

# **The Bronx Charter School for Children**

## **Board Meeting Minutes**

**February 17, 2022**

A meeting of the Board of Trustees (the “Board”) of The Bronx Charter School of Children was held virtually on February 17, 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), Tina Maiuolo (Director of Curriculum)

The meeting was called to order at 4:31pm.

### **Minutes of January Meeting**

The Board:

#### **VOTED:**

To approve the minutes of the January Board meeting with corrections held on January 20, 2022.

### **Middle School Building**

Facilities have not been available since the December break, Jan 18. The issue began with a pipe burst that may have been related to work begin conducted on the nearby Montessori school, which led to our water pump failure and pipe connections clogged. February 28<sup>th</sup> is the most optimistic projections when we can return to the building. Exploring the possibility of any recourse with Landlord. Force Majeure no insurance recourse, no offset? Has due diligence been exercised with all the repairs? Candice will provide a more detail analysis report with the water pump/pressure problems.

### **Spring Vacation**

Rescheduled to May 2 - 6th with Good Friday off.

### **Personnel**

Actively hiring teachers for next Spring - contact local teacher colleges. Hired for 2nd grade classroom. How many open positions now?

### **Executive Director Report**

Staff survey distributed electronically to Middle and Elementary school staff follow by paper/pencil survey to K-7 families. Bonnie Halloran prepares the Academic report and there was a reformat.

Rigor and consistency, Standard Elem/MS. Clear expectations # homework, # assignments which directs consistency. Issue is practitioner follow through. Some teachers actively input grades, some not. Working on managing this for consistency.

Tina, Richard and Bonnie will attend a conference (standards, assessment and grading "Fair grading" reporting practices).

Staff morale - LS. Tina met with LS staff to identify wants and shortcomings

- community and team building
- get to know each other better not only focus on work
- goal to boost staff morale
- well received

Catapult - work with Tina

Politico's - invited to join a coalition. Political advocacy element, engaging with elected officials to get to know our school better. Worked in the past "11 Zombie Schools" coalition. The TBSCS should be on their mailing list and forward to the board.

### **Tina Maiuolo**

Over 11 years at TBCSC, 1st grade, 2nd, reading, coach, instructional and development for teachers. Teams got together to paint TBCSC, team building exercises. Looking at data focus on 3-5, including more test prep, target specific scholars, what standards are foundational for each grade to prepare for their next year. Observe teachers and give feedback, working with Marina. Any surprises when conducting the individual interviews - craving team building/community building. Going back to the basics of building the teachers. We continually discuss how to achieve educational excellence? Ultimately there is no magic formula. We have been fine tuning our approaches, small changes in curriculum, grouping, supporting teachers, parents. The last major change was 5 or 6 years ago. When practitioners "teachers" leave the school they do not return. When teachers stay they can grow with the school. New teachers require tweaking and adjusting. Eureka in the first year implemented with Fidelity was challenging since the scholars educational foundation was not strong enough. The emphasis now is towards more testing as we have NWEA as a benchmark assessment from academic year 2019 - 2020. Need to figure out a method to assess our scholars, using this platform.

### **Richard Gonzalez**

Cumulative ELA completed - good news noticed growth specifically 6th grade one section of multiple choice questions targeting terminology. Performance in class not reflected on tests. Growth increase in ELA proficiency from grades 6th – 9<sup>th</sup>. Is the improvement in test scores attributed to test taking, curriculum or both? Teachers have been working on increasing scholar's stamina. The rooms were freezing in the afternoon which may have impacted their stamina.

## **Candice Manzano**

Presented 2021 – 2022 Recruitment Strategies

We are able to offer spaces for scholars as long as it does not go oversubscribed. Lottery is used when oversubscribed. When we attended physical fairs we had more success catching families. Lottery date April 5th. Need to constantly engage 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades to share our academics and family services educational foundation.

What can we do programmatically to appeal to the scholars? Extracurricular, what sports do you offer?

## **Academics**

Brigitte Bentele

NWEA – First and second grade slippage is being addressed. The pace of learning has been slower. Maria Fornez looking at each scholar from 2<sup>nd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> grade further assess goals. K-1 is experiencing difficulty with using the iPad in NWEA. Stamina is still an issue for our scholars. It may take 3 - 4 years to overcome the effects of the pandemic on the scholars.

## **Development**

Development Guild proposal comes at a high cost, but they will also help onboarding process. What is the likelihood of filling position and our job description feedback? The Guild will be compensated for the first 3 months even if the position is not filled. The Guild does not think it will be difficult to find the right person. Key consideration is what we want in a Development Director. The job description was reviewed and one suggestion is we need support in marketing and branding (which not in our job responsibilities). We were provided an estimate of 4-5 months to identify and hire the Director of Development once we initiate the proposal. Reference checking into Development Guild returned very favorable feedback. We do not recoup the initial fees if a candidate is not identified. We want grant seeking and writing, more robust fundraising plans with the board. Most of the successful fundraising starts from the board and expands from there. Development Committee identified Grant writing is a priority. The board needs to identify exactly what we want from a Director of Development. Paul to review at the contract/proposal with the Development Guild

The Board:

### **VOTED:**

To approve to adopt Developer Guild contract, pending their review and response to our questions. “Is our job description attached in the contract?”

## **Annual appeal**

No additional feedback.

## **Finance**

January revenue lower than projected, but higher than budgeted. Per Pupil funding is under budget, less students. ESSR2/ESSR3 approved part of revenue. Cash enough to cover 5 months in expenses. Shortfall in enrollment cushioned by ESSR. 4.7% increase in per/pupil rate 2022-23, normally modeled at 2%.

The Board:

**VOTED 6:28 pm:**

To approve to Architect agreement to consult - 629 Cortland, to reconfigure 388 Willis accommodate space for another grade.

**Governance**

Potential candidate scheduled to meet the board next month, has toured the school, and met with Jane and Denise. Continue to work with Board Assist for more candidates.

Consulting moving forward with Terra Winston. Jane will circulate the proposal to the board to review and request unanimous consent to move forward.

**Facilities**

629 Cortland, submitted comments to developers. We want to meet with the developers and go over the open points. Would like to have Denise and Candice tour the facility as part of our due diligence. No further communications about 138th street facilities about potential additional space.

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 6:40 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Hayden Chan, Secretary