

MINUTES
Board of Trustees Meeting
April 20, 2016

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

PRESENT

Lourdes Putz, Chair
Marcenia Johnson, Trustee
Charles Hobson, Trustee
John Witherspoon, Trustee
Evans Barreau, Parent Rep.

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

John McLaughlin, Ziegler Invest.
Will Fossil, Ziegler Investment
Mara Levy, Staff
Nector Santiago, Staff
Jennifer Parker-Spark
Rickey Brown, Staff
Paul Leleck, Building Hope

EXCUSED

David Fier, Teacher Rep.; Belkis Sosa, Student Rep; Joseph Cardarelli, Trustee; Akil Bello, Treasurer; James Lema, Trustee; Samuel Rivera, Vice Chair

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

1. WELCOME

Ms. Putz welcomed everyone.

2. BOSTON CHOIR TRIP RECAP

Ms. Levy introduced her video highlighting the choir's trip to Boston, which included a stop at her alma mater, Amherst College, where the students had the opportunity to sing with their choir.

3. ACADEMIC REPORT

(a) Ms. Gaffney reported:

- The WCHS Saturday Academy for Math and Living Environment Regents prep is in effect.
- Students are receiving help during 9th period.
- There is an 80% passing rate.
- Fire drills are up to date.
- Ms. Gaffney gave kudos to the Board for receiving a favorable review with staff.
- The Department of Education visited the School as part of the Annual Comprehensive Review (ACR). The DOE met with leadership, teachers and finance. During the debrief they said they were pleased with the School's preparation. The DOE visited classrooms for a short amount of time and commented on a lack of differentiation. The DOE will send a report and the School will have an opportunity to send back comments.

(b) Ms. Gaffney announced that she will be leaving WCHS at the end of June and thanked the Board and staff for their support. Ms. Eagen expressed gratitude on behalf of the Board for Ms. Gaffney's hard work, energy, and dedication to the School before and after she was principal. A letter will be sent home to parents and it will be announced in the Daily Leaf. Ms. Gaffney offered to help with the transition.

(b) 2016-2017 School Calendar

- The charter requires 180 instructional days. Teaching staff will be paid per-session for Regents week, starting August 14.

- The 2016-2017 school year will begin August 22nd for staff and August 29th for students. The DOE begins September 6th. The School will have off the day before Thanksgiving and two days before Christmas break. The rest of the calendar is the same as the DOE, including spring break, religious holidays and professional development days.
- Summer school will start on July 17th, go straight through August Regents and the start of school. Ms. Putz liked the fact that students will go from summer school right into Regents and thinks this will improve student test scores. Ms. Eagen said that non-instructional staff would like a representative to voice their concerns about working through the summer and not receiving per-session payments. The Board discussed the issue and decided to vote on the calendar up to June 2017.
- Mr. Witherspoon made a motion to approve the calendar to June 2017. Ms. Johnson seconded. All were in favor.

4. FINANCE

(a) April Finance Report: Ms. Fernandez reported that there are no major changes since the last report. As of March 31, 2016 the total revenue for 9 months is \$11.7 million and the total expenses for 9 months are \$11.2 million. Excess of revenue over expenses is \$93,336, which is a little under the budget to date (\$214,000 was the projection). All of the bills were paid on time and she expects no major expenses to arise. The auditors will start the week of May 18th and September 6th is the official audit date.

(b) Ziegler Investment Presentation

- Mr. Leleck introduced Mr. McLaughlin and Mr. Fossel from Ziegler Investments who gave a presentation about a bond deal to purchase the building. Their proposal showed various projections with tax-exempt bonds and how, over the course of 30 years, the school will save money by not paying rent. They mentioned that the current market rate is at an all-time low and reviewed a financial analysis of WCHS. They said the school will have to be rated by Standard and Poor's Financial Services and Ziegler's fee is paid based on the sale of bonds. They asked for questions from the Board and would like to follow up with a phone conversation.

5. TEACHER REPRESENTATIVE REPORT

Ms. Levy gave Mr. Fier's report:

- The teachers would like to revisit the salary piece from March's meeting because it was not fully resolved. The Board asked for a salary spreadsheet and will review it for next month. Ms. Levy also asked for clarity on the school hours and asked when per-session payments start for teachers working clubs starting at 3:45pm. Ms. Fernandez responded that they would start per-session at 3:45pm.

6. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT

This was tabled for next month.

7. PARENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT

Mr. Barreau reported:

- Parents still want better communication with teachers. He said he shared his cell phone number and email address with parents so that they can reach out to him and give feedback. The Board asked for the number of parents attending the conference and discussed incentives such as raffles and gift cards.

8. HR UPDATE

Ms. Barimah proposed amending the bylaws to allow for a staff representative in order to give the non-instructional staff a voice. The Board discussed this and decided to table it. Ms. Eagen said that the organizational chart needs to be amended as well.

Ms. Barimah also said she is in contact with teaching schools and will continue to send out information about

WCHS in order to recruit more teachers.

Ms. Barimah also gave the College Office Report:

- 148 seniors have a post-secondary plan and 87 have completed FAFSAs.
- 139 students applied to college and 14 have made decisions. One student is receiving a full scholarship.
- Juniors are registered for SATs.

9. ENROLLMENT UPDATE

Ms. Pierre reported:

- Student enrollment is 930.
- The lottery went well and the students performed for families. Registration is approaching and the School currently has 200 freshmen for the 2016-2017 year.
- The School is continuing with the Summer Bridge Program, middle school tours, and the Shadow Program.
- There are 675 people on the waiting list for grades 9 through 12.
- Mr. Leleck said he would like to have more students in the building.
- Ms. Eagen said that she would like the School to purchase a software program as well as hire an assistant to aide Ms. Pierre.

10. DEVELOPMENT & COMMUNITY OUTREACH/ ACCOUNTABILITY & COMPLIANCE

Ms. Manion reported:

- The funds for the SUNY Stimulus Project will be distributed.
- Mr. Kern met with visited local organizations alongside the student government.
- P.S. 145 will hold its 5th grade prom at WCHS.
- MR. Kern will be assisting with teacher recruitment.
- The ACR visit went well and Ms. Manion took notes to help us prepare for renewal.

Ms. Eagen mentioned again that differentiation came up during the ACR visit and that WCHS needs to correct this problem.

11. FACILITIES

Mr. James reported:

- Two partitions need to be removed.
- Five classrooms need new carpeting.
- The gyms need rubber flooring.

12. APPROVAL OF BOARD MINUTES

Ms. Johnson made a motion to accept the March 2016 Board Minutes. Mr. Witherspoon seconded. Mr. Hobson abstained. All were in favor.

13. NEXT BOARD MEETING

May 18, 2016 at 5:00PM.

14. EXECUTIVE SESSION

(a) Personnel

15. ADJOURNMENT

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