



The Association for the Advancement of Education, DBA, The Hawbridge School  
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday, September 28, 6:00 p.m.

**I. Call to Order: 6:03PM**

**II. Roll Call**

Attending Board Members:

Natalya Barker, Christina Fisher, Megan Glancy, Nick Harrison (Secretary), Joshua Horton, Davida Reid, April Williams (Chair)

Attending Directors and Faculty/Staff:

Cheryl Beierschmitt (Director of Lower School), Gretchen Kappity (Lower School Faculty Representative), Kierca Kimbel (Upper School Representative), Cameron Ratliff (Assistant Director of Business and Communications), Jennifer Shelton (Director of Upper School)

**III. Approval of Agenda**

A motion to approve the agenda was passed unanimously.

**IV. Public Comment**

A parent asked via chat: "For those of us who recently lost our fourth-grade teacher, is there anything parents can do to help with recruitment?"

**V. Consent Items**

A. Approval of Previous Meeting's Minutes

Minutes from the previous meeting were passed unanimously.

B. Future Meetings/Events:

- Proposed Board Meeting: Wednesday, October 26, 2022, at 6:00 p.m.

The next board meeting was proposed to occur in the Huth Commons of

the Lower School. The board meeting would be in-person. A motion to hold the board meeting on Wednesday, October 26, 2022 at 6PM in the Huth Commons of the Lower School was passed unanimously.

## **VI. Reports**

### **A. Directors**

#### ■ Lower School Director (C. Beierschmitt)

C. Beierschmitt addressed the ductwork and the presence of mold in the Lower School. The investigation continues, with technicians onsite at the school. The process is moving forward, and further details should be available soon. C. Beierschmitt also shared comments from the school community. A parent mentioned gratitude via email for the quick work in addressing safety issues once the mold was discovered. Another parent expressed gratitude for the concern about student health.

The Beginning-of-the-Year Assessments are starting for students. Fall Festival is approaching. C. Beierschmitt expressed gratitude to C. Ratliff for getting the message out in regard to Fall Festival. Parent-teacher conferences are October 20th through October 22nd. Teachers will contact parents on how to schedule the conferences.

The hiring of a fourth-grade teacher position is underway. The job is posted on the school website. If a community member believes they know of a good candidate, they are encouraged to have candidates apply.

#### ■ Upper School Director (J. Shelton)

J. Shelton commented on the resolution of a recent facility issue at the Upper School; a minor washout in the driveway that leads to the school was discovered but has since been fixed with minimal disruption.

Upper School Parent-Teacher Conferences are approaching. Because students have six different teachers during the day, parents can have up to four conferences an hour. Teachers are setting that up and should begin communicating details on the week of October 3<sup>rd</sup>.

As part of the collaborative leadership model, during the last board meeting, the Instructional Council meeting was mentioned. Membership involves C. Beierschmitt, J. Shelton, two teachers from upper school, two teachers from lower school, and a student representative. A discussion item covered by the Council was the reintroduction of student clubs, which were put on pause when the pandemic began in March 2020. The Instructional Council and Student Council President came up with a list of

clubs and will have a sign-up day for students soon. During bridge time, students can go to clubs.

An update about the expansion will be provided later in the meeting, but students are enjoying the space. The gymnasium, the stage and basketball/soccer/frisbee and the quad behind the school are popular with students helping everyone get to know each other again.

## B. Faculty Representatives

A. Williams commented that there will be two faculty representatives per school for this portion of Board meetings moving forward, and that the faculty representatives will alternate between board meetings.

- Lower School Representative (G. Kappity/L. Wilder)

G. Kappity reported that it has been a great year so far and there is a lot of positive energy so far.

- Upper School Representative (K. Kimbel/J. McDuffie)

K. Kimbel mentioned that the Instructional Council met recently to discuss place-based education and how to make that a bigger focus at Hawbridge. The focus centered on field trip requests and how to make that process go more smoothly. J. McDuffie was also in attendance and introduced herself to the Board and meeting attendees.

## C. Board

- Committee Updates

- a) Fundraising (R. Lynch)

N. Barker reported on behalf of Renee Lynch that the Fundraising Committee did not meet in the month of September. R. Lynch has requested that board members sign up for volunteer slots for Fall Festival. The volunteer slots will cover the ticket and admission tables. Also, a schedule has been created for promoting the Capital Campaign. Discussion is underway to identify donation amounts that should receive recognition from the school (ex: bench dedicated in your honor). Efforts are underway to reach out to businesses via email to support fundraising. These things will be the focus of the committee for the coming weeks.

- b) Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (JEDI) (D. Reid)

D. Reid reported that the Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (JEDI) Committee met on September 22<sup>nd</sup> to discuss the creation of tangible goals for this year. The Committee is looking into free or low-cost training for board, faculty, and administration. The Committee could support the school in this manner. Josh Horton will investigate grants that could be obtained for the Board or for teachers who want to include JEDI-focused experiences for their students. A Committee discussion about an equitable budget led to a second discussion about the lunch program and options that may work for the school at some point in the future. The Committee is also looking at ways that its efforts can lend support to Fundraising goals.

c) Strategic Planning (C. Fisher)

C. Fisher reported that the Strategic Planning Committee met twice since the previous Board meeting and began its review of the historic Hawbridge Strategic Plan. The previous plan ran from 2015-2022 and provides good background and guidance for the goals, strategies and actions that support the school's mission and vision. The Committee discussed possible actions to assign specific areas of the strategic planning to a given sub-team. In this effort, a sub-team would be assigned a certain area of focus and would have parent, administrative, and faculty representation in addition to a Board member. The next specific action for the Committee is to begin communication with the Hawbridge community via the website, email, and Google Form that volunteers will be sought to work with the Committee during the fall and winter months. If anyone is interested in participating in crafting the next Hawbridge Strategic Plan that runs from roughly 2023-2028, please consider volunteering.

d) Treasurer (A. Rose)

Natalya Barker reported on A. Rose's behalf on the matter of the August financials. There are no concerns to date. The tentative ADM (headcount approximation) is 578; the previously approved board budget had 599. The increase in per student funding reduces the impact of the ADM difference; the net difference is a projected revenue shortfall of about \$45K. Note that this figure still includes estimates as county funding has not been finalized. With one exception, total expense groupings (building, personnel, instructional, etc.) are currently at less than 17% of the initial budget; there have not been any significant unexpected expenses.

The exception is total other expenses, which are higher due to COVID-19 expenses that weren't in the initial budget. These are fully offset by COVID-19 federal funds that also were not in the initial budget. As of the current working budget (a rolling budget that is routinely updated by the Hawbridge accountant), a surplus of \$41K is expected this fiscal year due in part to the fact that the upper school mortgage has not yet been finalized.

## **VII. Unfinished Business**

### **A. Expansion Update (J. Shelton/C. Ratliff)**

The building is pretty much done, but there are still some final items on the punch list. The primary matter at this point is closing. Hawbridge Business Manager C. Ratliff stated that the school is in almost daily contact with the USDA to ensure that letters are completed, along with leases, liens, and surveys. Complexity on these matters varies, but the goal is to close by Thanksgiving. There is reason to be optimistic about that timeframe.

The Wi-Fi is still not fully functional at the Upper School, but the technical workaround provided by a school volunteer continues to suffice for the time being. A new Grounds Committee has been convened at the Hawbridge Upper School to examine how to utilize the outdoor space. The Horticulture Class is building a tool shed. The Eagle Scouts are interested in building things for the school as well. The faculty have submitted ideas for things they might like to see, and the student body is beginning to offer ideas as well. This is what our Capital Fund is intended to do for the school. About \$15K will be used to seed school gardening projects at the Upper School, and at the Lower School about \$25K is being used for the playground design and developing the perimeter boundaries.

## **VIII. New Business**

### **A. Proposed Updates to Grievance Policy (N. Harrison/J. Horton)**

N. Harrison reported that with the collaborative leadership model now in effect at Hawbridge and the position of Executive Director defunct, the Hawbridge Policy Manual Grievance Policy is receiving some updates as a matter of procedure. The Hawbridge Grievance Policy has three sections – a preamble; a Parent/Guardian or Student Grievance Policy; and an Employee Grievance Policy. Changes were summarized as follows:

#### Summary of Proposed Changes to Grievance Policy Preamble:

References to the Executive Director are removed to reflect the new collaborative

leadership model of the Hawbridge Upper and Lower Schools.

Summary of Proposed Changes to Parent/Student Grievance Policy:

Level Two of the formal grievance policy is now guided by the Director of the other school (Upper or Lower). Historically, Level Two was guided by the Executive Director of Hawbridge.

References to the Executive Director are removed to reflect the new collaborative leadership model of the Hawbridge Upper and Lower Schools.

Summary of Proposed Changes to Employee Grievance Policy:

If the employee's grievance involves an alleged action of an administrator, a duly elected Instructional Council Faculty Representative may accompany the employee to the formal grievance conferences. Historically, the Teacher Representative to the Board of Directors (instead of the Instructional Council Faculty Representative) could accompany that employee to formal grievance conferences.

Level One of the formal grievance policy is now guided by the appropriate Director (Upper or Lower). Historically, the Assistant Director guided Level One of the policy.

Level Two of the formal grievance policy is now guided by the Director of the other school (Upper or Lower). Historically, Level Two was guided by the Executive Director of Hawbridge.

References to the Executive Director are removed to reflect the new collaborative leadership model of the Hawbridge Upper and Lower Schools.

After Board review of the changes, a motion to accept the changes to the Hawbridge Grievance Policy was put forward. The motion passed unanimously. The changes will be published to the Hawbridge Policy Manual in the coming days.

**IX. Closed Session**

Motion to move into closed session at 6:52PM. Motion passed unanimously.

- a. To Consider Confidential Matters Pursuant to NC G.S. §143-318.11
  - i. Subsection (a)(3) and Subsection (a)(5)

The board returned to open session at 9:11PM.

**X. Adjourn: 9:11PM**

The board unanimously approved a motion to adjourn at 9:11PM.