



MINUTES
Board of Trustees Meeting
August 19, 2014

The meeting was held at: 198 Varet Street, Brooklyn, NY 11206 at 4:35 p.m.

PRESENT

Samuel Rivera, Vice Chair
Marcenia Johnson, Trustee
Alma Iannotto, Parent Liaison

GUESTS

Mary Kenny, Minutes Transcriber
Ellen Eagen, School Attorney
Patrick Kern, Staff
Claudia Acevedo, Staff
Kathleen Gaffney, Principal
Kathy Fernandez, Staff
Shante Martin, Staff

EXCUSED

Lourdes Putz, Chair
James Lema, Trustee
Akil Bello, Co-Treasurer
Robert Shea, Trustee

The meeting was called to order at 4:35 p.m.

1. WELCOME

The meeting proceeding without a quorum. Mr. Rivera presided over the meeting and welcomed everyone. It was noted that this meeting was well attended by staff and teachers. The Board and Principal had scheduled this meeting during the later part of the day during professional development week to introduce the school community to board governance and to encourage them to attend and participate in future board meetings and to strengthen the relationship between the board and the school.

2. APPROVAL OF JULY BOARD MINUTES

Absent a quorum, the discussion and approval of the July Board Meeting Minutes was tabled until the September Board meeting.

3. ACADEMIC REPORT

Ms. Gaffney reported on summer school. 238 students attended summer school. 77% passed and will earn credit. The 9th grade has 283 students who are being promoted to the 10th grade. The 10th grade has 153 students who will be promoted to the 11th grade. The 11th grade has 230 who are being promoted to the 12th grade. Nine additional 12th grade students earned diplomas. Twenty students will be held back in 12th grade.

Twenty-three teachers have been hired to replace those who left. Six additional teachers are being actively sought to fill remaining teaching staff vacancies. Professional development is underway, and staff has met with department leaders. Lastly, students will have orientation this week.

4. SECURITY/DISCIPLINE

a. Report of Security Audit:

Ms. Eagen reported that an RFP for an audit on security was made in the spring. WCHS received several bids, and the Board ultimately selected NJB Security Services (“NJB”). NJB has sent the Board a report with recommendations, and the Board is currently reading it in detail. Two representatives from NJB spoke at the meeting addressing the importance of school discipline, keeping current on training and developing a relationship with local law enforcement.

b. Status of Security Department:

Ms. Eagen said that the Board's goal was to be more transparent about decisions being made. As such, a redacted version of the report would eventually be made generally available. The major conclusion from the report was that WCHS has a need to train its staff and make sure all members are current on credentialing. The position of Head of Security has been posted, and a committee will be formed to conduct interviews. Ms. Eagen spoke about having an ongoing dialogue on how to maintain the warmth but instill structure, clear expectations and proper disciplinary follow-through.

c. Report Regarding the Restorative Justice Program:

New York Peace Institute is coming to do professional development on how to speak to students. Also, the Tolerance Center will give training on social media and bullying. The intervention process is also being written into the Student Consequence matrix.

5. FINANCE UPDATE

Ms. Fernandez reported that the audit will start next week. As for the budget and finances, there were no issues to report. Ms. Eagen said that NY State law dictates that schools need to be audited every year and this year we have had our preliminary meetings with the audits and the books look like they are in great shape. She thanked Ms. Fernandez and Mr. Leleck for their hard work.

6. FACILITIES

Mr. James reported that his team has been able to accomplish a lot of work this summer and that all major projects should be finished by next week. Work on the floors and walls of the building is on schedule.

7. HUMAN RESOURCES

Because Ms. Barimah was conducting an orientation for the newly hired teachers, she was unable to present.

8. ACCOUNTABILITY

Mr. Kern spoke about a letter WCHS received from Ira Schwartz of the State Education Department, which reported that the school has been removed from the Priority School Status list. The Board congratulated everyone for the great progress on being considered a school in good standing.

Mr. Kern spoke about Title I and Title II funds being used for extra learning time, professional Development, and next year's Summer Bridge Program. The title funding application would be complete in the next few weeks.

The Annual Report was submitted in a timely manner. Mr. Kern thanked everyone for their collaborative efforts.

WCHS is still waiting to hear from the Walentas Foundation on our submission for their grant proposal for the Charter Moves Project.

9. ENROLLMENT UPDATE

980 students are currently enrolled for the fall semester. Final numbers will not be available until ATS opens in September. Ms. Eagen discussed with the Board the need to give the Department of Education notice about going over 963.

10. NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Rivera introduced Charles Hobson, a candidate for the Board. He spoke about his experience and his interest in being a member of the Board.

It was also discussed that Mr. Bello sent the Board a letter to disclose that he has taken a new position with

The Princeton Review; therefore, he will recuse himself from all discussion about WCHS's contractual relationship with The Princeton Review in the future to ensure that there is no conflict of interest.

Ms. Iannotto also indicated that she will be speaking at the next parent meeting about parent participation.

9. NEXT BOARD MEETING

September 23, 2014

10. EXECUTIVE SESSION

11. ADJOURNMENT