BROOKSVILLE ENGINEERING, SCIENCE, & TECHNOLOGY ACADEMY, INC. BOARD MEETING MINUTES July 12, 2021

Meeting called to order at 10:00am

Jason Kahler, Patricia Laird, Rhonda Nienhuis present. Fairella Cook arrived late.

Jason Kahler stated the 6/30/21 minutes need to amend his name to Jason not Joshua. Motion made by Jason Kahler to accept the minutes with the correction. Seconded by Rhonda Nienhuis. Approved Unanimous.

Rhonda Nienhuis motioned to approve the 6/28/21 meeting minutes. Jason Kahler seconded. Approved unanimous.

We do need to vote on accepting Paul Douglas to the board of directors. However, he has not attended any of the meetings yet. We will wait until he is in attendance to vote.

Patricia Laird verified that Ms. Nienhuis and Mr. Kahler had received the information for fingerprinting and board training.

The school had some financial concerns this year. Ms. Wexler will no longer be handling the finances. The new administrative assistant will be doing the finances. Patricia Laird advised utilizing a CPA for oversight. We utilized Kyrzinski and Associates most recently. Any company we obtain would need to be familiar with the states Redbook standard. The company that does the annual audit, King & Walker, also provides some guidance. Mrs. Nienhuis asked when the audit was schedule to take place. Mrs. Laird advised most likely in August. We are also working with him on our budget.

Mrs. Laird advised that we had lost a substantial amount of grant money this year because there was no follow up by the school providing receipts and placing the orders to utilize the funds. She has reached out to Angela Kennedy at the school district to follow up on what is still outstanding that can be utilized.

Mrs. Laird addressed the collection of student fees. We have been inconsistent on collecting them. Students who leave without paying fees are issued a notice of obligation which is required to be paid before graduation. Mrs. Nienhuis asked if fees were being collected up front, before the first day of school. Mrs. Laird stated that in the past, the first quarter fees were collected with the student application; if the student did not get into the school, the check was returned. That has not been happening; we should go back to that practice. Mrs. Nienhuis stated all grade level fees for the first quarter should be collected before the back to school picnic. Mrs. Laird has requested an increased budget allowance in the preliminary budget for postage to send out notices to all students who have outstanding fees. We can allow parents to make payments. Mrs. Nienhuis suggested withholding EBC trips and walking in our 8th grade graduation, sending letters to parents advising what the money is specifically used for and that not receiving the fees would result in lesser trips being taken. Mrs. Nienhuis also suggested we need to make sure that

the EBC teachers have provided work for the students to do if they are required to stay back from a trip. Mrs. Cook suggested creating a scholarship fund with donations from the community for those students that could not afford the fees. Mr. Kahler suggested setting the parents up with autowithdrawl for the EBC fees. We need to check if we can do that.

There was an error with Quickbooks. It was set to autobill the students for the 3rd quarter and 4th quarter student fees. However, it did not send those bills. The quarterly student fees that are collected are specifically for the EBC program. But there were not many EBC trips taken this year, none in the second semester. 8th graders who have left would likely not pay them and parents would potentially be very upset about collecting fees for the program that wasn't utilized. Jason Kahler motioned to not collect the fees. Mrs. Cook seconded.

Patricia Laird advised that the PPP loan forgiveness had been submitted. Nothing else is required at this point. We are only waiting for the forgiveness letter. Once we receive the forgiveness, we can remove the \$86,000 liability from our balance sheet.

Mrs. Laird advised all old signers have been removed from the bank account. A new signature card is on its way. All board members will be included on the account. But we need one additional person to be a check signer. Mr. Kahler volunteered.

Mrs. Laird stated the school would be bringing back the credit system this year. The EBC teacher had the idea to incorporate learning a bank checkbook into the program.

Mrs. Cook inquired as to a \$200 classroom supply stipend from the state. Mrs. Laird will find out if that is still available.

Mrs. Laird stated we had 56 students carry over from last year but we have received 2 withdrawl requests. Ms. Black had sent a list of 21 students to the district but as of now, 3 had already removed from the list. We have also received 3 more applications. Discussion on recruiting opportunities including a STEM day and adding summer camps.

Mrs. Laird advised she had been building our social media presence and procured several hundred dollars in free social media marketing each month, as well as reaching out to the Hernando County Department of Tourism and Bay News 9 to do stories. Bay News 9 showed interest.

Mrs. Laird stated we need to decide how to handle the students who failed this year. Typically students who fail are released from BEST Academy. But the procedure was not followed. The students who only failed one class could potentially make up that class during the school year simultaneously on Florida Virtual School. The students who failed multiple classes should return to their regularly zoned school. Mrs. Laird stated she would try to find the actual school policy. Mrs. Nienhuis will reach out to Joe and Nevin at GCA. Mrs. Nienhuis stated we need to reinstitute biweekly progress reports and request the parents sign them. Extra credit could be given in a class for those students who return them. We also need to make sure we are documenting student attendance at before/after school clinics. Mrs. Laird expressed concern for the math program. Mrs. Nienhuis asked if BEST was still using the Saxon Model for math. She

will get with Mrs. Garcia to make sure the math program is on track.

Mrs. Laird stated she was having several areas of the campus cleaned out that are used for storage. We are paying \$110 a month for a POD for extra storage space but we already have space we can use if we clean out the space. She wants to alleviate that bill.

We do have several issues that were brought up at the June 30 meeting that we are still waiting for our attorney to advise on.

Mrs. Laird advised that we had received a renewal invoice for APEX learning system at \$14,000. We had used it in the past and had stopped. We brought it back last year as a method for teachers to teach the digital students during COVID. Both the digital students and in-person students utilized APEX heavily this year. Mrs. Nienhuis stated we should not be using APEX as a main source of education in the coming year. Mrs. Laird will get with the teachers to see what programs they prefer. There are significantly cheaper options than APEX.

All of our vendor contracts are rolling over but Mrs. Laird suggested having all new contracts signed. The district had asked for copies of the contracts but we haven't been able to find any original documents in the office. They include King and Walker, ESE services, Praetorian Guard, Kesseltech, Gator Cleaning. We have bid all of these services in the past several times. Praetorian Guard was increased \$2 an hour this year. Mrs. Nienhuis motioned to approve, Mrs. Cook seconded.

We will be posting the principal position, along with ELA, Spanish, and technology. Mrs. Nienhuis asked if we could utilize outside employment agencies. Mrs. Laird was unsure. Jobs are posted on the HCSB website. Another board member will be needed to conduct interviews. Mr. Kahler volunteered. The state mandated increased teacher salaries in February and also provided funds to bridge that gap. Mrs. Laird will be working to do the teacher evaluations and contracts in the next week.

The school hours will be changing this year due to Parrott Middle School changing theirs. We share bussing. We will be moving to 9:45 am -4 pm.

Our annual back to school picnic will be on August 7th from 9am to 12pm. Mrs. Laird suggested inviting both 6th and 7th grade since the 7th graders did not have a picnic last year.

We do need to hold board elections but Mrs. Nienhuis suggested to move it to the next meeting since Mr. Kahler lost his zoom connection.

Mrs.Laird asked the consensus on meeting dates and times. It was decided to keep the meetings on Zoom and remain with the 10am time on the 4th Monday. No change.

Board Chair Signature