations, what are they? Relate those expectations to the leadership code of conduct. What is the result if students do not meet those expectations on Day 1?*
- o If we teach discipline, is there a limit to the time, energy, and tolerance we should invest? If so, how do we articulate that limit?*

- It was stated that Charter RSA 194:B talks about various options regarding acceptance to a school. They include academic focus, basis of aptitude, academic achievement, or need.
- What is the vision of discipline? What are the minimum expectations? The expectations should be set from Day 1.
- The student's Code of Conduct was our guiding light and students and parents signed it before the first day of school. Expectations were set high – and should be. If we raise the bar the students will rise to that level.
- It is okay to have high expectations. We need to help the students get there.
- Not following the rules is a very tactical thing. Discipline and self-management is the goal. Consequences should be fair and reasonable. The goal is to develop positive behavior – we should set the bar high and and evolve from year to year as children grow.
- One Board member spoke about liberty and that it is the first aspect of self-leadership. Students need to learn to self-regulate. Discipline gives meaning to life. We should spend more time teaching the Code of Conduct –

teach them early - maybe daily during Round Table for the first month of school.

- The Code of Conduct should be examined to learn the purpose and why it should be important to students.
- From Day 1 students should be expected to follow the rules of the school. It's easy to let things slide, but if you let one thing slide, it leads to more and more and then control is lost. Teachers and Administrators need to stay strong and know that the rules (Code of Conduct) are not negotiable.
- The students that don't behave and follow the rules impact the other students - the ones that want to learn and attend the school. The Code of Conduct has to be emphasized. We have to be honest about our school and what is expected during admissions.
- Maybe placement testing should be implemented again - it sets expectations. We can't admit based on it but help parents understand expectations and receive resources for students if needed prior to school starting. Expectations and discipline must involve the parents so we are coordinated.
- Teachers can help discipline by forming relationships with their students and getting them to trust them. If the teacher is trusted and respected, students will tend to have better school behaviors that will carry over to every aspect of their lives.
- Character grading has started to be implemented. Structuring a common language that everyone knows will help the process. Students can hold each other accountable too. Adult teaching, peer to peer, then self-regulation - this is the process.
- All classes should have the same set of rules and follow them. Consistency is very important all across the board. If it is delivered the same every class, every time, it will help the students learn.
- All staff should get together to talk about discipline issues - nip them in the bud. Staff meetings should happen and all faculty should attend.
- Violence and drugs are not negotiable.
- Minimum standards should be set up and not a lot of latitude should be allowed; this helps keep order in the school, but helps with the very basics of self-discipline. We need to find the potential in each student and see if we can unlock that potential.
- How much time do we spend on the basics before we say enough is enough? It was suggested that it depends on the student and perhaps the offense(s).
- We have a real obligation to the students who want to be at the school and who want to learn. We need to teach the kids that appropriate behavior is essential.
- Could model students be the 'peacekeepers' of the school?
- If parents and students are invested in the school it is easy to keep them at the school.
- How do we enforce minimum standards? Limits have to be defined.
- It was stated that the Administration may see progress but sometimes the perception from the outside is different than what is really happening. Not everyone can see what is going on and what is really happening.
- It was suggested that maybe the older students could mentor the younger ones. In some schools, the older students read to the younger ones.

- It was also suggested that the Administration have more room to flex if needed.
- Expectations need to be clearly spelled out so there is no confusion during admissions, not when school starts.

1. Public Comments: (See Policy [BEDH](#)) 8:15pm

- Michelle S. spoke regarding parents that she has spoken to that have talked about the discipline in the school and behaviors that need to be dealt with by the Administration. Ms. S. discussed how she chose Founders because of the mission and the standards and safety of the school for children. She noticed how the students were very well spoken and very well behaved during her first visit to the school. She chose Founders because of the high standards of discipline and academics expected of students and staff alike. It was mentioned that Ms S. realizes it's been a difficult year for students coming back into the building and the adjustments that had to be made by everyone after the pandemic year.
Ms. S. also mentioned that now that the students have been in school for the entire year and things have returned to normal, that the discipline and expected behavior should be better at the start of the school year next year. She wants her children to be a part of the good culture and high standard of discipline that were set in place as the mission of the school. She believes that teachers need to be supported and should have strict and strong discipline in the classroom. There has been an issue with a few of the 6th graders this past year and we want to be sure that 7th grade teachers will be supported next school year.
Ms. S also suggested it would be a good idea to perform regular exit interviews when possible.

2. Secretary's Report: (Sue L) 7:05pm

- a. [May 18, 2022 Board Meeting Minutes](#)
 - **Motion** to accept the minutes as written made by Kim L
 - **Second** by Patty H
 - **Motion passed** 6/0/0

3. Treasurer's Report: (Kim L.) 7:07pm

- a. [Board Budget Report for FY 2021- 2022 Period Covered 7/1/2021 through 4/30/2022](#)
 - Mrs. L. reviewed the Treasurer's report
 - **Motion** to approve the report as present made by Sue L.
 - **Second** by Scott P.
 - **Motion passed** 6/0/0
 - Mrs. L. reported that the building is still in need of a new roof and the cost will be approximately \$600k. She received 2 estimates, one for \$601k and one for \$700k. The company that bid \$600k said they could do the job in 3 weeks time and can begin in August 2022. They would need a deposit of \$150k to secure the roofer. Mrs. L. suggested they use a line of credit and take out a short term loan to be paid back within 2 years at approximately 5.25% interest, depending on market at time of

loan, for the remainder of the loan. This would be the responsibility of the school, not the Foundation.

- **Motion** to use the money in this way was made by Scott P
- **Second** by Patty H.
- **Motion passed** 6/0/0

4. Dean's Report: see [here](#) (Cassie H. & Deb G.) 8:05pm

- Mrs. G. gave the first part of the report in the absence of Mrs. H. Mrs. G reported that the Administration is working with all students who are still working on mastery assignments and who need summer credit recovery.
- A Board member asked Mrs. G how we can better prepare the 8th graders for the transition to high school. There has to be a way to make high school feel exciting and help them become ready for this next step. Maybe a welcome to Founders high school night - make it an event. It's important to show the students and families that we truly care about them.
- Another Board member mentioned that we should learn which students need credit recovery much earlier and quickly to help with summer planning.
- Extracurricular activities are important. Start prepping students in the 7th grade.
- Dean H. was invited to the Manchester Chamber of Commerce Citizen of the Year Banquet and arrived late to the meeting, but told the Board that she had a chance to network with some people from North End Magazine and others, which is good exposure for the school.
- Dean H. discussed how Dr. Tyrie is analyzing the results of the SAS exam. The number of students taking the exam was very low. The numbers will be available sometime in August.
- The projected enrollment this year is 474 students. 397 have signed up for courses.
- The budget for this year was set for 435 students.
- In March 2022 there were 4 times that hit 50 applications in one month.
- In April 2022 23 applications were submitted - and that was a record.
- In the past 3 months 108 applications were recorded - another record. We are certainly moving in the right direction.
- If the numbers continue climbing, we may have to hire more teachers.
- There will be a dedicated counselor for the 5th grade.
- The Board gave a big THANK YOU to Admissions for all the hard work!

5. Faculty Representative's Report: see [here](#) (Reported by Deb G) 7:19pm

- Ms. G. reported that both the middle school and high school field trips were a great success; the students had a great time.
- Final exams went off without a hitch.
- Middle school semi-formal was great as was the 8th grade celebration; all the students dressed up and had a great time. Behaviors were great and parents should be proud of their children.
- Every 8th grader received a certificate, t-shirt, and plaque. It was an amazing night.

6. Student Trustee's Report: see [here](#) (Sabeena M.) 6:59pm

- Ms. M. reported that the end of year field trip was a lot of fun. She was excited that the fundraising efforts this year were so successful.
- She did mention that there are currently a lot of juniors on the Student Senate and they should consider academic effort and guidelines rules to get into Student Senate.
- Ms. M. thanked the Board for the opportunity to be the Student Representative this year and hopes that she is elected by her peers to this position next year.
- Ms. M. expressed that she learned a lot about the school and the behind the scenes working of the school.
- Bob B. thanked Ms. M for staying strong and involved in the discussion with the Board and said she did a great job this year.
- Sue L. expressed her satisfaction and how well Ms. M. represented the school and the student body. She liked how Ms. M. was able to bring information back to the students and thanked her for a job very well done.
- It was suggested that perhaps the House of Representatives could be involved in the coming year.

7. Board Business: (50 minutes)

- a. Board Organizational planning 2022-2022
 - There is a need for at least 2 more parent Board members, as Scott P. and Sue L. are leaving. Both were thanked for their time served on the Board and both will be missed.
 - Nominations were made for new Board members for the upcoming term
 - Treasurer - Bob B. nominated **Kyle F.**
Patty H. seconded the motion
6/0/0 vote for Kyle F. as Treasurer
 - Secretary - Kim L. nominated **Patty H.**
Sue L. seconded the motion
6/0/0 vote for Patty H. as Secretary
 - Vice Chair - Scott P. nominated **Kim L.**
Sue L. seconded the motion
6/0/0 vote for Kim L. as Vice Chair
 - Chair - Kim L. nominated **Bob B.**
Scott P seconded the motion
6/0/0 vote for Bob B as Chair
- b. Presentation from Nathan Wechsler (Kelli D'Amore & Stephanie Gray)
6:35pm
 - The auditors went over the PowerPoint presentation that they prepared and that was passed out to Board members. They explained that what they look for is reasonable assurance that the finances are free of misstatements and all objectives are reviewed. Because they have been auditing Founders for several years, they also change what they look for each year to be sure that 'fresh eyes' are brought to the audit. They review their own audit strategies looking for inherent weaknesses and risks within the primary areas of focus.
 - They explained that they prepare the 990 tax form because of its complexity - 90% of nonprofits need assistance with this form.

c. PTSG Report

- The PTSG report was given by Michelle S., the newly appointed President of the PTSG. Details can be found in the report, but Michelle wanted to point out all the safety initiatives that the PTSG has been instrumental in providing to the school including the night locks for every classroom and office in the school.
- A special thank you went out to Tom Huot for all his hard work in fundraising, events including dances, and the 8th grade celebration.
- It was suggested by a Board member that they should try to attend at least one dance per year as a chaperone or helper in some way; the dances are fun events to attend.
- It was also suggested that the lower cafe can be a great venue for dances and other events because there is so much that can be done with a 'blank slate'. It was suggested that we consider getting furniture that is more presentable to new families thinking about attending Founders.
- Lastly, Michelle wanted to say a big thank you to Elizabeth Sanville for all her years of service as President of the PTSG and this sentiment was echoed by several Board members as well.

d. Mission Report

- There was no Mission report this evening as reported by Patty H.

8. New Business 7:31pm

- Patty H. suggested that an exit interview be done for all teachers leaving. It was suggested that at least one Board member be included as the Board needs this information as they move forward.
- It was asked if families leaving the school should be interviewed as well. It could shed light on issues that the school should know about.
- Patty H. also mentioned that we need to discuss what can be done to retain the 8th graders; many leave to go to bigger high schools that may include extracurricular activities like sports.
- It was suggested that at the very least, there should be a survey so the Administration and Board can get a good perspective on why employees leave and learn whatever they can before they go. It's also important to thank them for all they've done in the year(s) they've been employed.

9. Non-Public Session began at 10pm

a. Board member exit interviews

Motion to adjourn non-public session: Sue L.

Second by Scott P

Non public session adjourned at 10:25pm

10. Next Meeting: August 17, 2022 at 6:30pm