



MINUTES
Board of Trustees Meeting
November 25, 2014

The meeting was held at: 198 Varet Street, Brooklyn, NY 11206

PRESENT

Samuel Rivera, Vice Chair
Alma Iannotto, Parent Liaison
Gabriel Perez, Teacher Liaison
Akil Bello, Co- Treasurer
Charles Hobson, Trustee

GUESTS

Kathleen Gaffney, Principal
Mary Kenny, Minutes Transcriber
Ellen Eagen, School Attorney
Kathy Fernandez, Staff
Donny Brusca, Staff

Raymond James, Staff
Patrick Kern, Staff
Princess Barimah, Staff

EXCUSED

Lourdes Putz, Chair
James Lema, Trustee
Robert Shea, Trustee
Marcenia Johnson, Trustee

The meeting was called to order at 4:20pm.

1. WELCOME

Mr. Rivera started the meeting by welcoming everyone and opening the floor for comments. He asked if the staff approved of having occasional Board meetings at 4:00pm so that they could better attend meetings. Most agreed that the time worked well.

2. APPROVAL OF OCTOBER BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Mr. Rivera indicated that the approval of the October Board Minutes would be tabled, as there was no quorum.

3. ACADEMIC REPORT

Ms. Gaffney thanked all for coming and reported on concerns about attendance rates, as well as math and science passing rates. She said that the School is focusing on credit recovery. She continued by saying that College Week was successful, and reviewed the work that grade directors are doing, such as working on incentives to decrease demerits. Observations are underway. Also, 9th period clubs seem successful. Ms. Eagen mentioned that the Board made a decision to establish the 9th period and she opened the floor for feedback from faculty. Ms. Gaffney said that surveys went out and was surprised to see so many positive statements. She said that this feedback will be put into an implementation plan in the spring.

4. PROGRESS REPORT/MARKETING AND PR UPDATE

Ms. Acevedo said that she took a look at how the school is represented on-line and noticed that the first six pages of news contained mostly negative articles. Some websites featured comments that were pretty serious, but most of those were at least three years old. Mr. Rivera said that the School achieved so much this past year and would like that to get out. Mr. Brusca said that the School will begin to use social media, such as Facebook, Twitter, Global Plus, and Wikipedia to broadcast good news. The Department of Education portal site can be edited as well.

Mr. Brusca showed a PowerPoint presentation on the School's progress report. He said the name has changed and it's now called the School Quality Guide, but that the School is still rated in the same categories. WCHS met their target. He reported that the School went up in the following areas: student achievement, school environment, parent participation and college readiness, although the School is still below the city average. Mr. Brusca also showed comparisons between charter schools and district schools which demonstrated that charter schools do better in all areas.

5. FINANCE UPDATE

Ms. Fernandez reported that the Audit was finalized and there were no findings. Also, the School has rectified the previous findings.

Ms. Fernandez also reported that as of September 30, 2014 there was \$3.9 million in the budget.

6. FACILITIES

Mr. James reported on the carpets and tiles that were replaced. He said that several Fire Department of the City of New York violations are in the process of being rectified.

7. HUMAN RESOURCES

Ms. Barimah reported on the new Hiring Policy and Procedures and on the Administrative Staff Teaching Policy. She said that they are a work in progress, and the Board discussed that item #3 of the document needs to state that Human Resources will be filtering applications, not Department Leaders or Supervisors. The Board also discussed the timeframe on receiving resumes.

Ms. Barimah then said that we have been attending college fairs for recruitment and the Board discussed the value of this with the faculty. Retention is a highly relevant issue.

She also spoke about Automatic Data Processing, which will provide paperless employee resources, such as direct deposit and W-2 forms.

8. COMMUNITY OUTREACH/FUNDRAISING UPDATE

Mr. Kern reported on student recruitment first and said that the School currently has 960 students. The first annual Open School event was hosted in the building. 130 people attended. Every department was represented and 13 teachers came. The School currently has over 400 applications for next year's 9th grade class, which is about where they were last year in the month of March.

Mr. Kern reported that the promotional video shoot went well, and the videographer was able to capture the school environment with great footage. Mr. Hobson brought in an excellent videographer on a small budget, and Mr. Kern said that this is one example of how the Board contributes their valuable time and monetary piece to the School.

The grant for constructing a dance studio has been submitted. In addition, creating the dance studio will free up space for computers; we are receiving computers from New York University – the university has offered to turn over their unused equipment to the School.

Mr. Kern reported that we received a \$5,000 grant from a Disney affiliate to initiate a school-wide recycling program. Several school administrators discussed the possibility of a Christmas party on December 19th that would bring the Board and all other staff members together in order to boost morale and solidify a school culture of unity, as it is the Board's priority. Ms. Eagen reminded everyone that public funds cannot be used for alcohol, but will look into the use of the building for after-school parties, including serving alcohol.

Ms. Eagen thanked the Board for all their efforts and said the School is lucky to have such a dedicated Board. She indicated that Mr. Rivera took time off from work to personally thank every staff member in the building for their hard work that day. She pointed out that Mr. Hobson has allowed WCHS to use his professional contacts to produce a first-rate production. Additionally, she highlighted Mr. Lema's donation of the money to WCHS for the dance studio, as well as Mr. Bello's referral of a well-qualified IT consultant.

9. NEXT BOARD MEETING

December 16, 2014 (tentative).