



The Association for the Advancement of Education, DBA, The Hawbridge School
Board of Directors Meeting

Date: Wednesday, July 20, 2022, at 6:00 p.m.

Location: Virtual Meeting

Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85099712252?pwd=ak5PdFJiNk8rVHJvcndiMEdsbzJkQT09>

I. Call to Order – 6:04PM

II. Roll Call

Attending Board Members:

Natalya Barker, Christina Fisher, Megan Glancy, Nick Harrison (Secretary), Josh Horton, Renee Lynch (Vice Chair), Davida Reid, Amanda Rose (Treasurer), April Williams (Chair)

Attending Directors and Faculty/Staff:

Jennifer Shelton (Director of the Upper School), Cheryl Beierschmitt (Director of the Lower School), Jonathan Farmer (Faculty Representative to the Board)

Other Attendees:

Jason Imhof (Aspire Construction Management)

III. Approval of Agenda

The agenda was approved unanimously.

IV. Public Comment

A. New Board Chair April Williams expressed her gratitude at entering the role of chair of the school board. She stated that her goals this year were 1) to return the board's focus to more typical matters of attention, whereas the last two years have been consumed by construction of the new school and COVID-19 matters; and 2) to prioritize board focus on long-term efforts that can serve as a foundation for the future of the school.

V. Consent Items

A. Approval of previous meeting's minutes

The board approved minutes from June 22, 2022, with a vote of 8-1. Eight board members voted in support and one abstained.

B. Future Meetings/Events:

■ Proposed Board Meeting: August 24, 2022

The board unanimously approved the next board meeting to take place on Wednesday, August 24, 2022. The meeting event will be held online.

The board discussed the possibility of holding one or more future board meetings in-person at the new Hawbridge Upper School. In-person meetings can foster interpersonal relationships and interactions between community members. However, virtual meetings have been observed to draw more attendance from the community.

Certain logistical challenges remain that need to be resolved before an in-person meeting can be held at the new Upper School. Microphones are available but not yet tested for this event. Also, the new building does not have Wi-Fi connectivity in place at the moment, which is necessary to broadcast an onsite board meeting to remote attendees.

VI. Reports

Prior to the reports, A. Williams noted that school bylaws identify only one standing committee: the board selection committee. This committee is tasked to choose board members in the spring of each year as previous board members' terms expire. In past years, there have been committees for Communications, Fundraising, and the Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (or "JEDI") committees. New and existing board members are invited to consider participation on a committee.

A. Board – Committee Updates and Selections

■ Fundraising Committee Report (Natalya Barker)

Following a 6/28 meeting, Renee Lynch volunteered to chair this committee for the year. N. Barker is also serving on the committee. One goal of the committee includes the creation of a master alumni list to create fundraising opportunities. Committee will seek to identify other opportunities for fundraising. N. Barker invited attendees to reach out to

Jennifer Shelton and Emily Martin on upcoming fundraising events and how the committee might be able to assist.

- Communications Committee (April Williams)

A. Williams is working with Faculty Representative Jonathan Farmer to draft an email from the board to the community with the goal to demonstrate the intention and tone of what communication from Hawbridge should look like. The communication highlights collaboration and problem-solving. Faculty will be provided short board-approved scripted responses to be available in the event that an external phone or email communication does not appear to be following the Hawbridge Code of Conduct. The board will set the tone and define expectations and/or next steps if communication has reached an unproductive state. Farmer concurred with this approach and commented that some example scripts are drafted and shared with the school administration for review.

- JEDI Committee (Christina Fisher)

The Committee met on July 11 and outlined short- and long-term goals.

One long-term goal is to cultivate a board that provides representation for diverse stakeholders and the Hawbridge community. A second long-term goal is how the board can be a more inclusive organization. A third long-term goal is to establish best practices for how the board can lean into the values of diversity and justice. The third goal is to include a question on the board application for new members that asks about their commitment to diversity, justice, and equality.

For short-term goals, the National School Board Association (NSBA) has a report on action items that will be summarized for the board next month that may inform short-term goals. A second short-term goal is to pursue training for JEDI and to research grants or fundraising opportunities for DEI training. Two seats in REI training were recently obtained through a grant and two board members plan to attend that.

Other notes from the July 11 meeting included a discussion around taking a cultural temperature check for JEDI and the school/community with regard to race, equity, and inclusion. It is unclear if there is a pre-existing approach to this. The committee is eager to do tangible things for board representation and awareness on the board and in the school, while ensuring a welcoming and respectful persona so all folks feel like part of the community.

- Proposal for a new Strategic Planning Committee

A. Williams proposed to replace the Communication Committee with a Strategic Planning Committee. The last plan was drafted in 2015 as a strategic vision for 2020; two years have since passed and there is also a new Upper School now present. An update to the strategic plan at this time is appropriate. The board does not create the strategic plan alone but does have a duty for taking ownership of the school's strategy. Other school stakeholders (faculty, staff, students, and parents) are involved in the process. Last time, the board took the lead on that process and listening sessions were held at different times for community input.

Several board members indicated support for the new committee and agreed that communication is the responsibility of the board as a whole instead of a single committee. As matters arise that may require communication, the board will work through those as needed. Some stated advantages to the creation of a Strategic Planning Committee included progress tracking of the effort, ensuring the matter is reported on regularly, and that it helps long-term planning.

A. Williams advised the board that the online signup sheet will be edited to include the Strategic Planning Committee to allow board members to volunteer for participation. Action will be forthcoming after board members make their committee requests known.

B. Directors

Lower School Director Cheryl Beierschmitt reported that multiple book donations for the school's new library have been received. Additional bookshelves are now needed. Staff members are starting to get things into place at the new library. A few purchases to support this effort have been made. C. Beierschmitt estimates that this effort should conclude by end of July. Volunteers are also helping at the library. Future goals for the library include creation of a display board to include the names of supporters that made the library possible, especially the person that provided startup funds. A sign will also be created for the library.

New windows have been installed in certain places at the Lower School for maintenance purposes. C. Beierschmitt also expressed gratitude to Ms. Mary – a kindergarten teaching assistant – for her efforts to paint the Lower School kitchen.

C. Beierschmitt referenced a recent PASTA email that was sent to parents to advertise upcoming events. Several outdoor workdays are approaching with the

goal of cleaning up the exterior of the Lower School. As this effort takes place, opportunities will be sought for future improvements to the exterior space of the building. Heat and the lack of shade around the asphalt/blacktop area during the warmer months are areas of future desired improvement.

The K-6 counselor job position is vacant and has been advertised at <https://www.schoolspring.com/job.cfm?jid=3407221&print&preview>.

The K-6 music teacher position is vacant and has been advertised at <https://www.schoolspring.com/job.cfm?jid=3754657&print&preview>.

Upper School Director Jennifer Shelton had exciting news to share on the Hawbridge Upper School. On July 19, Alamance County stated that the Certificate of Occupancy for the Hawbridge Upper School had been issued! This means there are no remaining legal obstacles to begin using the new building as a school. The board expressed excitement at the news and appreciation for the effort of many people to arrive at this huge milestone.

Jason Imhof of Aspire Construction Management indicated that elevators in the Upper School are not yet approved for use. Elevator inspection is not yet scheduled; obtaining a slot on the inspector's schedule is tough as that person is in high-demand. As a result, some heavier items remain on the first floor of the Upper School until the elevator can be used to move those to a permanent location on the second floor.

J. Imhof also reported that replacement doors for the Upper School have not yet been put into place. The doors have arrived at the office of the local contractor and may arrive at the school on Friday, July 22, at earliest.

A code issue in the area under the stairs was addressed earlier in the week. Originally, a seating area was designed to exist under the stairs. The code issue likely concerned the possibility of someone bumping their head. The area under the stairs was enclosed with the addition of a wall. Remediation of this code issue resulted in passing the occupancy inspection and acquiring the Certificate of Occupancy.

With the school now certified for occupancy, training for appropriate staff is now an important focus of the project. "How do I turn on/off XYZ in the new school?" For example, the Upper School has a boiler system that may require more knowledge than the old school. It is important for those staff members to have a grasp of how to perform basic functions and upkeep of the new building. Extra materials like ceiling tiles and carpet tiles are present to serve as replacement materials during normal wear and tear.

A cell phone booster will be present in the Upper School to help raise an otherwise limited signal. This system will amplify cell phone signals through the building and should be installed in the coming days. As of July 20, the equipment is still pending arrival. There is a strong desire to have this in place before the first day of school. In addition to cell phone service, AT&T will provide internet connectivity for the Upper School. Internet service is scheduled to be activated on the week of July 18, barring no delays in delivery or hardware availability.

J. Imhof stated there is still a matter of reconciling several change-issues and change-orders, both with the architect and CT Wilson. These originate mostly from the prolonged rollout of the school. CT Wilson items may be addressable more quickly due to the tangible nature of those matters. Liquidated damages are present because the original date of project completion was 2021. Contractor-caused delays are the primary cause of the cost overruns, which incurs a penalty (dollars per day) that is defined at the outset of the contract.

Overall costs of the project should remain below budget.

C. Fisher asked a question about the liquidated damages, if CT Wilson and the board could schedule a time to sit down and review any liquidated damages outstanding, if desirable. CT Wilson reportedly has requested that to occur. This can be useful if either party has a disagreement for who is responsible for a specific item on the list of liquidated damages.

N. Barker asked if a time estimate to complete final contract details was known. J. Imhof responded that there is a lot on the table, and that there are some hard issues remaining to resolve with CT Wilson. A lot will happen at the pace of CT Wilson. The important thing is not to sacrifice a good outcome for pace.

Apart from Upper School construction tasks, J. Shelton reported that the doublewide trailer was removed from school premises on the week of July 18. Logistical challenges required that a crane be brought in to remove the trailer. Steps are being taken to remove remaining debris. The Modpods have not yet moved, although the week of July 25 is a possibility for that to occur. J. Shelton indicated that the goal is to have the Modpods removed by the start of the school year.

Exploratory efforts to establish a playground at the school are beginning. Ideally this playground can serve not only as a school playground but a playground for the community as well. Discussions with an insurance company are underway.

The August 7 fundraising event has sold 70 tickets to date. Adult tickets and child tickets are still available. Sponsored items so far include a couple of bookshelves, a volleyball stand, a referee stand, and several potted plants. This

will be the first time the community will be allowed into the building. Volunteer 11th and 12th graders who attend the Upper School will act as tour guides for groups in the building. Several local businesses, including the General Store, Left Bank Butchery, and Haw River Farmhouse Ales, are donating food to the event. Paperhand Puppet Intervention is allowing use of some puppets for a parade. Onyx Club Boys will be performing at the event.

C. Treasurer

The topic of development/training funds for board members was discussed. A question was posed as to whether some amount of the school budget could be allocated to board development. J. Shelton indicated that state monies cannot be used for board development – only a grant or fundraising is allowed. A. Williams asked J. Shelton and C. Beierschmitt to identify a recommended resource that outlines how state policy can be followed while also facilitating board personnel goals for training and development. J. Shelton provided the following on the NC Department of Instruction website: [New Charter School Leaders Institute | NC DPI](#)

A. Williams requested that board members familiarize themselves with this material before the August board meeting.

D. Faculty Representatives

No updates to report.

VII. Unfinished Business

A. Hawbridge Expansion Update

No additions.

B. Election of Board Officers

April Williams, the board chair, provided a brief explanation that the positions of secretary, treasurer, and vice chair were vacant.

Nick Harrison was nominated for the position of secretary and accepted the nomination. The board unanimously approved Nick as the new secretary.

Amanda Rose was nominated for the position of treasurer and accepted the nomination. The board unanimously approved Amanda as the new treasurer.

Christina Fisher and Renee Lynch both received nominations for vice chair. The

candidates offered brief statements to indicate their individual interest and aptitude for the role. After statements were delivered, N. Barker observed that the upcoming Strategic Planning Committee needs a leader to head that effort, and that it is likely a big job to do that. After consideration, Christina opted to chair the Strategic Planning Committee and withdraw from consideration for vice chair. A. Williams expressed gratitude to Christina for accepting the Committee chair role.

The board unanimously approved Renee Lynch as the new vice chair.

C. Mask Policy

The board regularly revisits the school mask policy, with the last revision to the school policy occurring on May 26, 2022. That update, published on the school website, was:

Masks covering the nose and mouth according to CDC guidelines are optional on school grounds and during school-sponsored activities (e.g., field trips, extracurricular activities). In the event a student becomes sick with COVID-19, or comes into close contact with COVID-19, follow the guidelines set forth by the NC Department of Health and Human Services as outlined in the [StrongSchoolsNC Public Health Toolkit \(K-12\)](#). Drivers and passengers must wear masks while riding in school vans.

Since that time, the board became aware that the StrongSchoolsNC guidance is sunseting and will cease to receive updates in the near future.

The new Hawbridge school mask policy revision was proposed:

Masks are optional on school grounds and during school-sponsored activities (e.g., field trips, extracurricular activities). In the event a member of the Hawbridge community becomes sick with COVID-19, or comes into close contact with COVID-19, they should follow the [guidance set forth by the CDC](#).

The policy revision was passed unanimously by the board and will be posted to the Hawbridge school website.

VIII. New Business

A. Employee Handbook

Upper School Director Jennifer Shelton explained that the Hawbridge Employee Handbook has not received significant update in several years, apart from COVID-19 and how it relates to employee leave. Whenever changes are proposed to the Employee Handbook, those changes should be reported to the

board and notice of changes announced in the meeting minutes.

The changes to the Employee Handbook were: 1) a new section on COVID leave (per the Office of Charter Schools); and 2) changing the title "Executive Director" to "Upper School Director" or "Lower School Director" as appropriate.

The board unanimously approved the proposed changes to the Hawbridge Employee Handbook.

VIII. Closed Session

Motion to move into closed session: 8:41PM

A. To Consider Confidential Matters Pursuant to NC G.S. §143-318.11

IX. Adjourn: 9:40PM