

The Bronx Charter School for Children

Board Meeting Minutes

January 20, 2022

A meeting of the Board of Trustees (the “Board”) of The Bronx Charter School of Children was held virtually on January 20, 2022.

The following members of the Board were present:

Denise Alexander (Ex-Officio, Executive Director), Brigitte Bentele, Bruce Greenwald, Paul Libretta, Jane Ehrenberg Rosen (chair), Nicole Schmidt, Sydney Blair, Hayden Chan, Mark A. Samuel, and Larry Slous

Absent were: Joanne Carris

Guests included Richard Gonzalez (Middle School Principal), Anastasiya Rosenbaum (Director of Finance), and Candice Manzano (Director of Operations)

The meeting was called to order at 4:32pm.

Minutes of November Meeting

The Board:

VOTED:

To approve the minutes of the November Board meeting held on November 18, 2021.

Minutes of December Meeting

The Board:

VOTED:

To approve the minutes of December Board meeting held on December 16, 2021.

Executive Director

A week ago the DOE offered remote option schooling for scholars. TBCSC has no plans to offer the remote option, unless there is a medical exemption. We now have 2 scholars with medical exemptions within the same family. Remote option not supported by some members of the board, due to the negative impact of extended remote learning. Middle School Principal does not support as the social, emotional and education impacts are positive when in person. Fear of some families, one member of the family has an autoimmune condition and another family has comorbidity. Scholars who are home have tested positive in quarantine. Some scholars are not being sent back by families. Some parents are considering a discharge their children if no remote option is offered, attendance stands at 80%. Scholars mostly got sick outside of school. Teachers were very concerned with the potential of getting sick as kids are exposed to external social environments. No changes in our current policy.

Middle School Principal

Focus on test preparation, humanities, ELA and Social studies. Conducting weekly quizzes, skills and standards assessment. Before Xmas break most scholars were scoring above average. Reallocating teacher resources to assist with scholars to ensure mastery for high performing scholars and the scholars who require more attention stays with the current teacher. Math DCI hired, 6th and 7th grade instituting "problem of the day" program to identify gaps to reinforce skills. STEM competition (Math/Science) after the spring break the 7th grade will participate in the "Science bowl" and 6th "water tower" experiment projects. Operations - training on general response plan, shelter in place, hard/soft lock down and fire drills. We are working on increasing the scholar's stamina as we are concerned as they give up too easily. To enhance stamina we are "gamifying" certain aspects of learning to cross the finish line. At this point we would have paid for scoring (writing portion), we participate in the writing consortium and our teacher participate

Academic Committee

NWEA mid years were not given. We are considering changing vacation schedule since the math test is after the break. Positive staff feedback for moving spring break. There are still a number personnel vacancies. Will try to get a waiver of test for lower grades. Upper grade has a cumulative ELA test and the window is pushed to Feb break. Consider commercial test prep program, we have funds allocated.

Development

Actively recruiting for new Director of Development & Partnerships. Bethany (former Director) reviewing resumes and the Committee has met with two recruitment firms. The average lead time to recruit replacement can take up to 3 - 4 months. The committee is comfortable with both recruiting firms and confident we will have someone by next year. The development Guild spent time with Denise with questions, skillset, social media and marketing. Scion - no feedback on out post, follow up with needs assessment and questionnaires. Annual appeal - support music "Ariel Santos Fund"? Board to review letter, website "annual appeal page", then provide feedback to Denise. What is the focus and appeal? Would this maximize the returns? Denise will check with Bethany to expand the appeal beyond music.

Finance

ESSER-3 will cover expenses next year and following two years for expenses such as salaries for lower school teachers and interventionist.

Governance

Move ahead with recruiting new prospective board member Maria. Propose conducting Situation analysis which will include, interview 12 - 14 staff/teachers to assess the current state of the school.

Executive Committee

Proposed conducting an Exit Interview with outgoing lower school principal. Chair hoping to end tenure by the 1st of July 2022, Nicole is spearheading a task force for a replacement.

Facilities

No change. Contingency plans for middle school space - working with architect to review what would be involved in 388 Willis to accommodate one additional grade (6th grade) and at 138th street the 7th and 8th grade will continue to occupy. Permanent space options? Developer 629 Cortland 151 - 152nd street (NW of the HUB subway space), letter of intent issued (then lease), building is empty, take existing space add an additional floor, some financial modeling.

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 6:08 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Hayden Chan, Secretary