

The Bronx Charter School for Children

Board Meeting Minutes

June 16, 2022

A meeting of the Board of Trustees (the “Board”) of The Bronx Charter School of Children was held on June 16, 2022, at 4:30pm.

Present: Denise Alexander (Ex-Officio, Executive Director), Maria Aveledo, Sydney Blair, Joanne Carris, Bruce Greenwald, Paul Libretta, Jane Ehrenberg Rosen (chair), Mark A. Samuel and Larry Slous

Absent: Brigitte Bentele, Hayden Chan, Nicole Schmidt

Guests included Richard Gonzalez (Middle School Principal), Bonnie Halloran (Director of Assessment), Tina Maiuolo (Elementary School Principal), Candice Manzano (Director of Operations), Anastaysia Rosenbaum (Director of Finance).

The meeting was called to order at 4:34pm by Jane Ehrenberg Rosen.

The minutes for the April 21, 2022 meeting were approved as written. The minutes for the May 19, 2022 minutes were approved as corrected.

Executive Director Report. When questioned, Denise talked about the numbers relating to enrollment that appear in her report: Intent to Return, Current Enrollment, Retentions, Current Counts.

New staff members will report on August 16, all returning staff members will come in on August 17. We will hold a Back to School Fair, like a Block Party on August 19. Interviews are ongoing for open positions.

Denise talked about the work being done by the Academic Leadership Team with respect to vision, mission, and core values. They have analyzed and refined these to ensure they are appropriate. They have done the same with reporting structures and professional development. The Executive Leadership Team has done work with respect to these (vision, mission, and core values) as well.

Grade 7 will be housed at 388 Willis; grades 6 and 8 will be housed at 423 138th St. Grades 6 and 8 are the entering and leaving grades of the division.

Tina Maiuolo, Elementary School Principal. Tina talked about the end of year activities: Field Day (the first time in three years), Fifth Grade Walk Over to the Middle School. She also talked about bringing together elementary and middle school teachers with an eye toward working together and vertical integration of curriculum.

Richard Gonzalez, Middle School Principal. Richard mentioned that the staff has been focused

on preparing for the Grade 8 program next year. The schedule is almost complete.

Academic Committee. Jane reported on the Academic Committee meeting on June 9.

Bonnie Halloran reported on end of the year NWEA data. Many of our students made gains over the year and are on grade level. Tina and Richard commented on these test results and plans for next year in both English/language arts and in mathematics for their respective levels. Stamina is an issue for many of the children when taking tests. Richard noted that it is hard to keep the momentum going; the students knew that the SED testing in March and April was “high stakes” testing, and did not focus as much on EOY NWEA testing. Some students found it hard to focus on longer reading passages.

A Board member asked if there were any surprises in the EOY data. Both principals said there were no big surprises. The NWEA tests are electronic and this is hard for many in the primary grades. The SED tests are pencil and paper.

The principals explained about the retentions for this school year. Retention determined using: Academic Performance, NWEA testing, Attendance – if 19, or more than 10% of total school days are missed, child is often retained. Retention is usually higher in grades, K-2; 20+ retentions likely in K-5; 4 in middle School – 2 in each grade. Final letter with respect to retention has been sent to parents.

We will implement standard based grading next year.

Facilities Committee. Bruce and Larry reported that they are close to a final lease (a 32 year lease) for the space at 629 Courtlandt which will house grades 6, 7 and 8. The space should be ready for occupancy by Summer 2024. This lease will put considerable financial pressure on the School; we have a comfortable cash balance now, but over the next two years much of that could evaporate. Our financial position is based on enrollment. This is the best space we have seen during our search over nearly two and a half years; we will receive rental assistance for middle school grades.

The lease will be between the Developer and The Friends of The Bronx Charter School for Children; however, the School will need to guarantee the lease. The Board approved the resolutions:

WHEREAS, The Friends of Bronx Charter School for Children (“FOBCCS”) is negotiating a certain Lease Agreement (the “Lease”) by and between FOBCCS and BM Courtlandt LLC, whereby FOBCCS will lease a school building at 629 Courtlandt Avenue, LLC as more fully described in the Lease;

WHEREAS, as a condition to entering into the Lease with FOBCCS, the Landlord required the The Bronx Charter School for Children (the “School”) to guaranty FOBCCS’s obligations under the Lease pursuant to a Guaranty Agreement (the “Guaranty”) by the School in favor of Landlord, which was previously circulated to FOBCCS;

WHEREAS, the School desires to sublease the entire property and improvements described in the Lease from FOBCCS, upon terms and subject to conditions to be negotiated by FOBCCS and the School (the “Sublease”) upon execution of the Lease;

NOWHEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that it is in the best interest of the School, and the School be, and hereby is, authorized and directed, to enter into the Guaranty and such other documents related to the Guaranty, in substantially the form presented to the Board, with such changes, modifications and amendments to the Guaranty and such other documents as any officer of the School (each an “Authorized Person”) may, jointly or severally, in such person’s discretion approve, which approval shall be conclusively evidenced by the execution and delivery of the Guaranty by the School;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that each Authorized Person, be, and hereby are, jointly or severally, authorized and directed, at any time and from time to time, to do all such things and acts and to execute and deliver all such applications, documents and instruments in writing and to expend such fees for and on behalf of the School as may be necessary or advisable in order to give effect to and, generally, carry out the intent of these resolutions including, without limitation, to execute and deliver any instruments and documents required in connection with the foregoing, in the name and on behalf of the School, on such terms and conditions and in such form deemed necessary or desirable and approved by such Authorized Person with such changes, modifications and amendments thereto as such Authorized Person may in such person’s discretion approve, which approval shall be conclusively evidenced by the execution and delivery of such applications, documents and instruments in writing; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that all actions previously taken by any Authorized Person in furtherance of the foregoing resolutions, including, without limitation, entering into the Guaranty, are hereby ratified and confirmed.

Development Committee. We have a candidate for the Director of Development position, Latoya Williams, who was interviewed by Denise and Jane at School and later interviewed by the Development Committee (Nicole and Joanne). We have asked for references and a writing sample for Latoya. Development Guild has another candidate, Juliana Cope. We will interview her soon – we want to be able to compare candidates.

We have a Marketing Proposal from Top. It includes marketing and branding; it would provide a process for interviewing and surveying various constituent groups in order to establish our identity; we want and need to separate ourselves from others in our area. The fee is high (\$200,000) for one year. The cost for branding is \$35,000 and the fee would be \$15,000/month for creating a central, unified idea. The Board feels that Top is likely a group that works with much larger and more well-resourced organizations than ours; we need to negotiate the contract. The Board asked Denise and Candice and Denise to attempt to do that and report back to us.

Finance Committee. Anastaysia reported on the financial condition of the School.

Budget. The FY 2023 budget must be submitted to the State Education Department by the 30 of June. This budget was distributed to the Board in May. There are actually two budgets proposed – these have been created to deal with different enrollment numbers. The Board approved the proposed budgets for FY2023.

Insurance. The Board took up the insurance issue as our insurance coverage must be renewed. We will continue the same insurance coverage and the same carrier as before. Our rates have increased as we have added students with the addition of middle school grades. The Board approved the insurance coverage quoted by Austin and Company for the coming year.

Governance. Paul indicated that the Board will delay the evaluation of the Executive Director for a month. Jane indicated that Terra Winston has said she will have finished her work and be ready to present to the Board in July. We will devote the July Board meeting to learning about her findings.

Secretary to the Board. The job description for the Secretary to the Board was distributed prior to the May meeting and discussed then. A statement of likely cost was distributed prior to this meeting. The Board approved this position.

A motion was made, seconded, and passed to adjourn the public session of the meeting at 6:29p.

Respectfully submitted,

Jane Ehrenberg Rosen, Acting Secretary