



The Association for the Advancement of Education, DBA, The Hawbridge School
Board of Directors Meeting Proposed Agenda
Wednesday, May 24, 2023, at 6:00 p.m.
Huth Commons, Hawbridge Lower School

I. Call to Order - 6:03PM

II. Roll Call

Attending Board Members:

Natalya Barker, Christina Fisher, Megan Glancy, Nick Harrison (Secretary), Josh Horton, Renee Lynch (Vice Chair), Ted Teague, April Williams (Chair)

Attending School Directors and Faculty Representatives:

Cheryl Beierschmitt (Director of the Lower School), Gretchen Kapity (Lower School Faculty Representative), Jennifer McDuffie (Upper School Faculty Representative), Jennifer Shelton (Director of the Upper School)

Absent: Amanda Rose (Treasurer)

III. Approval of Agenda

Ted Teague motioned that a new item "Gym Rental Request" be added to the New Business portion of the agenda to discuss a third party's request to rent and use the Upper School Gymnasium on May 27, 2023. Megan Glancy seconded. The motion to add the amendment was approved unanimously. Josh Horton motioned to approve the amended agenda. Renee Lynch seconded. The agenda was approved unanimously.

IV. Public Comment

No public comments were offered.

V. Consent Items

A. Approval of Previous Meeting's Minutes

Nick Harrison motioned to approve the April minutes for publication on the school website. M. Glancy seconded the motion. The previous meeting's minutes were

approved unanimously.

B. Future Meeting: Wednesday, June 28, 2023 (Virtual)

The next meeting of the Hawbridge Board of Directors is scheduled to take place on June 28, 2023, at 6PM. The meeting will be held virtually. No Board member reported an obstacle with the scheduled date and time.

VI. Reports

A. Directors

■ Lower School Director (C. Beierschmitt)

The North Carolina End-of-Grade (EOG) exams are complete at the Lower School and everything went very smoothly. C. Beierschmitt expressed gratitude to Sue Krebs as Testing Coordinator for the many hours needed to prepare logistical support, which included how many computers and calculators might be needed for students who were testing. The Lower School teachers have done a great job ensuring that the school remains quiet during test times. With EOGs complete, teachers are feeling very happy about the growth they are seeing. Report cards will be mailed home at the beginning of June. EOG test summaries will be included for grades 3-6 (which are the grades at the Lower School that require EOG tests).

Many end-of-year activities have taken place recently, and C. Beierschmitt expressed gratitude to Ms. Robertson for the great work in helping plan those activities. A "Moving Up" Ceremony for 6th graders took place recently, which celebrates students who are moving from the Lower School to the Upper School next year. Parents were invited to attend as the students emerged from the Lower School and walked across the road, where Ms. Shelton was waiting to meet them and shake each student's hand. This is a new tradition that Hawbridge is beginning.

For facilities, the playground mulch delivery was delayed until the summer break, but students are still using the space for fun. Multiple grades can use the new playground area at the same time, and it does not feel crowded at all. The mulch arrival will add to the enjoyment of the space even more.

C. Ratliff will provide a summary of system repairs needed for the Lower School shortly, which are expected to introduce some significant costs in the future. Next year, repair requests will also be collected from the faculty to further see what was accomplished over the summer.

The Lower School is in the process of hiring for open positions. A new 4th grade teacher has been hired, while Ms. Quigly will move to the 3rd grade. For the 5th and 6th grades, the school is hiring for a combined science + social studies position. The candidate interview process will continue until complete.

- Upper School Director (J. Shelton)

End of year testing continues at the Upper School, with May 25th being the final day (apart from make-up days). All AP testing was completed in early May, and those results will be returned in July. J. Shelton also expressed gratitude to Sue Krebs for all the help as Testing Coordinator. The Upper School gym proved an ideal space for testing due to its space.

Commencement is on May 25th at 6PM, and everyone is welcome to attend the ceremony. The Upper School is hiring two positions for next year: a Health/PE teacher who just signed a contract, and a full-time Horticulture position. The interview process is ongoing for the latter position. The job duties of the Horticulture position will include working with the Grounds Committee on the gardens over the summer. The new Horticulture teacher will be teaching the subject while also participating in the Master Grounds plan.

The Tuesday and Wednesday following Memorial Day will be professional development days for teachers to discuss goals for the next year. Grades will be submitted and the wrap-up of the end of the year will be complete.

B. Faculty Representatives

- Lower School Representative (G. Kapity)

Many fun things are happening at the Lower School. The 6th graders recently took a field trip to Washington, D.C.; while the 5th graders took a field trip to the Museum of Life and Science in Durham, NC. The 4th grade classes visited the North Carolina Zoo in Asheboro. The Lower School art show also recently took place. Lots of different classroom celebrations are taking place on the week of May 24th. The kindergartners will be "crossing the bridge" into 1st grade. Overall, everyone is looking forward to the end-of-year celebration. The whole school will gather at the Farmer's Market, and class grades will rotate between different stations throughout the day.

- Upper School Representative (J. McDuffie)

Beta Club members were recently selected and will be recognized on

Awards Day. An induction ceremony will be held next fall. The Beta Club's first act of service will be to assist staff members in the classroom on May 31st.

Next year Ms. Denny will serve as the Elon Academy Advocate for Hawbridge: a role that recruits applicants from the 9th graders for the 2023-24 school year and holds meetings for parents. The Elon Academy is a non-profit college access and success program for academically promising high school students in Alamance County with a financial need and no family history of college. The academy provides three consecutive summer residential experiences prior to the sophomore, junior, and senior years; as well as a year-round Saturday program. In the summer after high school graduation, families participate in the Elon Academy Families-in-Transition Program. Once on their respective college campuses, the program will continue to offer support to ensure college completion.

The Spanish Honors Society recently held its first in-person movie night with a viewing of *Encanto*. Hawbridge literary magazine *The Squiggler* just published its first installment and is sponsored by Mr. Fiore. Ms. Kimbel and Ms. Estrada are faculty representatives for the end-of-school activities for the Upper School, and the opening concert is anticipated to be a great time for students.

Speaking of exam testing, Ms. Kowzan hosted a math EOC review session on May 23rd, which was well attended. The Upper School greatly appreciates the work of Ms. Krebs. Ms. Luther also announced that a 9th grader received a special prize for an essay on the Soviet Union and the manmade famine in 1930s Ukraine. The award included a \$100 prize.

J. McDuffie expressed welcome and appreciation to new faculty Ms. Snyder and Ms. Gilliam, who joined midyear.

M. Glancy asked if the faculty representatives were already identified for next year. J. McDuffie replied that this topic is one that will be discussed at the end of the year.

C. Board

- Committee Updates
 - a) Fundraising (R. Lynch)

The last meeting of the Fundraising Committee was a recap meeting with no new business introduced. On May 30th at 4:30PM, a final meeting will be held to wrap up any work that

remains. R. Lynch expressed hope that incoming Board members would express interest in participating in that committee next year.

b) Selection (R. Lynch)

The Selection Committee met on May 4th to decide on the slate of new Board candidates. The one-year vs. three-year roles were discussed, along with what roles were being left vacant and what the Board needed for the upcoming year. A slate of candidates was selected by the Committee, and those nominations will be given later in the meeting.

A. Williams requested that R. Lynch provide a poll to the incoming Board members to ascertain possible dates for availability for upcoming training and orientation workshop for the Board. Scheduling that event will involve coordination with a number of speakers.

c) Strategic Planning (C. Fisher)

The Strategic Committee met virtually on May 18th to discuss parent, faculty, school administrators, and Board feedback that had been gathered through survey and other means. The Committee also discussed possible next steps for consolidating that material. The discussion also covered the language of goals, priorities, and evaluative measures. Strategic goals have not been settled yet and committee members are working on initial language. C. Fisher expressed gratitude that R. Lynch mentioned the consideration for who will serve on committees next year, as that is a natural topic to anticipate as Board terms end.

d) Assessment and Evaluations (M. Glancy)

The Committee worked asynchronously to finalize the school director self-assessment tool. Once completed, the self-assessment was distributed to the two School Directors. The Committee examined how other schools handled similar evaluations and surveyed best practices, recording those findings to the Board shared drive. The Committee also met on May 23rd to discuss progress and next steps moving forward. The Hawbridge Board of Directors completed a short questionnaire, and those responses will be reviewed shortly. A goal of the Committee is to complete this process prior to the Board term ending and Committee members exiting their roles. Another goal

of equal importance is to arrive at an evaluation process that is predictable, equitable, and consistent. The Committee anticipates a meeting on the week of May 29th to continue its work.

■ Treasurer (A. Rose)

Eighty-three percent of the fiscal year has passed as of the end of April. To date, 81% of total projected revenue and 82% of total non-surplus expenses have been recognized. There are no concerns to bring to the attention of the board as a result of April financial activity.

The projections for various line items were updated in April to reflect current year actuals, which resulted in anticipated revenue increasing \$8K and various expenses decreasing \$64K for a total expected improvement over the prior month budget of \$72K. The largest two drivers within the total expected expense reduction were building expenses and personnel costs - projected to fall \$42K lower and \$15K lower than the prior month working budget, respectively.

After incorporation of these projection changes, the surplus generated in the current fiscal year is expected to be \$284K, up from the prior month estimate of \$212K.

VII. Unfinished Business

A. Bylaws Update (A. Williams)

In a previous Board meeting, A. Williams commented on the presence of several minor grammatical and typographical errors in the school bylaws, along with some examples of ambiguity. A copy of the school bylaws has been shared with Board members and school administrators that specify proposed edits. The goal of this effort is not to introduce new things, but to clarify existing language so that it supports the school. Where appropriate, proposed edits in the draft document have a comment that references the general statute or rationale to the edit in question.

According to the school bylaws, any proposed amendments must be presented thirty days in advance to the Board of Directors. A. Williams stated that this meeting acted as the presentation of proposed amendments and encouraged Board members to review the changes carefully to understand the rationale behind the change. At the June Board meeting, A. Williams will open the floor for discussion and then afterward potentially call for a vote. Parallel to the Board of Directors review of the proposed amendments, A. Williams also stated that the proposed changes will be shared with Hawbridge school attorney Donna Rascoe for additional considerations.

T. Teague asked a question in regard to the thirty-day review period for proposed amendments to the bylaws. With the proposed amendments being presented on May 24th, can Board members offer changes to any amendments that can then be approved at the June Board meeting, or will the June meeting simply be an up-or-down vote for the original proposed changes? A. Williams replied that the bylaws do not have a specific answer to that scenario. J. Shelton commented that past changes to the bylaws have not historically required much debate or alteration of language.

N. Barker commented that if new language is being introduced which would dramatically change the interpretation of previous language, that might merit further discussion and a period of review. For example, if part of the Board's discussion of a presented amendment produced a significantly different interpretation than the historic language or had a large impact on how the Board might function, that could require longer review.

N. Barker added that with the 2022-2023 Board term concluding next month, the Board could choose to approve individual proposed amendments. In the situation that individual items need further review or discussion, those efforts could be carried forward by next term's Board. The rationale of this approach is to preserve work where there is consensus.

C. Beierschmitt commented that a summary of changes to the document could be presented at the Board meeting as a more efficient approach instead of a line-by-line review of each individual change.

N. Barker commented that since so many of these changes involve correction of bad grammar and clarity, it would be possible to provide a brief summarized list of the changes to present as part of the faculty reports. T. Teague commented that although drafts are not necessarily open record laws, since the document has been shared in open session, the draft does become a public document. There would be no reason not to share it and to provide a "syllabus" so a reader could be directed to the changes in question. M. Glancy commented that transparency should be the aspirational goal in all areas of the school (barring legal reasons that would preclude information sharing).

VIII. New Business

A. 2023-24 Proposed Budget (C. Ratliff)

Cameron Ratliff (Assistant Director of Business and Communication) presented annotated slides on the 2023-24 proposed budget and how its items were brought together. The proposed budget is drafted first in collaboration with the Hawbridge contracted CPA Nicole Lightner. N. Lightner contracts with several

charter schools in North Carolina, and her contract fee is included in the salary line item.

Hawbridge receives funds from the State of North Carolina, the U.S. Federal Government, and from students' county of residence. The Average Daily Membership (or ADM) informs a state-devised funding formula for public schools. ADM is relative to student attendance at the school over the first twenty days of school. If a student is enrolled but does not come to Hawbridge more than half of those twenty days, that is used in the funding formula. Student attendance in the first twenty days is key to school funding.

J. Shelton and C. Beierschmitt have provided planning numbers of 270 students for the drafted budget for the 2023-24 Lower School and 350 students for the 2023-24 Upper School. In the coming years, Hawbridge plans for two sections of grades K-8; and three sections for grades 9-12. The rising 7th grade this year will have three sections due to a holdover condition. The reason for hiring additional teachers in the early grades is because Hawbridge is going from one section to two sections there.

The school administrators decided to increase the initial number of accepted lottery students for the 2023-24 school year. The rationale for this is to ensure that an adequate number of students attend Hawbridge in the fall. Previous years have demonstrated that while some students receive admission to Hawbridge in the spring lottery, not all will choose to attend Hawbridge. Further, when waitlisted students are extended an offer closer to the start of school, there is a lower rate of return as many of those waitlisted students have since committed to other schools. An increase of initial admittance offers is done to ensure full enrollment in the fall. The new number of initial offers is a "safe number", meaning that care is taken to avoid overcommitment. Creating the school budget is done without knowing for certain what the ultimate state funding will be. The proposed budget uses a 2% increase vs. 2022-23 (estimate) for State of NC and EC funding for planning purposes. The 2% is a conservative number, identified with help from the Hawbridge CPA so as not to create an over-projection.

The EC student category brings additional funding per student for accompanying services and staff hired to support those students. A line item projecting a \$10K expense for NC Virtual Schools identifies tuition paid by the school so that a student can take an online class, but since the pandemic, students have generally had less appetite to take online classes. Line items for "Fines & Forfeitures" and "Indian Gaming" are determined by the State of North Carolina, with Hawbridge having little control over those amounts. A line item for "Bonus" indicates bonus pay issued by the State for teachers. If a teacher pay bonus is issued, the money is considered a passthrough and allocated immediately as described by the issuance.

Hawbridge receives county funding each year. Alamance County is the most common residence of students at the school. It is important for budgetary planning to avoid under-projecting for Alamance County. Alamance issues lower funds per student than several other surrounding counties. By contrast, a Durham County school with the same number of students (all from Durham County) would be receiving an additional \$1M in county funding. To anticipate attrition throughout the year and how that may affect school funding (i.e., a student withdraws midyear from Hawbridge), the Hawbridge CPA has advised subtracting ten students from the early planning number of students. If a student unenrolls midyear from Hawbridge, the school does not fill that spot midyear. Subtracting ten students proactively in the proposed budget anticipates attrition. Funding to the school does not change after the first twenty days of attendance, so if a student leaves, there is not a significant detrimental effect to the school caused by that departure. Additionally, county funding can vary from month to month. To accommodate this, a conservative 2% projected increase was used for the proposed budget.

Federal funding is a third category. Each year the Hawbridge EC Director applies for a non-competitive repeating federal grant called the IDEA Grant (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act). Funds obtained through this grant go directly to staff. Federal funds related to COVID-19 are expiring. The REAP Grant (Rural Education Achievement Program) is awarded to small, rural schools with a student body of 599 students or less.

J. Shelton recently submitted an application to the REAP Grant Program for \$60K to outdoor classrooms. The outcome of this REAP application should be known by August, and Hawbridge has been successful in this grant previously. If successful, the grant will be used to improve outdoor spaces around both schools. The student count of 599 is a threshold of significance for the grant and used in the spring for grant application. If Hawbridge has enrolled 601 students in April of a given year, the REAP Grant cannot be sought. This year's REAP application is already in the queue and is unaffected.

Since Hawbridge may go slightly over 600 students in 2023-24, an initial review of the numbers indicates that if teachers and classroom sizes are not impacted by the additional student count, it is better for Hawbridge to receive funding from enrolling the additional students and discontinue pursuit of future REAP Grants. If the student count drops back to 599, the REAP Grant becomes an option again.

Hawbridge qualifies for sales tax refunds, which is treated as a passthrough expense. The school's average sales tax refund totals approximately \$14K, paid out through two installments a year.

Earlier in the meeting, the Treasurer's report indicated an expense reduction for building expenses. An audit conducted by the school CPA and C. Ratliff revealed that building expense projections made last year for the Upper School were lower than expected. This will help inform projections for building expenses in the 2023-24 year to be more accurate. A new line item for building expenses includes "Groundskeeping", which relates to the contracted service to mow the grounds of the Upper School. A line item for "Condo Association Fees" indicates the cost the Lower School pays along with other community businesses to maintain the parking lot, insurance, streetlights, mowing, and parking lot above the museum. Custodial services for the school will remain outsourced for the 2023-24 year.

Personnel expenses generally follow the Alamance-Burlington School System pay scale. The 2023-24 proposed budget anticipates an average pay increase of 2.5%. The school pays to provide occupational therapy services, speech and language pathology services, and psychological services. Hawbridge staff are eligible to participate in the North Carolina Teachers and State Employees Retirement System. Instructional expenses include technology, instructional supplies (budgeted to help teachers minimize out-of-pocket expenses for class), place-based activities, and staff development (includes individual training by request, team building/meals, AP training, group training, etc.).

Miscellaneous expenses for Hawbridge include copier rental and maintenance, liability and property insurance, legal counsel, technology support, vehicle maintenance, board training, subscription to a SaaS product for the annual lottery, marketing for the annual lottery, and subscription to a mass email communication tool.

Co-curricular expenses include line items for the school yearbook and funding for the various sports, clubs and activities. Whenever Hawbridge sends students on field trips, supervision of those outings typically includes Mr. Lipscomb and another non-Hawbridge contractor trained in outdoor skills. A line item tracks the costs for this trained contractor to provide assistance on the field trips.

On surplus lines, the Hawbridge CPA has identified recommendations for upcoming major repairs categorized as capital improvements. Certain equipment at the Lower School is reaching end of life. One recommendation is to begin replacing five of eleven rooftop HVAC units at the Lower School, which are over twenty years old. Quotes have been obtained. A crane will need to hoist the HVAC units off the roof. Separately, the Lower School fire system will need to be replaced. Resources that are shared between buildings are subject to cost sharing by the building association, and the fire system is an example of this. Recently, L. Pierce and C. Beierschmitt met with local businesses that would share the mechanical panel of the new fire system to collaborate on the planning.

A vendor named Pinnacle has been used to reported good effect by other local businesses.

Also at the Lower School, L. Pierce and C. Ratliff are working on additional upgrades, including an effort to partition an office in the front area. Certain walls are also in need of fresh paint or cladding.

C. Ratliff also suggested future points of consideration in regard to upgrades, income streams, and debt removal. In the context of strategic and equity goals, some charter schools are working with larger scale investors for debt removal because their strategic plans align with the values of those investors.

B. Nomination of New Members (R. Lynch)

R. Lynch presented the slate of candidates identified by the Selection Committee to serve as new Board members. If the Board of Directors approves the candidate slate, R. Lynch will contact the candidates to inform them that their application has been accepted and confirm that they accept the nomination.

Candidate slates must be approved or rejected as a whole. If a slate is rejected, the Selection Committee must create a new candidate slate and present the new slate at a future Board meeting. As a current Board member and an applicant in the proposed slate of new members, T. Teague will abstain from the vote.

Skillsets of the candidates include a background in fundraising, grant writing, diversity training, and legal expertise. The Board was seeking these qualities, along with organizational leadership, experience in the public education field, parent participants, and other qualities that were mentioned in the Board application.

N. Barker motioned to approve the candidate slate; M. Glancy seconded. The Board approved the candidate slate 7-0. T. Teague abstained.

C. 2023-24 Regular Board Meetings Schedule (A. Williams)

A proposed Board of Directors meeting schedule for the 2023-24 Board of Directors was shared that identifies the meeting dates and accommodates the holiday schedule for the school. The Board of Directors has historically held its monthly meeting on the fourth Wednesday of each month. Meeting locations will be discussed in a future meeting. The proposed meeting schedule is:

August 23, 2023

September 27, 2023

October 25, 2023

November 15, 2023*
December 13, 2023*
January 24, 2024
February 28, 2024
March 27, 2024*
April 24, 2024
May 22, 2024
June 26, 2024
July 24, 2024

An asterisk () denotes a date that deviates from the usual fourth Wednesday of the month to accommodate breaks in the school calendar.*

C. Fisher motioned to approve the proposed schedule; R. Lynch seconded. The schedule was approved unanimously. Following approval, the meeting schedule will be posted to the Hawbridge website.

D. Policy Manual Update (N. Harrison)

Reference to obsolete job titles still remain in the Hawbridge Policy Manual. These titles should be updated to reflect current organizational structure. A review of the document revealed references to "Executive Director" and other titles that have since been merged or discarded. A copy of the policy manual will be placed in next month's shared folder for review and possible approval at the June Board meeting.

E. Gym Rental Request (T. Teague)

T. Teague reported that Hawbridge received a request to rent the Upper School gymnasium on May 27th for a wedding reception. While previous Board meetings have indicated the creation of a process for gym rental to community events is underway, that process is not far enough along to inform the request now before the Board. The Board has discretion on what decision to make.

A brief discussion of Board members and school administrators indicated that without a prepared gym rental process and the lack of supporting resources to be available at short notice, Hawbridge could not accommodate the request at the time. M. Glancy motioned to authorize C. Ratliff to respond to the community member on behalf of the Board with sympathy that Hawbridge was not in a position to grant the gym rental request at this time. The motion was approved unanimously.

IX. Closed Session

A motion to enter closed session was made by R. Lynch and seconded by J. Horton. The motion passed unanimously, and closed session began at 8:40PM.

- A. To Consider Confidential Matters Pursuant to NC G.S. §§ 143-318.11(a)(5) and 143-318.11(a)(6)

The Board returned to open session at 9:42PM.

X. Adjourn

The Board unanimously approved a motion to adjourn at 9:42PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Nick Harrison (Secretary)