

**MINUTES**  
**Board of Trustees Meeting**  
**December 16, 2015**

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

**PRESENT**

Lourdes Putz, Chair  
Marcenia Johnson, Trustee  
Samuel Rivera, Vice Chair  
Joseph Cardarelli, Trustee  
Evens Barreau, Parent Rep.  
John Witherspoon, Trustee, *via phone*  
Belkis Sosa, Student Rep.

**GUESTS**

Kathleen Gaffney, Principal  
Ellen Eagen, School Attorney, *via phone*  
Mary Kenny, Minutes Transcriber  
Princess Barimah, Staff  
Patrick Kern, Staff

Paul Leleck, Building Hope  
Darnell Pierre, Staff  
Kate Manion, Staff  
Kathy Fernandez, Staff  
Amaryllis Valentin, Staff

**EXCUSED**

Akil Bello, Treasurer; Robert Shea, Trustee; James Lema, Trustee; Charles Hobson, Trustee; David Fier, Staff Rep.

The meeting was called to order at 6:25pm.

**1. WELCOME**

Ms. Putz welcomed staff and students. She moved items on the Agenda to allow for latecomers to arrive.

**2. APPROVAL OF OCTOBER, NOVEMBER and DECEMBER BOARD MEETING MINUTES**

Minutes were tabled for next month's meeting due to lack of quorum.

**3. ACADEMIC REPORT**

Ms. Gaffney reported on:

- **Filling Vacancies in Math, Special Education and Biology:** Ms. Gaffney said that the School has certified substitutes in Math and Special Education positions who are certified and interested in filling the vacancies. She also recommended a candidate for the Biology position who is working towards certification. Ten of the School's teachers' certifications expired and Ms. Barimah is addressing the issue.
- **Evaluating Teachers and Staff:** 125 staff members and teachers have had their mid-year evaluations.
- **Supporting Teachers with Observations and Feedback:** Each teacher has had four mini-observations.
- **Addressing Math Data Concerns:** The School is looking into two consulting firms and staff have been attending professional developments.
- **Attending Performing Arts Performances:** The School has performed keyboard, chorus and dance recitals, and also hosted a craft fair. All events were well received and students have shown amazing growth.
- **Transition of Director of College Guidance:** Ms. Valentin is transitioning into the position of Director of College Guidance from Guidance/Data Manager (upon R. Brown's midyear departure) and has shown enormous dedication to both the job and to Williamsburg Charter High School. Ms. Valentin presented college acceptance statistics to the Board.
- **Student Life:** Three students were involved in an altercation with Grand Street Campus students after school and they have all been suspended. The Board discussed the details of the incident, including, why police were called and how staff handled the issue.

#### 4. DEVELOPMENT & COMMUNITY OUTREACH - MR. KERN

- **SUNY Stimulus Grant Announcement:** The school was awarded a SUNY Stimulus Grant of \$175,800 and the funds will go towards facility updates. Mr. Kern thanked everyone for their help obtaining the grant. Ms. Eagen stressed the importance of following the timeline outlined in the RFP documents.
- **Charter School Fair:** The Fair will take place the first weekend of March and Mr. Kern, Ms. Pierre, and Ms. Manion will host a meeting with the Charter School Center in January to go over particulars. The Board discussed costs and benefits, including staffing fees and School publicity.
- **Dept. of Citywide Administrative Services:** The Department requested to use 20 classrooms in the School for testing across five days in February and March. The Board discussed logistics and decided it would be too costly to secure the School.
- **China Trip:** AFAR contacted Mr. Kern with news that the School qualified for a ten-student trip to China. The School would need to confirm the trip by December 18<sup>th</sup> and fundraise \$20,000 on its own. AFAR also offered to extend the program for the next two years. The Board believes that while it is a great opportunity for students, the funds will need to be raised and other trips are in the works. Mr. Eugene “E-Pod” Podokshik of First Fidelity Insurance, Mr. Lema, and Building Hope may donate. Ms. Eagen reminded the Board that last year a luncheon was held to raise funds and there was no follow-up afterwards. Mr. Rivera would like to start a conversation about building prospective trips into the budget. Mr. Rivera asked staff to approach the Board prepared with fundraising ideas. Ms. Eagen will contact AFAR.

#### 5. FINANCE

Ms. Fernandez explained:

- As of November 30, 2015, the total revenue for 5 months is \$6.6 million and the total expense for 5 months is \$6.4 million. The excess of revenue over expense is \$187,344 and is reserved for emergency funds. The School is in line with the budget to date.
- Mr. Leleck said that IT will be covered by the grant and the School will save money on that expense.

#### 6. HR REPORT

Ms. Barimah introduced a Care Time proposal which would prevent teachers from using all of their remaining Care Time in June. After analyzing last year’s data, the Board concluded that a payout plan would help. The proposal states that teachers with six unused days by a pre-determined date would receive pay for up to three of them. This would be less expensive than paying substitutes. Ms. Putz recommended starting it as a pilot program. Ms. Eagen was concerned that initiating a mid-year pilot program would be unfair to those unable to fully benefit from it. Ms. Fernandez explained this was done purposefully in order to collect the proper data for the plan. The Board decided to move forward, to notify teachers of identified trends, and to put the program in place with a payout date of July 15, 2016.

#### 7. ACCOUNTABILITY & COMPLIANCE UPDATE

Ms. Manion reported:

- Mr. Brusca completed the December Per Pupil Invoice due December 4, 2015.
- Ms. Manion worked with Ms. Pierre to develop an outreach plan for the upcoming Charter School Fair.
- She and Mr. Brusca created a WCHS Twitter account to highlight School activities and assist the Charter Center with Fair promotion. They also created a Support button for the School website in order to increase traffic to the fundraising page.
- Ms. Manion assisted administrative staff with a variety of promotional tools.
- Mr. Leleck thanked Ms. Manion for her organization prior to the meeting.

#### 8. ENROLLMENT UPDATE

Ms. Pierre reported:

- Enrollment is 945.
- She visited enrollment centers in Lower Manhattan.
- There are four applications under review.
- Ms. Pierre has already received 400 applications.
- The Shadow Program will start after the lottery.

## **9. FACILITIES UPDATE**

- Ms. Gaffney reported that she walked the building with Mr. James to review repairs that need to be done. Over the break his team will paint and clean floors. He spoke to Kleenex about replacing inefficient staff. Mr. Rivera asked how the outsourcing has been going. Ms. Eagen said Kleenex should accommodate and that the purpose of contracting with a third party is that the relationship can and should be terminated if it is not working out for the school.
- Ms. Putz reported that her agency, United We Stand, has moved into the space and it is going well. She said that Ms. Haught has connected with Ms. Wade and they talked about collaborating in order to help parents and students. Ms. Putz will create a list of services they offer.
- Mr. Kern introduced Belkis Sosa, 12<sup>th</sup> grader, who was approved to sit on the Board as Student Representative. She spoke to the Board about starting an information service for students to get them involved in School issues and community service projects. She is looking for a supervisor to run the group. The Farmer's Market is interested in forming a relationship with this group.

## **10. NEXT BOARD MEETING**

January 28, 2016 at 6:00 p.m. (tentative).