



The Association for the Advancement of Education, DBA, The Hawbridge School  
Board of Directors' Meeting Minutes  
Sunday March 6<sup>th</sup> at 10am

- I. Call to Order 10:03
- II. Roll Call Natalya Barker (Chair), Kathryn Brown (Vice Chair), Dawnya Bohager (Treasurer), Megan Glancy (Secretary), April Williams, Christina Fisher, Davida Reid, and Todd Nicolet  
Attending Executive Director and Faculty/Staff:  
Jennifer Shelton (Director), Emily Martin (Dean of Students), Jonathan Farmer (Upper School Faculty Representative), and Kierca Kimbel (Lower School Faculty Representative)
- III. Approval of Agenda
- IV. Public Comment – No public comment
- V. Consent Items
  - A. Mask Policy – T. Nicolet shared that one rationale for this meeting was to learn about how other schools are implementing mask policies; learned that other surrounding school districts (Orange, Durham, Chatham) are also lifting mask mandates effective 3/7; Another change since last meeting is the understanding of CDC guidelines which now include all surrounding counties as medium level risk which do not require mask mandates per updated guidelines; A. Williams expressed that she likes the language from CH/Carrboro schools regarding masks being recommended but not required; expressed that this type of language acknowledges that there is still a risk and that there are many individuals who are unable to be vaccinated or our at risk for illness; expressed that she likes that language and would advocate for that type of language and context for what that means in the communications; D. Bohagar concurred that they prefer this language and articulated that it is inclusive and recognizes our emphasis on valuing the needs of all individuals; expressed that they would like to also discuss aspects of the new policy such as protocols for schools; C. Fisher expressed that it is apparent that many are already going mask free in our community; supports mask options with that type of language for our community; expressed that there is still a level of fear regarding COVID in our community but is also not normal to wear masks indefinitely; expressed that the “new normal” should not include masks; expressed that it is time to go masks options; expressed that using language such as optional is more appropriate; using language such as “recommended” may feel exclusive to some families; expressed that moving to mask optional will be a small step towards back to normal and is merited at this stage particularly as children and school administrators are taking the brunt of the

burden for these requirements; expressed that they do not understand why schools are being required to continue masking; expressed that individuals should be able to decide for themselves at this stage; expressed how difficult it has been for children; D. Reid expressed that they are fine with the wording either way; expressed that they have heard wearing masks at school is not optional (from students); A. Williams expressed that it is important we are specific with our language and recommends looking at the language as we finalize and vote on policy changes; asked for a clear policy with final language prior to voting; also asked to discuss specific plans and messaging regarding issues such as family preference and requirements for teachers and enforcement; T. Nicolet expressed hesitancy regarding scripting policies and staying within the BODs realm of responsibility; expressed that the CH/Carrboro information is not necessarily policy verse recommendations; BOD discussed language regarding Senate bill 654 and discussed what the requirements for BOD action is going forward; M. Glancy asked for feedback from the school regarding what the framework has been thus far in terms of discussing masks; Admin expressed that only framework was the two recent emails; C. Williams asked for a temperature check from the school regarding what is anticipated; J. Farmer expressed that there was not a clear indication of the path forward; expressed that they did not see enforcement challenges; K. Kimbel she has heard that many schools are still seeing high mask wearing rates (approx. 70%); J. Shelton expressed that recent changes to go mask optional outside have not caused issues; N. Barker clarified Bill 654; the BOD will need to have a mask policy on record and the policy must be voted on every month for the remainder of the school year; J. Shelton shared that in the case of an outbreak the plan is to contact Alamance Co. health department to ensure compliance with latest guidance and adaptations are being made as changes occur per their guidance; A. Williams expressed that the policy should be short and succinct and the BOD should offer contextualization in an email communication; less is more in the policy but the email explanation should be thoughtful, and representative of the current thoughtful and detailed conversation; T. Nicolet expressed that the term “encouraged” implies a stance and implies that this is something which should be done; D. Bohagar expressed that a third language option between encouraged and optional would be a respectful and perhaps a nice approach to wording the policy; N. Barker expressed that there are many families with younger children who are not eligible to be vaccinated at this juncture and we must be mindful of that; C. Williams expressed that language is important and they are appreciative of the thoughtful conversation regarding how to word this; C. Fisher expressed discomfort with the recommended language; expressed that the BOD is not fully considering the impact that masking and the pandemic is continuing to have; expressed concern that being overly cautious; expressed that the overabundance of caution is unnecessary; T. Nicolet expressed that if we must (and we must) have a policy we should always include an option to wear masks; M. Glancy expressed concerns that varying from the recommended language provided by the sources when we have been using that to rely on thus far could be opening the BOD up for further abusive correspondence from the community; T. Nicolet expressed that deviance from the provided language will indicate that the BOD is taking a stance on the issue when we have not yet done so; suggest using the language “support” vs.

encouraged; A. Williams asked what the teachers feel regarding encouraged vs. optional; K. Kimbel expressed that the BOD should provide the guidance without a recommendation; J. Farmer expressed that he would not be in a position to ask students to mask; A. Williams raised the possibility of offering another vaccination clinic; discussed possible wording options; BOD discussed staying as close to the original language of the mask policy as we reword and adapt; discussed the requirement to mask in school vans/transportation; M. Glancy expressed that keeping masks required in transits is consistent with national level recommendations regarding transits; surrounding counties are keeping masks on transits; C. Fisher expressed that they do not see any logic regarding keeping this requirement; expressed that they do not see the necessity; T. Nicolet expressed that doing so keeps with the trend of following the guidance from officials; BOD discussed the nature of the communication that needs to go out to the community; questions regarding the level of detail necessary to convey this information; E. Martin expressed that short, clear, communications are beneficial for families who may have difficulty accessing information in longer, more complex communications; Voted on policy update as follows:

Masks covering the nose and mouth according to CDC guidelines (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/about-face-coverings.html>) are optional on school grounds and during school sponsored activities (e.g., field trips, extracurricular activities). Drivers and passengers must wear masks while riding in school vans.

Motion to pass mask policy as revised effective Monday March 7, 2022 was made by T. Nicolet, seconded by A. Williams. BOD continued to discuss language and hesitations regarding current wording; C. Fisher continued to express discomfort with requirement on vans; M. Glancy articulated that CDC guidelines are changing regarding masks but still recommend other mitigation efforts such as social distancing, etc. thus vans are a unique instance where other measures cannot be accommodate and thus necessitate masks; T. Nicolet and D. Reid articulated the need for email correspondence from the BOD to accompany policy; BOD discussed concerns regarding the email correspondence and coming to agreement on the language; goal of generating a communication to families by 5pm; Call the question to vote; passed 5 for (T. Nicolet, C. Fisher, D. Reid, M. Glancy, K. Brown) with 2 abstentions (D. Bohager and N. Barker.)

X. Adjourn – 11:48