

MINUTES
Board of Trustees Annual Meeting
April 24, 2018

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

PRESENT

Lourdes Putz, Chair
Charles Hobson, Trustee
Manuel Morales, Trustee
John Witherspoon, Trustee
Karl Richards, Staff Rep.
Christopher Francis, Stud. Rep.

GUESTS

Tanishia Williams, Principal
Mary Kenny, Minutes Transcriber
Donny Brusca, Staff
Ryan Heyman, Staff
John Ballantyne, Staff
Melissa Wade, Staff
Ann Leghorn, Staff
David Medina, Staff
Lester Samson, Staff
Joseph DeMarco, Staff
Kelly Thomas, Staff
Kelsey Tilin, Staff
Seth Failla, Staff
Kelly Thomas, Staff
Ryan Fuller, Staff
Shante Martin, Staff

Ellen Eagen, Attorney
Kate Manion, Staff
Angela Rogan, Staff
Bryn WorriLOW, Staff
Laura Rackmil, Staff
Angelica Romero, Staff
Matthew Cavenza, Staff
Kathy Fernandez, Staff
Kristen Assenzio, Staff
Ian Cummings, Staff
Angela Rogan, Staff
Valerie Jacobson, Staff
Mariella Mercado, Staff
Raymond James, Staff
J. Kronenberg, Staff

EXCUSED

Samuel Rivera, Vice Chair; Evans Barreau, Parent Rep

1. WELCOME

The meeting was called to order at 6:10pm. Ms. Putz welcomed Christopher Francis, the new Student Representative to the Board.

a) #ENOUGH Student Walk Out

Ms. Thomas and two students discussed the recent #ENOUGH Student Walk Out. Students were permitted to exercise their freedom of speech by participating in a 13 minute walkout, one minute for each person killed at Columbine High School. Students scanned in and out of the building and walked to the corner of Varet Street and Bushwick Avenue with signs. The walkout was a success. A select group of students were accompanied by two chaperones and attended a protest in Washington Square Park. In addition, #ENOUGH student members designed an Advisory presentation that discussed the purpose of their organization, the shootings that occurred at Columbine and Marjory Stoneman Douglass, as well as ways to take action. During this period, students were permitted to make phone calls to New York and national congressmen about specific legislation detailed by the #NationalSchoolWalkout webpage. The film Rachel's Challenge was screened beginning at 10:00am as lunch periods began. An installation for Columbine victims was placed in the lobby for 13 days. It included 13 pairs of shoes to represent each student killed. Ms. Eagen noted that the School community learned from what didn't work in the first walkout and the second one was drastically improved. She thanked students and staff for participating and working together. Ms. Eagen stated that the School will always support student voice and encouraged the staff to continue to empower student voice.

b) Staff Rep. Report: Karl Richards

Mr. Richards stated that he appreciates the support he has been receiving from staff. He met with Mr. Failla and Mr. Fier, two former Staff Representatives, to learn how he can best shape the role. Mr. Richards will be holding office hours and invited staff to come talk to him with any concerns.

c) Student Rep. Report: Christopher Francis

Mr. Francis introduced himself to the Board. He's a graduating senior who feels this role will help him become a future leader. Mr. Francis discussed his busy schedule and his internship with Google, where he is learning about Virtual Reality (VR) technology. He will major in Computer Science next year at the New York Institute of Technology.

2. APPROVAL OF BOARD MINUTES

- Mr. Morales made a Motion to approve the March 20, 2018 Board Minutes. Mr. Witherspoon seconded. Mr. Hobson Abstained. All were in favor.

3. BURNING FLAME AWARD

The Burning Flame award was given to Mariella Mercado, Operations Associate. Ms. Mercado has done an exceptional job taking on student enrollment. Ms. Mercado thanked Ms. Williams and stated that she couldn't have done it without Allison Witkowski (Operations Associate).

4. ACADEMIC REPORT

a) Bell Schedule

Ms. Williams reviewed two options proposed for next year and explained the differences:

- Option One will have Advisory Class consistently after 2nd Period.
- Option Two will have Advisory Class rotating. The day would be divided into 9 regular periods instead of the current 8 periods, and Advisory would be scheduled as a period in the student's day. The longer 75 minute periods are reduced to 60 minutes.

In both options, the rotation of bands is eliminated.

Ms. Williams opened the floor to questions and comments regarding Advisors, students who cut class, as well as Advisory credits and curriculum. Ms. Eagen asked if Advisory could center around college and career building curriculum. Discussion occurred about the best ways to utilize this time moving forward, especially with consideration to the upcoming charter renewal. The Board asked Ms. Williams to hold a forum to gather input from the community on this issue.

b) 2018-2019 School Calendar

Ms. Williams gave an overview of the proposed 2018-2019 calendar, which will consist of: 13 Holidays, 17 days total for winter, midwinter, and spring recess, 6 conference days, 13 professional development days, 7 orientation days, and 10 Regents days, for a total of 182 official student school days and 196 staff days. The first day of school is August 27 for students and August 20 for staff. Teachers will be required to attend three days of professional development, with options starting in July. Ms. Williams opened the floor for discussion. Approval of the calendar was tabled for May. The Board asked Ms. Williams to hold a forum to gather input from the community on this issue.

c) Uniforms

Mr. Ballantyne discussed ways to address uniform infractions. Brainstorms from a recent "UniForum" event included: uniform rentals, modified consequences, improved communication, and uniform lotteries.

d) Teacher Evaluations

Ms. Williams reported that observations and feedback have been completed. Teachers were given a rubric with 20 indicators and received feedback on 12 of them. Scores were based on a variety of factors, including averages compared to peers, and certification. Teachers have been given the opportunity to respond to their evaluations via Google Forms. Ms. Williams opened the discussion. Teachers present brought up the need for mentorship and questioned some of the scoring - such as, whether or not parent contact, use of Hero, and Advisory curriculums were factored into the scores. Ms. Eagen mentioned concern about comparing first year and seventh year teachers. Ms. Eagen also stated that teachers who were placed on probation following their evaluations should see it as a growing process. The use of probation is to propel teachers to do better; it is not intended to be punitive. One question from the teacher audience was how the school will assist teachers in improving. Ms. Williams and the Board responded that the School is currently reviewing different methods including outside consultant, internal coaches, professional development, etc.

5. RECRUITMENT AND ENROLLMENT

a) Lottery

Ms. Mercado reported that 240 students accepted seats after 52 families attended the Round 1 Lottery on April 10. 164 students are fully registered.

b) Recruitment

Ms. Martin reported that she and Ms. Alcantara have visited local community centers and the Pentecostal Church in hopes of forming more partnerships in the area.

c) Enrollment

12 students enrolled this month and four have graduated with Regents Diplomas. The current enrollment is 947 in PowerSchool and 945 in ATS. Ms. Fernandez stated that there is a deficit of \$387,000 due to low enrollment. She will budget for 943 next year and will prepare numbers for the May meeting.

6. FINANCE

a) Pay Scale

Ms. Fernandez presented instructional pay scales with increases of 4%, 5%, and 6% across the board. Mr. Morales said he was not comfortable voting on the pay scale increase based on the information provided. Ms. Williams stated that increases would first be given to instructional staff and that budgetary issues due to low enrollment would be fixed the following year. Ms. Eagen discussed Cost of Living Allowance (COLA). Mr. Morales reiterated that he was not comfortable voting at this time. He proposed a Finance Committee meeting. Ms. Eagen drafted a motion stating that the Board has approved a 5% increase in teacher salaries pending the Board Treasurer vetting the percentage based on other revenue factors. The Board was comfortable with that.

- Mr. Morales made a motion approving a 5% increase in teacher salaries pending the Board Treasurer vetting the percentage based on other revenue factors. Mr. Witherspoon seconded. All were in favor.

7. FACILITIES AND SAFETY

a) Facilities

Mr. James reported that there have been issues with some exterior window leaks; the heating units are ready for shut down in the summer; and the elevator inspector issued two violations.

b) Safety

Ms. Eagen stated that additional security has been placed in the school in light of a sensitive safety concern regarding a former employee. She stated that she would be happy to discuss the matter privately with staff.

8. ACCOUNTABILITY AND DEVELOPMENT

a) NYC DOE Surveys

Ms. Manion reported that the NYC DOE Survey collection is complete and that the School collected more surveys across the board than in 2016-2017. She also stated that the School surpassed its Organizational Goals of collecting 50% in parent, student, and staff surveys.

b) Title I and Title II Audit

Ms. Manion stated that WCHS was selected to participate in a random desk audit of its Title I and Title II funding. She has collected consultation minutes, emails, agendas, and invoices.

9. ADJOURNMENT

- Mr. Witherspoon made a Motion to adjourn. Mr. Hobson seconded. All were in Favor.