



MINUTES
Board of Trustees Meeting
March 16, 2016

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

PRESENT

Lourdes Putz, Chair
Marcenia Johnson, Trustee
Akil Bello, Treasurer
Joseph Cardarelli, Trustee
Evans Barreau, Parent Rep.
John Witherspoon, Trustee
Belkis Sosa, Student Rep.
David Fier, Staff Rep.
Robert Shea, Trustee *via telepresence*

GUESTS

Kathleen Gaffney, Principal
Ellen Eagen, School Attorney
Mary Kenny, Minutes Transcriber
Kathy Fernandez, Staff
Patrick Kern, Staff
Kate Manion, Staff
Princess Barimah, Staff
Darnell Pierre, Staff
Donny Brusca, Staff
Teachers and Staff Members were present

EXCUSED

Samuel Rivera, Vice Chair; Charles Hobson, Trustee

Ms. Eagen introduced Trustee Robert Shea, who joined the meeting via telepresence with BEAM technology. He announced that he was resigning from the Board due to distance and professional obligations. Ms. Eagen thanked him for his service. Mr. Shea acknowledged the wonderful work that the Board, staff, and students do at Williamsburg Charter and regrets that he will no longer be able to participate as a Trustee.

Ms. Eagen introduced Beam technology to teachers; she played videos highlighting the benefits of BEAM technology in education, markedly its ability to allow users to transport to other locations through a mobile robot. One video showed a homebound female student who attends classes through the BEAM.

Ms. Eagen said WCHS students can use the technology to tour out-of-state colleges. Then Mr. Medina connected the meeting with Arizona State University's news room and the director provided a tour to the teachers.

The meeting was called to order at 5:00pm.

1. WELCOME

Ms. Putz welcomed everyone and made introductions.

2. APPROVAL OF FEBRUARY 2016 MINUTES

- Ms. Johnson made a Motion to accept the Minutes. Mr. Witherspoon seconded. Mr. Bello Abstained. All others were in Favor.

3. ACADEMIC REPORT

Ms. Gaffney reported:

- Six students passed the January Regents and have graduated.
- Teachers have completed the DOE School Surveys. Parents are aware of their importance; the School needs at least 500 by April 1st.
- Staff evaluations have been completed.
- Students are receiving math assistance through the Saturday Academy.

- Representatives from District 14 Superintendent’s office visited the School. The visit went well and the office showed support for the School.
- Over 600 people attended the Charter Fair at the School. The event was a huge success.
- Staff is ensuring students adhere to the School’s uniform policy.
- Spirit Week and Senior trip will occur within the week.
- The Black History Month celebrations were well attended and well received.
- The DOE will be visiting as part of the Annual Comprehensive Review process. Teachers and staff have attended a professional development in preparation.

Ms. Valentin provided a college acceptance update, reporting that 152 students applied to colleges and 42 have received acceptances. 72 students have completed FAFSA forms and Juniors are currently enrolled in SAT prep.

a) Technology Grant Opportunity

- Ms. Eagen presented proposal from Suitable Technologies regarding Beam.
- Beam is cutting edge technology in education throughout States
- Ms. Eagen asked for the school to come up with a proposal including the various ways that the Beam could be used to assist teachers and students. Upon receiving the proposal, Ms. Eagen will present it to Suitable Technologies (the creator of the Beam); if accepted, WCHS will be considered for a free Beam.

b) Governors Ball Fundraiser

Mr. Ballantyne proposed a Spectrum Caterers fundraiser at Governors Ball:

- Non-profit organizations can sell drinks to spectators at no fee to the School.
- The School would receive 30 cents per beverage as well as tips. Mr. Ballantyne anticipates raising up to five figures.
- Participants must be 18 years of age since alcoholic beverages will be served.
- Participants can attend the music festival for free.
- Some staff members have already volunteered.

The Board discussed several issues, including: whether other DOE or charter schools are participating; whether the School will be held liable if someone gets hurt due to alcohol consumption; and whether the School name has to be associated with the event. The Board said that the Executive Committee in consultation with Counsel will make a vote once these questions are answered.

4. TEACHER REPRESENTATIVE REPORT

Mr. Fier, in coordination with WCHS faculty, presented several policy proposals to the Board:

- Matching the DOE’s teacher salary schedule: This plan would include MA+30, longevity with steady raises, as well as out of state/city experience compensation.
 - The Board, Ms. Eagen, and Ms. Barimah said that while they support the idea, there are some issues which need to be worked out. Mr. Fier will re-write this proposal. The Board tabled the discussion for a later meeting.
- 15 days of paid parental leave: Mr. Fier proposed that new parents be provided paid parental leave of 15 days, in addition to care days, to be used within the first year after the child’s birth.
 - Ms. Fernandez reported that it would cost approximately \$4,000 per teacher, and last year, two teachers had babies. Ms. Eagen voiced strong support and recommended Board adopting. The Board agreed.
 - Mr. Bello made a motion to offer 15 days of paid parental leave. Mr. Witherspoon seconded. All were in favor. No abstentions, no nays. This policy will be effective in the 2016-2017 fiscal year.
- Following the DOE calendar: Mr. Fier proposed adhering to the DOE calendar in order to improve

student attendance and to accommodate teachers.

- The Board and staff discussed a variety of potential issues; citing summer jobs, professional development, and student and teacher attendance. Ms. Gaffney pointed out that the 2016-2017 DOE calendar has yet to be released. The issue was tabled for a later time.
- Consistent contribution or matching % to 403b plans: Ms. Barimah mentioned that TRS is not fiscally possible at this time. Ms. Eagen reminded the Board that the School has offered contribution or matching 403b plans for the past two years based on the budget. Mr. Fier and Ms. Eagen asked for it to be made policy.
 - Mr. Bello made a motion to add a 403b plan as policy for staff. Ms. Johnson seconded. All were in favor. No abstentions, no nays.
 - The Board discussed whether it should be a contribution or matching plan. Mr. Bello made a motion to make the 403b a matching plan. Mr. Witherspoon seconded. All were in favor. No abstentions, no nays. The matching percentage was tabled.
- Ending School Day at 3:45: Mr. Fier proposed shortening the school day to 3:45, which is when students leave, rather than mandating teachers to stay until 4:30pm. Afterschool activities such as clubs, sports, and test review would begin at 3:45. Office hours would be moved to Wednesday.
 - The Board discussed whether teachers would stay if not required; if parents are on board with this; if it would help teacher retention; whether 9th period works; how to renew interest in clubs; and per-session payments. Ms. Fernandez said additional per-session payments would not make a big impact financially. The Board agreed that student safety is the School's main priority, thus teachers should stay until 4:00pm to ensure safe and smooth exits for students.
 - Mr. Witherspoon made a motion to approve ending the school day at 4:00pm for teachers. Ms. Johnson seconded. All were in favor, no nays, no abstentions.

A staff member will present non-instructional staff proposals at a later time.

5. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT

Belkis Sosa, Student Representative, updated the Board on student activities:

- Seniors are helping Freshmen with student government.
- Sophomores want the uniform to include black pants; to hang pictures of student government members in the school; and to embroider their cardigans with their names.
- The student president would like to plan a carnival.
- Seniors want the ability to leave School for lunch.
- Students would like to plan a scavenger hunt outside of the school.
- Seniors would like to plan a dinner before graduation.

The Board responded to some of the students' requests. Black pants will not be incorporated into the uniform. Cardigans may be embroidered as long as it is their full name, rather than a slang name. Pictures of the student government may be posted in the school. Mr. Hernandez will head the scavenger hunt. The Board decided that lunch outside of school grounds is not permissible.

6. PARENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT

Mr. Barreau reported that parents want better communication with teachers. Teachers in attendance spoke about the efforts they go to in order to contact parents. Mr. Barreau said he will bring this up at the next parent meeting. He is also concerned about the number of substitute teachers in the School.

7. FINANCE

Ms. Fernandez reported that there are no major expenses since the last report. As of February 29, 2016, the total revenue for eight months is \$10.3 million and total expenses for eight months are \$10.2 million. Excess of revenue over expenses is \$108,795, which is in line with the budget to date.

8. FACILITIES

- There are no fire violations to report.
- ConEd replaced light bulbs throughout the School, which will cut costs. ConEd is also going to replace the heating system.
- Window repairs and leaks are being taken care of.

9. HR REPORT

Ms. Barimah reported:

- There is an employee recruitment fair on April 2, 2016.

10. ENROLLMENT UPDATE

Ms. Pierre reported:

- Enrollment is 933 in Blackbaud and 936 in ATS.
- Six students have zero attendance and Ms. Pierre is trying to get them off the School's roster.
- Registration closed on March 5.
- The lottery is April 13, 2016. The School has 716 applicants.

11. DEVELOPMENT & COMMUNITY OUTREACH UPDATE

Mr. Kern reported:

- The Charter School Fair was a success and the School received wonderful feedback from the Charter Center. Mr. Kern thanked Mr. James' team for their work. 650 people attended the Fair and the radio station, WBLS, was on site all day.

12. ACCOUNTABILITY & COMPLIANCE UPDATE

Ms. Manion reported:

- The DOE Annual Comprehensive Review visit is taking place on March 30, 2016. Teachers and staff have been prepared. Ms. Gaffney added that the administration is aware of and addressing potential issues which may arise.

13. NEXT BOARD MEETING

April 20, 2016 at 6:00PM.

11. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Witherspoon made a motion to adjourn. Ms. Johnson seconded. All were in favor.