

Uplift Education Regular Board Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, May 25, 2021, at 4:30 p.m.

A virtual meeting of the Board of Uplift Education was held on the date and time listed above. Pursuant to Governor Abbott's March 16, 2020 Order approving a request by the Office of the Attorney General to temporarily suspend a limited number of open meeting laws in response to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) disaster, governmental bodies may conduct meetings by telephone or video conference to advance the public health goal of limiting face-to-face meetings (also called "social distancing") to slow the spread of the Coronavirus (COVID-19). In compliance with Governor Abbott's order, and in furtherance of the public health goal of limiting face-to-face meetings, this meeting was held by videoconference.

Access online was through TEAMS and the agenda provided the following access information:

https://teams.microsoft.com/l/meetup-join/19%3ameeting_ZTYxZWY4M2YtMGNkOC00MWZkLWE0ZWQtZDdkMWM1YTYwZTIk%40thread.v2/0?context=%7b%22Ti d%22%3a%22c1136be9-3a18-45ff-8099-b182bfd6890c%22%2c%22Oid%22%3a%2226d7a1b6-9be1-4fdc-9c72-d7278ededda4%22%7d

For access by phone: +1 469-340-0751; conference ID: 756-359-819#

Called to Order: 4:31 p.m.

Adjourned: 6:44 p.m.

Board Members Present:

1. Richard Frapart
2. Cullum Clark
3. John Beckert
4. Dawn Davidson
5. Ardo Fuentes
6. Lael Melville
7. Michael Stack
8. Cathy Estrada

TOPIC	DISCUSSION/CONCLUSIONS	ACTIONS
I. Call to Order and Announcements	<p>R. Frapart welcomed the Board to the meeting and took attendance. A quorum being present, the meeting was called to order at 4:31 p.m.</p> <p>Congratulations were given to Elena McFann who was named President of Anthem's Medicare Business.</p> <p>An introduction was given to Jarie Bradley, a People Team consultant who is working with Anne Erickson and her team.</p>	
II. Previous Board Minutes	<p><u>ACTION ITEM:</u> Consider and take action on minutes from previous board meetings - Richard Frapart, Board Chair.</p> <p>a. April 27, 2021.</p> <p>The first order of business was to discuss and take action on previous Board minutes from April 27, 2021.</p>	<p>Upon motion by Lael Melville to approve the minutes from April 27, 2021, as presented, and seconded by C. Clark, the Board unanimously voted to approve the motion.</p>

Update from the Board Development Committee – Deborah Bigham, Chief External Affairs Officer, and John Beckert, Board Development Committee Chair.

The Board took agenda items out of order and heard the Update from the Board Development Committee first.

J. Beckert discussed the importance of having a culture of fundraising at Uplift, and the importance of relationships and annual giving campaigns. The aim of the Development Committee, discussed by J. Beckert, is to create a culture of fundraising within our Board, Staff, and Communities by forging relationships with individuals, foundations, and corporations through the creation of an annual giving program and the launch of our 2021-2026 Capital Campaign.

D. Bigham reviewed board member giving during Fiscal Year 21, and an overview of several giving line items. The total giving raised so far for Fiscal Year 22 is \$6,660,004.00. D. Bigham also discussed annual giving and capital campaigns. Annual giving is focused on Uplift's annual needs to meet the overall objectives of the 21-26 strategic plan and is currently set at \$1.34m. Existing sources for annual giving include the North Texas Giving Day, Dinner and Dialogue, Annual Holiday Mailer Campaigns, and Senior Decision Day. Our capital campaign is focused on Uplift's one-time capital needs aligned to meet the overall objectives of the 21-26 strategic plan and is currently set at \$11-15m over five years. The total philanthropy need for FY22 is \$7m, \$1.34m from the annual fund and \$6.6m capital campaign.

III. Information Items

Report on ESSER III Funding Potential Uses and Stakeholder Feedback – Yasmin Bhatia, CEO.

Y. Bhatia reported on ESSER III funding and began with a comprehensive overview of the timeline for getting stakeholder feedback on the use of the funds, which included calls, surveys, townhalls, and board meetings.

Uplift is receiving ~\$35M over 3 years from the Federal government in stimulus funds through the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act. These funds are intended to support acceleration of learning coming out of the pandemic and any expenses related to returning to in-person school. These funds go away after 3 years and hence organizations, like Uplift, need to be mindful to not take on ongoing expenses that will not be covered in future years through additional funding sources. The Texas Education Agency has asked districts to prioritize funds that support teacher

development, high quality curriculum materials, extra learning time for scholars, and ongoing technology needs. Uplift has already made investments in high-quality/culturally responsive curriculum materials, social emotional development for scholars, well-being resources for staff, mental health resources, and equity training. We will continue our investments in these areas.

Uplift's draft plan for using the ESSER III funds includes the following:

1. Invest in more competitive compensation, as part of our larger value proposition, to retain our teachers, leaders, and support staff
2. Invest in external teacher professional development to support teachers in meeting the needs of their scholars
3. Invest in high-quality, small group tutoring during the school day to close reading gaps
4. Invest in our whole scholar experience at school by strengthening enrichment programs that matter to families and scholars
5. Consider creating an Uplift "virtual academy" for those families who only want a virtual school option for 2021-22

Y. Bhatia next reviewed the feedback received from leaders, staff, parents, and scholars. Per survey results, parents most care quality teachers and extracurriculars, notably sports and robotics, as well support for homework and reading and social emotional needs. Scholars are aligned with families on college and career guidance and quality teachers, and are also interested in sports, arts, robotics, and band.

Next steps include the following:

1. Complete and submit the ESSER III formal application
2. Assign formal dollar amounts against each investment bucket
3. Provide campuses their survey results to support enrichment planning
4. Watch what comes out of the legislative session re: virtual school and launch a formal working group
5. Launch a formal working group on how we want the contract reading/math program to work
6. Expand our enrichment investment theme to include family engagement

Update on Staff and Scholar Wellbeing Work – Dr. John Gasko, Chief SEL and Wellbeing Officer.

Dr. Gasko discussed the principles of recover and restore, and the role they play in informed trauma.

Next, Dr. Gasko discussed human resilience and allostatic load and vulnerability. The formula for determining allostatic load is (stress x adverse childhood experiences) divided by resilience factors.

Next, Dr. Gasko reviewed the integrated model of supports that comprise well-being, programming from FY21, as well as planned programming for FY22, and whole scholar preferred outcomes.

Update on Staff DEI Work – Anne Erickson, CPO.

Anne Erickson, CPO, along with Jarie Bradley, presented the equity update to the Board. The update objective is to provide a high-level update on the equity agenda – specifically on the commitments made in the Board’s letter regarding racial equity, to provide a more focused update on the work of creating a multi-year plan to increase the diversity of our teachers and campus leadership teams, and to preview where we will go from here.

First, the 1-year anniversary of the killing of George Floyd was recognized and a moment of silence was observed.

Next, progress on Board commitments was reviewed, as well as an overview of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI), distinct concepts driving Uplift’s equity work. Diversity is about a collective or group and can only exist in relationship to others. A candidate is not diverse – they’re a unique, individual unit. This is the numbers work. Equity is a process that begins by acknowledging the reality of an unequal starting place and continues to address and correct the imbalance. This is the systems/process work. Inclusion means that within your diverse team of talent, all feel welcome and can grow, contribute and develop – regardless of their identity...This is the culture work.

Next, the principles of DEI and how they are connected to our strategic priorities were reviewed, as well as the creation of a 3-year plan to increase diversity, acknowledging the work is iterative, moving from acknowledgement, to awareness, to action. Racial and ethnic differences in the teaching profession was discussed, as well as teacher demographic data, the importance of same-race teachers and research supporting same-race teachers, Uplift staff-student race data, the significance of language and inclusivity and research supporting the same, and Uplift staff-student language data.

Next steps were provided as well as space for Board feedback, questions, and discussion. Topics herein

included the political climate, the current Legislative session, impact of bills, importance of same-race teachers, avoiding pitfalls, and praise for the data provided.

Update from the Board Advocacy Committee – Eric Dominguez, Director of Government Affairs, and James Stanton, Board Advocacy Committee Chair.

E. Dominguez provided an update on the Legislative session, including the following:

1. SB 1 – General Appropriation Bill
2. SB 1444 – TRS Health Care opt-out
3. SB 487 – Charter School Municipal Overreach Bill
4. HB 1545 – HB3 Cleanup Bill
5. HB 3610 – Property Tax Bill
6. HB 3979 – Social Studies Curriculum in Public Schools

At 6:18, R. Frapart announced the Board was moving into the Executive Committee portion of the meeting and that any non-voting Board member was welcome to drop-off or stay-on. During the Executive Committee portion of the meeting, voting Board members meet to address administrative items. Non-Executive Committee members are always welcome to stay-on and attend, but to honor time, Non-Executive Committee members may drop from the meeting if they so wish.

Finance Update – Jim Jahnke, CFO.

J. Jahnke provided his update at the same time he introduced the finance administrative action items.

IV. Administrative Action Items

ACTION ITEM: Consider and take action on approving amended budget for 2021 fiscal year – Jim Jahnke, CFO.

J. Jahnke presented to the Board the FY21 amended budget for approval. This included a presentation – expenses and revenues – on the FY21 September amended numbers, the FY21 proposed May amendment numbers, and the variance between the two.

ACTION ITEM: Consider and take action on approving appoint of Weaver as Auditors for the 2021 Audit – Jim Jahnke, CFO.

This was corrected during the presentation to be for FY22, not FY21.

J. Jahnke explained that for the last six Years, Uplift has been using Weaver & Tidwell for the financial

Upon motion by J. Beckert to approve the 2021 amended budget as presented, and seconded by M. Stack, the Board unanimously approved the motion.

Upon motion by A. Fuentes to approve appointing Weaver & Tidwell as auditors for the fiscal year 2022 audit, and seconded by M. Stack, the Board unanimously approved the motion.

audit and preparation of IRS form 990. For FY21, total base fees will increase by \$1,700 to \$77,400. Administration is recommending use of Weaver & Tidwell as auditors for the FY22.

ACTION ITEM: Consider and take action on resolution approving forgiveness of overpayments for insurance premiums for benefits – Jim Jahnke, CPO.

J. Jahnke explained that open enrollment of benefits for a school year occurs during the summer and premium payments for benefits chosen by an employee are taken out of the employee's pay starting with the September 30th Payroll.

A reconciliation for the period of September 2020 through December 2020 between the deductions in employee pay and what Uplift paid to the benefit providers for the employee selected benefits indicated that payroll deductions were not made for one or more monthly payments for a number of Uplift employees. During this period, the affected employees still had access to the coverages they had elected to receive.

Administration made the decision to not collect the payments as allowed for in the employee handbook as there was a recognition of the additional stress and hardship for affected Uplift employees during the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Corrective actions have been and are being implemented to complete reconciliations on a timely basis in the future.

ACTION ITEM: Consider and take action on resolution approving summer school program scholarship – Yasmin Bhatia, CEO, and Alex Berk, CLO.

Y. Bhatia explained to the Board that Uplift's network average scores on High School End of Course exams are down 8-10% relative to Uplift's scores from 2018-19 (pre-pandemic). Passing the five End of Course exams are required by the State to graduate from high school. Scholars take the various five exams (English I, English II, Biology, Algebra, and U.S. History) during 9th-11th grades. Y. Bhatia explained that Uplift is competing for scholars' time and attention in the summer with their need/ desire to work. Hence, Uplift wants to borrow an innovation that NYC Public Schools is trying this summer with the support of philanthropy to pay scholars to participate in in-person summer school and provide an additional financial reward for passing the test. In the program, Scholars would attend 20 hours/week of in-person instruction at one of Uplift's campuses for three total weeks. They

Upon motion by M. Stack to approve the resolution forgiving overpayments for insurance premiums, as presented, and seconded by L. Melville, the Board unanimously approved the motion.

Upon motion by A. Fuentes to approve the summer school scholarship program resolution, as presented, and seconded by C. Estrada, the Board unanimously approved the motion.

	would earn \$25/hour (making it more attractive than they could earn at typical summer jobs) for \$1200 and then \$300 for passing the associated exam. Uplift would pay out in 1-2 checks and would require parent approval for them to participate. Uplift would issue our scholars 990s for tax purposes. Uplift is currently surveying scholars to gauge their interest and the program would start on June 7th with re-takes of exams in late June.	
V. CLOSED Session	<p>At 6:33 p.m., R. Frapart retired the Board to closed session pursuant to 551.074 of the Texas Government Code to deliberate the appointment, employment, evaluation, reassignment, duties, discipline, or dismissal of a public officer or employee.</p> <p>At 6:43 p.m., the Board returned to OPEN session. R. Frapart noted the same quorum of the Board was present and that no action or decision was made during CLOSED session.</p>	
VI. Community Forum	No community members signed up to speak during community forum.	
VII. Adjournment	There being no further business before the Board, R. Frapart adjourned the meeting at 6:44 p.m.	

Respectfully submitted by Alexander S. Berk, Secretary.