

TWENTY FIRST CENTURY CHARTER SCHOOLS, INC

Corporate Board Meeting

Bennett Academy– 2930 W Bethany Home Rd, Phoenix AZ 85017

April 3, 2023 – 4:00 p.m.

Board Members:

(P=present, E=excused, A=absent)

Fred Bennett (P)

Terryl Fender (P)

Jamie Leija (P)

Nancy Bennett (P)

Erick Miller (P)

Guests: Sandra Richmond, Peggy Fender

AGENDA:

Fred Bennett called the meeting to order at 4:06 pm and immediately adjourned until all members were present; the meeting was reopened at 4:08 pm with a moment of silence.

Minutes of January 18, 2023 Meeting –

The Minutes of the January 18, 2023, meeting had been emailed to the Board Members and printed copies were available. Terry Fender made a motion to adopt the minutes as written. Jamie Leija seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Item # 1: Approval of Child Find Policies & Procedures – Nancy Bennett

Dr. Bennett reported that we are being monitored by the State and that there are a few items which need to be addressed. One item is our Child Find Policies & Procedures; they need to be expanded. We are required to serve the under-school-aged children of our families by annually notifying our parents of the resources available for identifying developmental issues. The short narrative in our Student/Parent Handbook wasn't accepted by the State. Dr. Bennett has rewritten the Child Find Policies & Procedures, as well as, the Special Education Identification of Students Enrolled in a Twenty First Century Charter School (Bennett Academies).

The rewritten policies and procedures are attached (Appendix A) and were available to the Board members by email prior to the Board meeting and in printed form at the meeting. Board discussion followed to clarify what is meant by Child Find.

Motion: Fred Bennett made the motion to approve the updated Child Find Policy and Procedures and charge the responsible parties to: 1) translate them into Spanish; 2) distribute them to the parents of both Bennett Academies in a timely manner; 3) post a copy of the mandated Child Find posters in the reception areas of both schools; 4) replace previous Child Find Statement and policy and procedures in the upcoming 2023-2024 Student-Parent Handbook; and 5) distribute updated Child Find and Special Education policies and procedures to all classroom teaching staff and to the principals of the schools. Terry Fender seconded the motion; the motion passed unanimously.

Item #2: Welcome New Board Member

Fred Bennett welcomed Terry Fender as our new Board member. Terry shared briefly about his life including his time in Honduras with the Peace Corps and writing a textbook in Spanish, teaching physics at South Mountain Community College, and how he met Peggy Fender. Previously, he has come to Bennett Academy and presented science demonstrations for the students.

Announcement: Fred Bennett reported that our finances are back in the good range; he has been able to reduce expenses so that now our reserves are good; \$250K in 5 banks.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 4:51 pm by Fred Bennett.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sandra Richmond, Secretary

Twenty First Century Charter Schools Child Find Policies and Procedures

Child Find is a component of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA '04) that requires Public Education Agencies to locate, identify, and evaluate all children with disabilities, aged birth through 21, located within their boundaries of responsibility who are or may be in need of early intervention or special education services. For infants and toddlers aged birth to 2 years, 10-1/2 months to 5 years, the charter school should refer the child to the child's district of residence, and/or Arizona Early Intervention Program (AzEIP) for evaluation and services, if needed. Schools meet their obligations for Child Find in several ways:

A. Charter Schools, including Twenty First Century Charter Schools, will identify, locate, and evaluate all children with disabilities *within their population served* who are in need of special education and related services.

1. Identification, location and evaluation will include:

- a) Children who are homeless;
- b) Children who are highly mobile, including migrant children;
- c) Children who are wards of the state.

2. Child Find will include children who are suspected of having a disability and are in need of special education, even though:

- a) They are advancing from grade to grade;
- b) They are highly mobile children, including those who are migrant children;
- c.) They are not yet of school or preschool age.

3. Each public agency (school) will maintain a record of children who are receiving special education and related services.

B. All children with suspected disabilities aged birth (0) through twenty-one (21) years in Arizona may qualify for special education and related services. The children will be identified, located, and evaluated, including children who are:

1. Homeless;
2. Highly mobile, including migrant children;
3. Wards of the state;
4. English Language Learners (ELL).

C. The boundaries of Twenty First Century Charter Schools include only the families whose children currently attend our schools, Bennett Academy Main and Venture Academy. Parents of children between the ages of 0-3 who are not yet attending school shall be referred to the school district in which they live. (Elementary School Districts must include children with disabilities attending private schools and home schools, regardless of the severity of the disability.)

D. **Child Find** activities will also include Bennett students suspected of being a child with a disability who are:

1. Advancing from grade to grade;
2. Highly mobile, including migrant children;
3. Not attending a public, online, or private school or not signed up for homeschooling;
4. English Language Learners (ELL).

E. **Public Awareness**

1. The Bennett Academy schools will inform all parents within our boundaries of the availability of special education services for students aged three (3) through 21 years and how those services may be accessed, including information regarding early intervention services for children aged birth through 3 years.
2. Services for an eligible child with a disability will extend through the date when the child attains the age of 22. This applies to students receiving services from a public or private high school.

Special Education Identification of Students Enrolled in a Twenty First Century Charter School (Bennett Academies.)

A. **Policy/procedure:** For a student transferring from another school, **screening** for possible disabilities or other educational concerns will be completed **within 45 calendar days after** entry to the school in grades K-8.

1. Screening procedures will include consideration of the following areas:
 - a) Vision and hearing test results;
 - b) Cognitive or academic functioning;
 - c) Communication skills;
 - d) Motor skills;
 - e) Social or behavioral functioning;
 - f) Adaptive development.
2. Additionally, the school will review:
 - a) Enrollment data;
 - b) Medical records;
 - c) Educational performance in the prior school;
 - d) If the student has a history of special education as demonstrated by an active Individual Educational Plan (**IEP**), the name and records of the student shall be submitted to the administrator and special education teacher for scheduling of services.

B. **Policy/Procedure:** If a student's records indicate **no IEP but poor performance** over time in the previous school/s the following will apply:

1. The student will be put on a Watch List.
2. The parent/guardian of the student will be asked to meet with Special Education services personnel to discuss a plan for success of the student. (This includes students who do not qualify for special education services after an informal or formal evaluation, but need interventions in the classroom or tutoring services.)
3. Students whose parents have asked that their child be opted out of special education will be included on the Watch List.

C. **Policy/Procedure:** For a student who is transferring from another school or is starting in Kindergarten

1. Parents without appropriate school records will be asked to provide such within *two week period* and this includes:
 - a) All screenings;
 - b) All evaluations;
 - c) All school progress reports.
2. If they are unable to do so they will be expected to attend a meeting with the child's teacher to provide a profile of the student.

D. **Policy/Procedure:** Continuing students will also be screened for possible disabilities or other educational concerns **within 45 calendar days after:**

1. Parent notification to the school of concerns regarding their child's developmental or educational progress in school; or
2. Classroom teachers detect issues or difficulty learning in children who attended a Twenty First Century Charter Schools, Inc. in a previous year.
3. If a concern about a student is identified through screening procedures or a review of records, the parents of the student will be notified of the concern within ten (10) school days and informed of the school's procedures to follow up on the area(s) of concern, and for consideration of the need for a referral for a full and individual evaluation or other services.

E. **Policy/Procedure:** Twenty First Century Charter Schools Child Find procedures include:

1. Student Study Teams of school personnel after the 45-day screen, to discuss possible interventions and accommodations for the child.
2. Follow-up Discussions of the student's Response to Interventions and Accommodations.
3. Additional Follow-Up discussions of the student's status and response to interventions if warranted.

4. If Interventions are deemed ineffective, the student will be put on a path for teachers and special education personnel to collect Existing Data re: the student's progress, information from the parent, and in-class observations.

F. Policy/Procedure: Regarding identified ineffective intervention measures

1. Using Existing Data the following procedures apply:
 - a) A **Multidisciplinary Evaluation Team (MET)** will be conducted by a school psychologist with the parent(s) of the student and his/her teachers to discuss options, including a potential psychoeducational evaluation of the student.
 - b) The school will maintain documentation of the identification procedures utilized, the dates of entry into school, notification by or to parents of a concern, and the dates of screening. The dates will be maintained in the student's permanent records in a location designated by the school leader.
2. If the **MET** indicates a possible disability or other educational concern,
 - a) Student name will be submitted to the administrator for consideration of the need for a referral for a full and individual evaluation or further services;
 - b) If, after consultation with the parent and teachers, the school determines that a full and individual evaluation is not warranted, the school shall provide prior written notice and procedural safeguards notice to the parent in a timely manner.

G. Policy/Procedure: A parent or student may request an evaluation of the student at any time; however, the MET team may disagree. (For parentally placed private school students, the school district within whose boundaries the nonprofit private school is located is responsible for such evaluation.)

H. Policy/Procedure: Twenty First Century Charter Schools will provide prior written notice (PWN) and a procedural safeguards notice to the parent at each step in the process in a timely manner.

I. Policy/Procedure: For Parents of student attending a Bennett Academy,

- a) The school will make available at the beginning of each school year, to its school-based personnel and all parents within its boundaries of responsibility, either in writing or electronically, written procedures for the referral and identification of all children with potential disabilities. Parents will receive a handbook at the beginning of each school year which includes the Child Find information. Specific parents (new to school, children on the Watch list) will be provided with this information in a separate mailing when appropriate.
- b) Appropriate school-based personnel (classroom teachers, administrators, board members) are required to review the written procedures related to child identification and referral on an annual basis. Documentation of this review shall be maintained by the school principal and Director of Exceptional Student Services.

Twenty First Century Charter Schools Child Find Policies and Procedures

Reviewed/Approved:

Mr. Fred Bennett,
Twenty First Century Charter Schools Board Chair

Date

Dr. Nancy Bennett, Board Member

Date

Mr. Erick Miller, Board Member

Date

Ms. Jamie Leija, Board Member

Date

Mr. Terry Fender, Board Member

Date

Teaching Staff

I have reviewed and understand the policies and procedures re: Child Find, which are included in the annual Student/ Parent Handbook. (Revised March 20, 2023)

Name Date

Additional Resources:

www.azed.gov/specialeducation/az-find

www.azed.gov/specialeducation/early-childhood-special-education-child-find