



**The Association for the Advancement of Education, DBA The Hawbridge  
School Board of Directors Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday, November 15, 2023, at 6:00 p.m.**

Virtual: <https://meet.google.com/xcj-wsvo-wyv>

**I. Call to Order 6:00 PM**

**II. Roll Call**

*Attending Board Members:*

Renee Lynch (Chair), Ted Teague (Vice Chair), Amanda Rose (Treasurer), Josh Horton (Secretary), Sara Abernethy, Johnny Buck, Megan Glancy, Kemp Watson-Ormond, Dylan Bondy

*Attending School Directors and Faculty Representatives:*

Jennifer Shelton (Upper School Director), Cameron Ratliff (Interim Lower School Director, Assistant Director: Business and Communications (K-12)), Gretchen Kapity (Lower School Faculty Representative), Kierca Kimbel (Upper School Faculty Representative), Lora Wilder, Emily Martin, Jennifer McDuffie

**III. Approval of Agenda**

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the meeting's agenda was unanimously approved.

**IV. Public Comment**

No public comments were offered.

**V. Consent Items**

*A. Approval of Previous Meetings' Minutes.* Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the October 2023 minutes were approved.

*B. Future Meeting.* Proposed Wednesday, December 13, 2023, 6:00 p.m. @ Huth Commons, with 5:30 PM PASTA meet and greet in advance. Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the December meeting date, time, and location was approved.

## VI. Reports

### A. **Directors** (J. Shelton/C. Ratliff).

Directors' combined written report is annexed unto these minutes. The Board listened to and discussed the report.

### B. **Faculty Representatives.**

#### ■ **Lower School Representative** (L. Wilder)

On Friday, October 13, 2023 the Eli Whitney FD. came to do fire prevention training for all of our K-6. Students got to explore the fire truck and learn important ways to prevent fires and how to respond in the event of a fire.

On November 3, 2023 we hosted a Cherokee speaker who shared about the Cherokee culture and language with our students. We are grateful to Elizabeth Osborne for helping.

Also yesterday the Lower School staff participated in an after school PD with Board Certified Behavior Analyst Amy Swaim who discussed how to identify the functions (root cases) of student behaviors and strategies for behavior management. It was very informative!

#### ■ **Upper School Representative** (J. McDuffie)

1. Last Monday and Tuesday, the students had the opportunity to sign up for the clubs of their choice. We are looking forward to having clubs start meeting in the week after Thanksgiving.
2. Several classes and groups have gone on field trips recently. Our student council officers participated in the LEAD Convention in Washington, D.C. this past weekend. Ms. Estrada took her Spanish 1 classes to the Eddy Pub for a cupcake decorating lesson in honor of el Día de los Muertos, Mr. Greenberg took APES students to visit the new lab at ACC and the UNC Cogeneration Power Plant, and Ms. Anderson took her Horticulture students to Mellow Marsh Nursery. There, they were a "crop mob" in which they helped with several projects, and got a tour of the nursery. In exchange for their "crop mob" work, the school is receiving free plants, which we will receive on Thursday.
3. Hawbridge Horticulture is chugging along on the Terrace Garden. We still have the lower two beds and lower, creekside area, to spread fill on. The top terrace has very small plantings of spinach and radish.
4. Thank you to Jonathan for his representation on the Strategic Planning committee and for the Committee's survey giving the faculty the opportunity to express our ideas, concerns, and vision for the school moving forward! A few items of discussion have come up among faculty that may have been mentioned in the committee's survey results. However, they bear mentioning here since some may be items for the Strategic Planning committee to take up, others may involve other committees, such as Finance, and some may be items for the administration to

discuss or address:

- a) Athletic Fields – several teachers have commented on the school’s need for athletic/activity field space. Not only would this benefit our P.E. classes and outdoors and sports programs, it would also benefit our classroom teachers. At the Upper School, for example, the primary field space (the quad) is immediately adjacent to a large number of classrooms. When outdoor activities are in progress on the quad, classes are frequently interrupted by balls hitting windows and walls and children yelling. Additionally, because the gym and stage area are shared between the P.E. and Drama departments, our Theater classes only get to use the stage two days a week. By having a separate athletic/activity field space, many of these challenges would be alleviated.
  - b) Student Behavior – Many teachers have expressed concerns about students with ongoing/repeat behavior problems. There is a concern that the disciplinary process and restorative justice model, at times, stall without a resolution to the problems.
  - c) School Calendar – several teachers have requested a conversation about the school’s policy to have the end of year testing days included in our calendar as academic days for all students to attend. With the school’s growth, providing test administration to the testing students while simultaneously needing to provide supervision to the non-testing students is challenging. Teachers have requested that we begin a conversation about whether or not to include the testing days as academic days in our calendar by requiring all students’ attendance on those days, or if we can find alternatives for our future calendars that would not require non-testing students to attend on test days.
  - d) Teacher Salaries – As we look ahead to the spring contract and hiring season and beyond, it is important to make sure that teacher salaries at Hawbridge are competitive with the surrounding districts and schools in order to recruit the best candidates and retain our current faculty. Many faculty members expressed appreciation last spring when Cameron explained the school’s budget, including teacher salaries, and how it is set. With that being said, a number of faculty members have expressed a need for Hawbridge to make sure that all teachers’ salaries are competitive with our neighboring schools. One example that was brought to my attention was River Mill Academy, who offers the NC salary schedule, a 14% local supplement, Master’s pay, and contributes to NC Health and Retirement. Because it wouldn’t be appropriate for me to ask about or discuss other teachers’ salaries, I will use myself as an example and say that I do not even receive the state base pay for my certification level and years of experience. Since River Mill is a neighboring charter school in Alamance County, they provide a very good comparison for Hawbridge and will compete with us for both students and faculty.
5. We are working to form a committee and begin planning for future extended learning days, which are similar to a block schedule and allow for lengthier, more in-depth class activities. More information to come as the plans get solidified.
  6. Everyone, both students and staff alike, have been very busy recently and

everyone is looking forward to the break for Thanksgiving.

After J.McDuffie gave her report, J.Buck brought up athletic fields for discussion. He said that the Finance committee discussed this at its last meeting. One issue is availability of land. In Saxapahaw, it is much more difficult to get land that is adjacent to or walkable from Hawbridge than it is to get more remote land.

M.Glancy asked J.McDuffie about student behavior issues, in the context of restorative justice. Hawbridge has fair number of IEP students. Is there a need for training in the context of student behavior, IEP and restorative practices? J.McDuffie said that help and support in implementing restorative practices would be helpful for faculty. R.Lynch noted that Restorative Practices falls under day-to-day operations and the purview of the Directors, who are best equipped to find such opportunities.

## **C. Board**

### **■ Committee Updates**

- a) **Governance** (R. Lynch). Committee was to meet yesterday, but there was a scheduling conflict, so it was canceled for the month. However, members undertook some asynchronous work on drafting a large contract and purchase policy and a bylaws update. Former Board Chair April Williams provided a Crossing Guard solution and the Board is going to consider the proposal in December.
  
- b) **Strategic Planning** (S. Abernethy). The Committee surveyed the faculty and have feedback from over half of faculty at the time of this meeting, and all very thoughtful and helpful. The Committee will provide a summary of the findings from Jonathan Farmer, but the bottom common theme underlying most issues is a lack of resources. Discussed creating an endowment, and have been investigating/coordinating with Finance Committee on this matter. It would be good to have a Spring/25th Anniversary Event on Hawbridge campus and have other events (barn dances, etc.) that increase opportunities for fundraising. It is also crucially important to coordinate our fundraising with PASTA to ensure effective and holistic fundraising rather than competing with PASTA for donations. It is our hope and goal to make sure everyone feels supported. Bottom line is that Strategic Plan goals can never be met without an immediate plan for substantially increasing funds.

R.Lynch mentioned that there was work to create Saxapahaw Children's Endowment, worth connecting with Sue Elden regarding it. Also, in regard to money, being mindful of where the money goes, how it sits and who it's allotted to.

- c) **Board Selection** (K. Watson-Ormond). Met last Wednesday for the first time. Discussed goals for this Fall. Filling gaps in the Board. Ways to promote Board to school and wider community. In short term, hoping to have some kind of presence at holiday market and having promotional material available. How to be more inclusive and have a full selection of applicants and an application that helps elicit answers toward that end

d) **Finance** (J. Buck). Committee met yesterday, and S.Abernathy also attended. It was a wide ranging meeting primarily relating to fundraising. The Committee discussed the need for student transportation, before and after school programming, long term strategic fundraising, creating an endowment (especially for covering fixed overhead costs), the Fall fundraising campaign, PASTA's fundraising timeline, and the tradition of coordinating between PASTA and Fall board fundraising to avoid simultaneous campaigns, as well as the 25th Anniversary event, and strategic planning for long-term fundraising. We are currently targeting Hawbridge's 25th anniversary event as a fundraising and celebration event in the Spring, and continuing an annual spring fundraising event from then on. We believe that PASTA's fundraising and Hawbridge's fundraising needs to be combined so that there are not two or more competing groups raising funds (while leaving open the possibility of direct asks for faculty to parents for specific class-related needs). We further discussed the budget and the need to connect with professional financial advisors for Board surplus funds that could be invested in a more profitable manner. We also discussed efforts to get a member of general public to join the Committee, as the Committee's current charter calls for this.

A current challenge for fall fundraising is that C.Ratliff has been carrying the vast majority of responsibility for fundraising, and her time is currently extremely limited. C.Ratliff needs much more fundraising support and perhaps we need to adjust our goals for Fall fundraising giving the current restrictions on available time.

e) **Hiring** (R. Lynch). The Committee is working on revising the job description for the Lower School Director. The Committee also had a volunteer create a promotional video introducing students and faculty from both LS and US, with the intention of allowing applicants an opportunity to see and embrace Hawbridge culture. The Committee found the video so inspiring that it determined that promotional videos need to be utilized more often for other purposes. The job posting will go up by November 20, 2023, with a recommended application date of January 12, 2024.

S.Abernathy requested that some kind of response go out to applicants to acknowledge receipt of their application. J.Buck suggested we create a specific email address for fielding such emails so we can set up an autoresponse.

■ **Treasurer** (A. Rose)

We are a third of the way through the school year as of October 31st. Approximately 28 percent of revenue and 32 percent of total non-surplus expenses have been recognized to date. The budget now reflects approved, final funding per ADM and per EC ADM amounts. Per ADM amounts are higher than the initial board approved budget but lower than the previous estimate provided by DPI. The reduction in funding per ADM from the prior month estimate generated an annual state funds reduction of approximately \$47K; this was offset by increased ECADM funding and headcount, as well as an increase in total projected county funds. These offsets resulted in projected revenue being within \$500 of the prior month estimate.

Projections pertaining to personnel costs were reduced by \$40k this month, largely attributable to salaries and health insurance.

At this time, the surplus for the year is expected to be nearly breakeven, excluding increased legal costs that have not yet been reflected in the budget.

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R.Lynch discussed surplus in salary line - related to open Lower School Director position, per A.Rose.

**VII. New Business**

A. Open House Event - The Board discussed the upcoming Open House event.

VIII. Upon a motion duly seconded, the Board unanimously voted to adjourn at 7:22 PM.



The Association for the Advancement of Education, DBA, The Hawbridge School  
 Directors' Monthly Board Report  
 November 15, 2023

**Enrollment**

20-day ADM: 600

<b>Grade Level</b>	<b>Active Enrollment</b>		<b>Withdrawals since last board meeting</b>	<b>2024-2025 applications</b> (Lottery opened November 1)
Kindergarten	33		0	13
1st grade	33		0	2
2nd grade	34		0	5
3rd grade	35		0	5
4th grade	42		1	2
5th grade	45		0	7
6th grade	41		0	1
7th grade	58		0	4
8th grade	48		0	5
9th grade	57		0	8
10th grade	69		1	1
11th grade	62		0	1
12th grade	40		0	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>597</b>		2	55

## Personnel

Current Vacancies: EC Teachers

## Dean of Students Report

### Attendance

<b>Month</b>	<b>Attendance letters sent</b>	<b>Attendance meetings held</b>	<b>Attendance contracts issued</b>
August	2	0	0
September	42	2	0
October	57	7	0
November	33	3	0
December			
January			
February			
March			
April			
May			
Total			

### Behavior

<b>Month</b>	<b>In School Suspension</b>	<b>Out of School Suspension</b>	<b>Behavior Referrals LS/US</b>
August	0	0	12 / 4
September	1	3	11 / 29
October	2	1	11 / 17
November	0	0	30 / 13
December			
January			
February			



March			
April			
May			
Total			

### **Business and Operations Report**

\*Board-approved fire panel upgrade is almost complete.

\*Board approved security system is mostly complete—service issues have occurred with the installer but the equipment vendor is responsive and helping navigate. To our benefit, licenses are held with the vendor, not the installer.

\*PASTA school directory, sponsored and managed by PASTA and initiated in collaboration with administration to support lateral communication among families, is live. Promises improved communications channels for families and parents.

\*The US hvac system is becoming very expensive to maintain. We are looking into options for cost and sustainability. This could affect maintenance costs over time.

\* The technology line item in the budget contains miscoded items. The billing team is discussing the best way to code some items before adjusting the budget for tech this year.

\*With a portion of this year's \$80k in REAP funds we plan to install a grass amphitheater and small games field behind the US commons. We estimate \$45k+ for this project and are still compiling quotes for the work. We will report when we have a final proposal to share.

### **Important Dates for Next Month:**

December 2: Open House (Holiday Market), 10-2

December 18 - January 1: Winter Break (no school)