

The Bronx Charter School for Children

Board Meeting Minutes

August 19, 2021

A meeting of the Board of Trustees (the “Board”) of The Bronx Charter School of Children was held virtually on August 19, at 4:34pm.

The following members of the Board and Administration were present:

Denise Alexander (Ex-Officio, Executive Director), Jane Ehrenberg Rosen (chair), Hayden Chan (Secretary), Larry Slous, Krista Hammond, Paul Libretta, Brigitte Bentele, Bruce Greenwald, Joanne Carris, Nicole Schmidt, Bethany Goldszer (Director of Development and Community Partnerships), Anastasiya Rosenbaum (Director of Finance), Candice Manzano (Director of Operations) and Richard Gonzalez (MS).

Sydney Blair and Mark A. Samuel, were absent.

Minutes of Previous Meeting

The Board:

VOTED:

To approve the minutes with minor revisions of the last Board meeting held on July 15, 2021.

COVID/Middle & Elementary School

Students and Staff returned to school on August 9, 2021, due to COVID testing one staff member was tested positive but this person did not have much contact to anyone in the school. Lower school families were nervous once they were informed of the positive test. As such CDC guidelines were maintained - masks are required for everyone in the school, scholars maintained 3 feet distancing in class, Physical Education/Chorus maintained 6 feet distancing, Dining 6 feet apart and eating in different places or areas. DOH has not strayed from CDC guidelines, therefore, we are complying with CDC. This stance has been adopted similarly by Charter schools across NYC. Vaccinated staff required to submit proof today August 19, 2021 and Un-Vaccinated staff will be required to get weekly testing and submit results to the school. Elementary and Middle School orientation - Elementary school families voiced more concerns than Middle School. Some complained that the children should not be attending school physically and will share view with local officials. Preparation for school closure is ongoing based on experiences from other schools in the coming weeks. Some families kept electronic devices (Chromebooks) and others returned, we are recommending families to take loaner devices now. Last year some families did not take device due to incompatibility issues and this year we are proactively testing efficacy of devices. Jane Ehrenberg Rosen and Denise Alexander primary message is to encourage vaccinations for staff. In addition, communicating with families that attendance counts and Pods are being employed. Intervention groups will occur at the same time as core lessons and Intervention group teachers will interact with different pods. DOH not indicating that two positive COVID cases results in school shut down. Denise will disseminate the percentage of vaccinated to the board when available. Middle School will not be opening for in person learning the following week and will conduct remote learning. We are not ready to host middle school scholars as the furniture ordered is being delayed due to supply chain issues and

the WiFi setup expected to be completed by Saturday. Exploring the possibility of renting furniture for Middle School as a stop gap measure until the permanent furniture arrives. Middle School families have been notified of the delay and on Friday there will be a community event. We have experienced quite a bit of resignations: administrator, one Elementary teacher, Middle School Math/Science and 2 - 3 additional resignations this week. Reasons attributed to relocation therefore found new employment closer to home, looking for work life balance and new hires are being aggressively courted. DOE jobs are particularly enticing for teachers and sign on bonuses are being offered for Spec ED teachers. Have not been able to fill teacher vacancy in Elementary Art and Spanish. We have not hired MS operational facilities as we don't have facilities.

Academic

Mathematics scholar achievement is weaker and ELA scholar achievement stayed consistent compared with data two years ago. A new designed guided math program has been initiated, which involves small group instructions tailored to each scholars needs. Determining scholar's level of progress has been hard to monitor since we were remote. The biggest gains were focused on the conceptual consistent coaching with scholars. Another program to improve academics is to provide intervention for short period of time in the form of targeted support on a daily basis. Interventionist will have data coaches assigned to ensure alignment with the program. This will enable teachers to zero in on discreet skills and frequently monitor progress. Middle School will schedule 2 hour blocks every other day to support teachers to maximize those multi-tiered system and the metamorphosis Middle School math program development. Had it been a regular school year, guide and intervention math programs would have been much more effective. Cumulatives (resemble state test) we not began because of remote learning. Mock assessments in the summer did not provide enough data to compare, since the sample size was not adequate enough to provide reliable data. The ELA and math assessment was same test as 2018, therefore the outcome was not reliable.

Academic Committee

The committee has not met. Denise Alexander, Jane Ehrenberg Rosen and Brigitte Bentele will review Academic calendar and meet monthly to review data for proficiency of learning goals, benchmarking systems and unit assessments. Denise Alexander and Brigitte Bentele will collaborate on one-on-one academic actions plans, review, achieve and progress. An opportunity will be available for our Principals to address the board.

Development Committee

Bethany Goldszer reviewed the Monthly Development Report prepared by Bethany Goldszer, Denise Alexander and Krista Hammond. Bethany Goldszer provided a presentation of Development Committee Meeting Slides, where the Board was given a comprehensive review the process of raising funds and establishing long term donor relationships. Bethany will conduct new donor's assets review for capability and qualify them by gauging their interest to engage in partnering with our goals. This donor review normally takes 4 - 6 months to complete.

Finance Committee

Anastasiya Rosenbaum reviewed the financials with the board. June revenue generated a surplus attributed to a couple of factors including loan forgiveness and donations. Our current Cash and

Cash Equivalent balance can cover 7 months of expenses. We are maintaining very conservative investments because significant claims in the next couple of years. New Medical Plan sign up commenced and all eligible participants signed up over the course of 3 days. Overall feedback was the Medical Plan was well received and everyone was fairly excited. They have received the “Clarity Card”

STIPENDS – After discussion, the board voted to approve stipends recommended by Denise and previously approved by the Executive Committee attributable to additional work assumed by certain staff members as a result of Covid accommodations, remote learning and staff attrition. The total cost of the stipends was \$17,200.

Governance Committee

In June 2021, Nicole Schmidt disseminated by email an overview and action plan for succession “A Toolkit for Succession - Executive Board Succession”. Jane Ehrenberg Rosen, Bruce Greenwald and Larry Slous are preparing for board succession and will write up job descriptions as key officers. Some considerations - who internally would be able to step into those roles, if internal board members unable to oblige then we need to add new board members. We need to add more people to the Succession planning committee currently staffed by Brigitte Bentele and Nicole Schmidt. Jane Ehrenberg Rosen will circulate a list of eligible candidates compiled 6 months ago. Paul Libretta’s draft of bylaws will be passed along to the board for review and comments. Changes to the handbook will be available, once Candice Manzano has completed expected next month. Waiver for open meeting law has been repealed - one or more board members will set up meetings physically in school. CSD 7 should be in the school and start projecting the meeting. Will ensure meeting will be available to the public in the district. Meetings will be conducted in the district where the school is located. Informed the board when there is a vote board members cameras must be on.

Facilities Committee

Conditional Lease for Middle School space on E 138th Street was executed, the lease is for 3 years with an option for an additional one year. The building on on E 138 Street currently does not have Temporary Certificate of Occupancy (TCO) or Certificate of Occupancy (CO), it has been agreed with Sendowski (Landlord) the 1st month rent and deposit would be held in escrow. As of today the TCO has not been received and we have an agreement with Sendowski to extend the agreement for another 30 days. Our architect is drafting a letter to indicate all safety issues are adequately addressed, no there are no outstanding issues involving safety. We have not been issued architect’s letter, but expect to receive in the coming week. Candice Manzano has been able to negotiate to provide services by DOH if TCO or CO is provided for E 138th Street. TCO expired in August 2019 with schools still operating in the in the building. We do not know how SED will respond to the issue of no TCO or CO, this will be mostly dependent on the DOB as corrective actions required may be suggested. The lease will be circulated tomorrow for unanimous consent.

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 6:09 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Hayden Chan, Secretary