

**Tall Pines STEM Academy Board Meeting Minutes**  
**Meeting Date: January 19, 2023**  
**Location: Tall Pines Campus – Camp Long, Aiken South Carolina**  
**Commencement Time: 5 pm**

Presiding: Michelle Lorio

**1. Meeting Opening:**

- a. Michelle Lorio called the meeting to order at 5:01pm. Jennifer Minolfo read the mission. Mandy Sims called roll and a quorum was established.
- b. Meeting Attendance:
  - i. Present:  
Lori Mastromonico, Michelle Lorio, Stephen Lance, Mandy Sims, Alisa Perry, Reggie Rearden, Kelly Schepens, David Tamburello, Melissa McKnight, Phillip Dersham, Jennifer Minolfo, Sandy Blankenship
  - ii. Absent:  
None
  - iii. Public members:  
None

**2. Old Business:**

- a. Reviewed new board member requirements
  - i. Conflict of Interest policy - all are complete
  - ii. Background Checks - all are complete
  - iii. Access to Google Drive and TPSA email - all have access
  - iv. Required Charter School training - all have completed

**3. Matters for Decision:**

- a. Approval of November Meeting Minutes:
  - i. The minutes were approved. Jennifer Minolfo motioned for approval. Kelly Schepens seconded. Vote was unanimous.
- b. Approval of November Financials:
  - i. [Phillip Dersham](#) reviewed slides regarding financial updates. Slides showed trends of income, expenses, and bank balances.
  - ii. David Tamburello motioned to approve November financials. Alisa Perry seconded. Vote was unanimous.
- b. Attendance Policy
  - i. The first reading of the proposed Attendance Policy addressing chronic absenteeism was read.
  - ii. Proposed new policy is attached at the end of these meeting notes.
- c. Proposed amendment to ESSER funding
  - i. Lori Mastromonico requested for ESSER funding to be able to roll over to the next fiscal year.
  - ii. Mandy Sims motioned to approve the change to the ESSER application to allow for funding to be rolled over to the next fiscal year. Jennifer Minolfo seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.
- d. Executive Session
  - i. None

**4. Matters for Discussion**

- a. Fundraising Committee Update
  - i. Fan Store will be opening soon as a direct link from the TPSA Website
  - ii. Profits from sales will support Athletics, Packs celebrations, PBIS celebrations
- b. 2023/2024 TPSA School Calendar
  - i. Reviewed proposed calendar
  - ii. First reading of the 2023 -2024 calendar was completed.

- c. TPSA Lottery
  - i. Lottery will be held on Feb 21, 2023 at 6:00 pm.
  - ii. The board meeting was scheduled to be on Feb 16, 2023 at 5:00 pm. Mandy Sims made a motion to move the board meeting date to Feb 21, 2023 at 5:00 pm. [Phillip Dersham](#) seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.
  - iii. Assignments for responsibilities during the lottery are as follows:
    - Numbers will be selected by Alisa Perry
    - Numbers will be verbally identified by [David Tamburello](#)
    - Numbers will be documented by two individuals, Lori Mastromonico and Mandy Sims
    - Numbers will be written on display board by Jennifer Minolfo
  - iv. Audit Review
    - Audit was completed and no issues were found.
  - v. School Board Governance Form
    - This was submitted.

## 5. Matters of Noting:

- a. School/Principal's Update (Lori Mastromonico)
  - i. Principals Update
    - Basketball/Pickleball/Bowling going well
    - Packs – Pondorosa still in the lead
    - Art Club and Lego Club has started and had good participation
    - Upcoming Field Trips are planned for each grade
  - ii. Teacher of the Year/STARS
    - Shannon Green
    - John Jeffery
  - iii. Upcoming Interest night Feb 8<sup>th</sup> at Second Baptist Church 6p-7p
  - iv. Waitlist Numbers
    - 5<sup>th</sup> = 73
    - 6<sup>th</sup> = 97
    - 7<sup>th</sup> = 16
    - 8<sup>th</sup> = 1
    - Lottery = 107 for upcoming 5<sup>th</sup>

## 6. Meeting Finalization:

- a. Review actions to be taken:
  - i. None
- b. Comments:
  - i. None
- c. Meeting close:
  - i. It was motioned by Alisa Perry to adjourn the meeting. It was seconded by Jennifer Minolfo and approved. Meeting was adjourned at 6:21 pm.

## ATTENDANCE PROPOSAL

### **Current TPSA policy from the handbook:**

ATTENDANCE Students are expected to attend school regularly. Parents are responsible for having their children in school. Students must be in school more than half the day (four class periods) to be counted present. Vacations are counted as unexcused absences even if you notify TPSA ahead of time; this policy is from the South Carolina Department of Education. Any student who fails to bring a valid excuse to school within three days automatically receives an unexcused absence. Students must be in school more than half the day to be counted present. State law requires students to miss no more than ten days per year. According to the South Carolina State Board of Education, "a child ages 6 to 17 years meets the definition of a truant when the child has three consecutive unlawful absences or a total of five unlawful absences." It is the policy of TPSA that after 3 consecutive unlawful absences, and/or 5 cumulative unlawful absences, an attendance intervention meeting must be held with the parents and TPSA administration. Parents are responsible for having their children in school. The mission of TPSA is to provide engaging learning experiences that are not easily made up individually or at home.

### **PROPOSED ADDITION FOR CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM:**

#### Chronic Absenteeism Policy

-The **first five absences** can be a combination of excused or unexcused (vacation, parent note, etc). If a student must be absent, s/he should bring a written excuse the first day s/he is back at school. Any student who fails to bring a valid excuse to school **within three days** automatically **receives an unexcused absence**.

- At **five unexcused or three consecutive unexcused absences**, the student and parent will be sent an attendance contract from the principal. **At this point, medical excuses should be provided** for any further absences. Excused absences with a doctor's note do not affect truancy.

- At **ten unexcused absences**, students will be considered **truant** and **receive a letter from the board stating that a board hearing** will be held **if the student is absent three more times** without medical excuse.

**- If three additional non-medically excused absences occur after the board letter was issued, the parent will state the defense of the absences at a board hearing. A board vote will determine whether the student will be allowed to continue enrollment at TPSA or be required to enroll at his/her home zoned school. A majority vote will be the final decision and effective immediately.**

**-Three unexcused school tardies (arriving after 8:00am) will result in one absence toward this policy.**