



MINUTES
Board of Trustees Meeting
May 16, 2017

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

PRESENT

Lourdes Putz, Chair
Charles Hobson, Trustee
Samuel Rivera, Vice Chair
David Fier, Staff Rep.
Evans Barreau, Parent Rep.

GUESTS

Tanishia Williams, Principal
Mary Kenny, Minutes Transcriber
Valerie Jacobson, Staff
Princess Barimah, Staff
John Ballantyne, Staff
Bridget San Filippo, Staff
Joseph DeMarco, Staff
Sean Hatten, Staff
Gonzalo Romero, Staff

Ellen Eagen, Attorney (*via Beam*)
Kate Manion, Staff
Darnell Pierre, Staff
Raymond James, Staff
Amaryllis Valentin, Staff
Matt Temme, Staff
Angelica Romero, Staff
Carlyle James, Staff
Nector Santiago, Staff

EXCUSED

John Witherspoon, Trustee; Marcenia Johnson, Trustee

1. WELCOME

The meeting was called to order at 6:12pm. Ms. Putz welcomed everyone and moved the contract vote to later in the meeting.

2. PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

Ms. Williams spoke about the upcoming prom and noted that Risk Boutique, a Varet Street neighbor, donated over fifty dresses to WCHS students. Several students attended and tried on dresses at the store. It was a big hit.

a. Burning Flame Award

Matt Temme received the Burning Flame Award for June. Mr. Temme is the head of the Athletic Department and is responsible for coordinating all of the student sport events. Ms. Williams stated that he is amazing with students.

b. Student Support Services

David Fier

Mr. Fier presented data from the spring administration of STAR Reading and Math testing, which occurred March 30-April 21. The number of students in need of urgent intervention decreased slightly in both the Reading and Math assessments.

Mr. Fier also presented current HERO data for the following five categories: being on time to class, meeting academic expectations, uniform compliance, being early to school, and being late to school. Mr. Fier noted that there has been a decrease in the number of students out of compliance and stated that teachers are continuously encouraged to give incentives and to track students who are meeting academic expectations. He also stated that there were 8 April suspensions and 0 expulsions.

John Ballantyne

Mr. Ballantyne presented statistics from the College and Career Office. He stated that 881 college acceptance letters have been received. Mr. Ballantyne also pointed out that the mean SAT scores for the WCHS 2018 cohort (995) are above both State and District averages (950, respectively).

d. Data Review

Ms. Williams presented data from the 2016-17 DOE surveys. The number of responses went down this year among parents, teachers, and students. Discussion occurred about how to improve this next year. Ms. Eagen reinforced how critical these survey responses are and stated the importance of rectifying this in 2017-18.

3. FINANCE

The total revenue for 9 months is \$11,621,482 and the total expenses are \$11,591,348. The excess of revenue over expenses for the period is \$30,134.

4. ENROLLMENT

The enrollment breakdown is as follows: 962 in ATS and 952 in Blackbaud; 4 students have been discharged; 108 students have registered for fall.

5. HUMAN RESOURCES

9 teachers are pending certification and 6 have expiring certifications. There are currently 5 teacher vacancies.

6. ACCOUNTABILITY

Ms. Manion reported that she is preparing for the Annual Report and Title I and Title II submissions. She is looking into possibly pursuing Title III funding, pending qualifying numbers that are released in June. She is also working with consultant Bryce Nielsen to complete the Walentas Grant application.

7. SAFETY AND FACILITIES

Mr. James reported that the school has received new proposals for ventilation of the art studio. Work is set to start in August. The school has also received a proposal to enclose rooms 717 and 617. Stair railings will soon be repaired. He also reported that the NYPD has been monitoring school dismissals. Mr. James stated that 16 additional cameras would be beneficial for surveillance. One student was arrested and one client from the neighboring homeless shelter was arrested for assault. All safety officer positions have been filled.

8. OPERATIONS

Ms. Jacobson reported that Regents Exams have been ordered, AP Exams have been completed, and NYSESLAT testing is still in progress. STAR Testing Round 3 will begin on 5/26. Fourth quarter progress reports were issued and online registration for the upcoming year is in progress.

9. APPROVAL OF APRIL 25, 2017 BOARD MINUTES

Mr. Rivera added "All others were in favor" to Approval of February Minutes.

Mr. Hobson made a motion to accept the minutes with additions. Mr. Rivera seconded. All others were in favor.

10. COMMENTS FROM SCHOOL COUNSEL

Ms. Eagen proposed discussion on several topics.

Ventilation of Art Studio

Ms. Eagen told Mr. James that it is his responsibility to ensure that there are three bids for the art studio ventilation. She also stated that it is important for this work to be completed as soon as possible. Mr. James said that it will be done by August 1.

Languages

Ms. Eagen noted the importance of Latin in the curriculum. Williamsburg Charter High School's vision is to help inner city kids excel. As such, Latin separates WCHS from neighboring schools and offers students opportunities to receive full scholarships from ivy-league universities. It is vital that WCHS remain loyal to its

charter and its original mission when determining the 2017-18 language curriculum.

School Surveys

Ms. Eagen expressed concern over school survey numbers and is shocked that such a small percentage of teachers and students completed them. She questioned why support staff familiar with the process did not assist Ms. Williams in a more effective manner. Ms. Eagen encouraged staff to develop stronger streams of communication moving forward.

Budget and Next Steps

Ms. Eagen opened up discussion of finances with comment regarding Mr. Leleck's generosity to WCHS. He dedicates time and energy pro-bono to make the school excellent. She commended his ethical stand in regards to the school's finances.

Ms. Eagen then stated that STAR Assessments have made it possible to better place students in classes based on need. The results, however, also impact the budget and the organizational chart presented to the Board in April. The modified chart originally supported four Assistant Principals. This may not be possible in the budget now due to teacher staffing adjustments in order to properly address student need.

Ms. Eagen pivoted conversation to the potential purchase of the building. The auditors feel as though we are in good shape to do so. If the landlord is willing to sell, the school may be able to independently purchase it, or locate investors willing to raise bonds to help. Ms. Eagen stated she would meet with the landlord following approval of the budget.

11. VOTING

Language

Ms. Williams reviewed the proposal to add languages to the curriculum. She referenced Ms. Eagen's point about Latin being a key element of our charter, but also noted the decline in interest over a three-year period. Ms. Williams stated that she conducted a survey amongst students and discovered that French and Spanish were top choices. She would like to offer Latin for one year and then offer students a choice. The Board requested to review the exact language in the charter before voting.

Ms. Eagen stated that the mission of the charter would remain intact if additional languages were added. This would require adding a teacher, which the school may have internally. The interview and demo process could begin but no contracts could be issued at this time. Ms. Williams revised her request.

Mr. Rivera made a motion to give permission for Williamsburg Charter High School to offer languages other than Latin, specifically, French I and Spanish I in the 2017-2018 school year. Mr. Hobson seconded. All were in favor.

Guidance Counselor and Social Worker Step Salaries for the 2017-18 School Year

Ms. Eagen acknowledged that not discussing these salaries at the April meeting was an oversight. WCHS is committed to matching the DOE pay scale. Mr. Rivera made a motion to accept the Guidance Counselors and Social Workers Step Salary Pay Scale for the 2017-2018 Academic School Year. Mr. Hobson seconded. All were in favor.

Teacher Contract Terms

Ms. Williams distributed a memo to the Board giving historical context regarding the financial burden of teachers breaching contracts after reaping wages at the start of school years. The proposed solution would allow for the term date to start on August 21, 2017. The current contract ends July 31, 2017. Teachers would not receive a pay disbursement until August 31, 2017. Recognizing that this may be a hardship, Ms. Williams proposed offering an advance that would be paid back in two months. This would begin with the September 15,

2017 paycheck.

Discussion occurred regarding per diem rates during professional development and health insurance. Ms. Eagen said that she and Ms. Barimah have been working on the latter for the past two years and feels that the school has been pro-active in coming to an ethical solution. The Board recognized the necessity of this change despite its inconveniences.

Mr. Rivera made a motion to change the term of the teachers' contract to August 21, 2017 through August 14, 2018, with the first salary disbursement on August 31, 2017, and also to delegate to counsel to revise the current contractual language to align with these dates. Mr. Hobson seconded. All were in favor.

Mr. Rivera made a motion to offer teachers the opportunity to get an advance on their 2017-2018 salary, that is limited to 50% of their monthly salary, that they will be required to pay back in no more than four installments that are deducted from their paychecks, the first paycheck being September 15 and the last paycheck being issued October 31 and that this agreement is to be memorialized in an promissory note. Mr. Hobson seconded. All were in favor.

12. ADJOURNMENT

The Board of Trustees Annual Meeting will be held on June 20, 2017 at 6:00pm.

Ms. Manion reminded the Board that next month is Ms. Johnson's last meeting and the Board brainstormed how to fill her vacancy. Ms. Eagen will create a list of possible candidates and reach out to them to invite them to tour the building and be interviewed by Ms. Putz.

13. EXECUTIVE SESSION