



MINUTES

Board of Trustees Meeting

February 15, 2022

The meeting was held via Google Meets at 6:07pm.

PRESENT

Lourdes Putz, Chair
Samuel Rivera, Trustee
John Witherspoon, Trustee
Ahmad Duwaik, Trustee

GUESTS

Jahi Bashir, Head of School
Ellen Eagen, School Attorney
Over 35 Virtual Participants

Val Jacobson, Head of Operations
Mary Kenny, Minutes Transcriber

EXCUSED: Kathleen Gaffney, Trustee

1. WELCOME

Ms. Putz welcomed everyone to the meeting. She reviewed the Agenda.

2. APPROVAL OF JANUARY 25, 2022 BOARD MINUTES

- Mr. Rivera made a motion to approve the January Board Minutes pending school counsel review. Mr. Duwaik seconded. All were in favor.

3. ACADEMICS

Mr. Bashir discussed the temporary transition to remote instruction from February 7-1 due to a facilities issue. During this time, students participated in remote learning via Canvas. School resumed in-person on Monday, February 14. STAR Testing will take place February 16-18 and the PSAT is scheduled for March 23. Mr. Bashir and Academy Leaders are working to ensure students who are scheduled for in-person learning are attending in-person. Only 28 students have been approved for remote learning yet other students have been participating via the remote platform as well. Efforts to increase attendance are ongoing. Staff are focusing on rewarding positive student behavior and increasing student activities at the school. Mr. Bashir has begun work on 2022-23 schedules.

143/212 seniors are on track to graduate. 56 additional students can graduate in June with credit recovery options. 4 5th year seniors graduated in January. 31/52 5th year seniors are engaged and working towards graduation. The College and Career office continues to send out a monthly newsletter. A second trimester class is in place. FAFSA workshops are ongoing and college tours continue. 138 students have applied to CUNY schools. 82 have applied to SUNY and or private colleges. 60 students have been accepted by one or more colleges. Student acceptances are being recognized on social media. The Board discussed graduation planning, remote students and teacher evaluations.

4. OPERATIONS

Ms. Jacobson reported that Operations staff have distributed mid-winter break at-home COVID-19 test kits to all students; coordinated weekly NYC DOE onsite COVID-9 testing for 20% of students with consent forms; submitted FY22 Per Pupil Billing Invoice #5 (estimated FTE 955.4) and 2022-23 enrollment projections; collaborated with College and Career Readiness and SNAS Departments to prepare proctor training, schedules, rooms, testing accommodations, and the bell schedules for PSAT Grade 9 and SAT Grade 11 on March 23. She is continuing to interview for the following vacancies: HR Manager, Paraprofessional, Speech Pathologist, Hall Monitor, Lunch Associate, and coverages for teacher vacancies. Ms. Jacobson and Mr. Bashir hosted a Parent Town Hall on February 10 at 6pm and discussed facilities updates, temporary remote learning, COVID-19, and return to in-person instruction. PowerSchool Dashboards and Swipe implementation continue. She is continuing to collaborate with instructional leadership in drafting the 2022-23 calendar and FY23 budget process.

Ms. Jacobson also reported that the Operations team is collaborating with Parent Coordinator and Academy Leaders to launch NYC DOE Surveys on February 14 which will run through March 25.

980/1,294 laptops are loaned to students. 174 laptops remain in stock. 50 laptops were reported lost. 90 laptops are in need of repair. She will be working to repair or replace laptops. 123/250 wifi hotspots have been distributed.

5. COVID UPDATE

Ms. Jacobson reviewed local COVID rates. According to the CDC, COVID transmission in Kings County is considered “High” as of February 7. The 7-day rolling average in NYC is 4.52% as of February 4. The majority of COVID Cases are from unvaccinated individuals. The 7-day COVID positivity average in 11206 is 2.02%. 58.03% of 11206 are vaccinated. The Omicron variant is present in 98% of tested cases in NYC. The Delta variant is present in 1% of cases. COVID-19 Key Indicators (percent positive, confirmed cases, probable causes, hospitalizations, and confirmed deaths) are all decreasing.

Ms. Manion stated that weekly PCR testing is ongoing. 50-90 students are tested per week. All students will be sent home with at home kits prior to mid-winter break. NYS COVID reporting continues. She and Ms. Jacobson continue to follow updated quarantine/isolation guidance. Vaccine education campaigns continue.

6. FACILITIES

Mr. Morales updated the Board on the purchase of 188 Varet Street, the property next door to the school, for the purpose of building a gymnasium and administrative offices. He announced that WCHS officially owns the building as of February 10. Mr. Morales asked the Board to give approval to an Environmental Assessment Statement Proposal so that the project can move forward. After obtaining three bids, he is proposing we go with Philip Habib & Associates, the least costly for the service. The architect will file the plans with the city but expects a snag because the property is not zoned for a school and will need a permit. The Board of Standard and Appeals will review the application and most likely grant it. Then he has 30 days to file the application, which will include the Environmental Assessment.

The Board discussed the project finances. Ms. Putz suggested consulting Building Hope. Mr. Morales clarified the parties working on the project. Ms. Eagen asked Mr. Morales about the three proposals and he said they were brought in by the land-use attorneys who have experience with the vendors. He stated that the vendors are aware of the requirements for the Environmental Assessment applications. Mr. Rivera agreed that they are well-known and have a knowledgeable staff.

- Mr. Witherspoon made a motion for Philip Habib & Associates to work on the Environmental Assessment Statement Proposal after reviewing the other bids and subject to legal approval. Mr. Rivera seconded and Mr. Duwaik abstained. All others were in favor.

Mr. Morales said that he will have renderings to show the Board at the next meeting. Ms. Eagen reminded the Board that Mr. Morales is no longer a Board member and that he is a separate paid entity delegated to do this work, so it is important that a member of the Board be present on the calls with the architect.

Mr. James reported that the school had a leak issue due to an underground Con Edison problem. This resulted in a gas line issue. The lines were repaired on February 8. Renovations to the staff lounge are ongoing. The school’s fire pump is scheduled for repair to replace the packing seals that have become worn. The vendor rescheduled the original work date. Building inspections were conducted during cold weather for potential freezing pipes. The school’s Department of Building hearing for a boiler room infraction was completed with a reduced fine. The FDNY responded to the school two times due to a National Grid issue.

7. SAFETY

Mr. James reported that there was one student altercation reported off property. All security cameras were inspected. Repairs were made where needed. A proposal is being submitted to add extra cameras to the facility. The Office of Emergency Management (OEM) visited the school on February 4 regarding the Con Edison water leak issue. Bag checks were conducted randomly throughout the month.

8. ENROLLMENT/RECRUITMENT

Enrollment is 981 in both Powerschool and ATS. The FTE is 955.4. These numbers include 2 pending discharge and 28 with zero attendance. There have been 90 discharges and 39 will not attend since July 1. Enrollment by Grade is as follows: 247 in Grade 9; 297 in Grade 10; 191 in Grade 11; and, 246 in Grade 12.

Open houses occur the first Saturday of every month. The next one is March 5. 9 people attended the February 5 open house. As of February 7, 283 applications for 2022-23 have been received. The application deadline is April 1 and the lottery is April 4 at 6pm.

Recruitment efforts are ongoing, including: attendance at middle school fairs, ad placements in El Diario, Brooklyn Family Magazine, and Schneps Media, Daily News email blasts, increased online marketing and consulting with our Google Ads rep, upcoming radio and/or movie ads, and bus ads.

9. FINANCES

As of December 31, 2021, the total collected revenue is \$9,125,534 and expenses are \$8,985,964. The total excess of revenue over expenses is \$139,570. The Board reviewed total liabilities/net assets. Mr. Duwaik asked about the lease increases per year.

10. ACCOUNTABILITY & DEVELOPMENT

Ms. Manion reported that she is compiling data for the Civil Rights Data Collection (CRDC) with Karl Richards. She thanked the Academy Leaders and Ms. Cruz for assisting as well. ARP-ESSER funds have been approved. Information about the spring check-in visit from SED is forthcoming.

The New York City Charter Center invited Mr. Bashir, Ms. Jacobson, and Ms. Manion to meet with Jonathan Harkavy from Assemblywoman Maritza Davaila's office. She will be following up with events to invite her to. Borough President Reynoso has been invited to speak at graduation on January 28.

11. PARENT LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

Ms. McFadden stated that the next PLC meeting will be on February 17 at 6pm. A representative from the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) will be presenting information for families about ending the silence surrounding mental health. Additional student issues such as working papers, taxes, and COVID-testing will be discussed.

12. ADJOURNMENT

- Mr. Duwaik made a motion to close the meeting. Mr. Rivera seconded the motion. All were in favor.