

## **MINUTES: Board Meeting on November 19, 2020**

**The monthly meeting of the Board of Trustees of The Bronx Charter School for Children was held virtually on November 19, 2020 via Zoom.**

Present: Denise Alexander (Ex-Officio), Brigitte Bentele, Bruce Greenwald, Krista Hammond, Paul Libretta, Jane Ehrenberg Rosen, Mark A. Samuel, Nicole Schmidt, Suellyn Scull, Larry Slous

Absent: Sydney Blair, Joanne Carris, Hayden Chan

Guests: Bethany Goldszer, Director of Development and Community Partnerships; Dana Johnson, Kindergarten teacher; Candice Manzano, Director of Operations; Anastasiya Rosenbaum, Director of Finance

Jane called the meeting to order at 4:33pm. The minutes of the virtual October meeting were approved as emended.

### Head of School Report (attached)

Denise reported on four questions from the Head of School report: 1) All children who requested devices to use for remote learning have received them. We have additional Chromebooks on order. 2) The new assessment system (NWEA) assesses student performance from the beginning of the year and going forward. We will have the results of a middle of year assessment in January. 3) We have not been able to hire fourth and fifth grade special education teachers - Denise is concerned about the scholars in these two grades, especially those in grade four. 4) Returning to School: Everyone will be in quarantine for two weeks after the Thanksgiving holiday and two weeks after the Winter holiday - all learning will be remote during that period. Question if school will re-open for in-person learning after quarantine period following Thanksgiving holiday and before Winter holiday begins.

### Development Committee

Bethany reported on the work that is being done in terms of Development (summary attached), on grants awarded, pending, and to be submitted. For the annual campaign she set up a new donation site, met with Board members for edits to the email or letter to send to contacts, launched a monthly Message from the Executive Director, and consolidated the logo to one image. The plan is to launch a capital campaign in January with a grand opening for Middle School, done virtually except for one ribbon-cutting event.

### Finance Committee

Anastasiya reported an October surplus of \$46,000 and a projected year-end deficit of about \$550,000. She signed a contract with Procurify to move purchases online and is considering a change in policy for the threshold for signing off on expenses. The audit financials were filed. The Board unanimously approved the health plan. Anastasiya is looking into alternative plans for medical insurance which shows a 9% increase in cost. For Procurement, they are in the final stages of testing ProcureFive.

### Governance Committee

Paul reported that Employee Handbook is complete, with the Operations and Family Handbooks nearly done. The Board discussed the ideal size, currently at 12, and the make-up of the Board and decided that the priorities for new board members should be diversity and fundraising capabilities. Regarding the NYSED Notice of Deficiency we currently have 14% students with disabilities which is higher than last year. Consideration is being given to prioritize a 12-1-1 program. There's also a compelling case for having a program for autism.

### Facilities Committee

Bruce reported that we are pursuing three sites for a MS: St Lukes which is closing, 3 floors at 110 East 149th Street, and land at 132 Bergen. He sent letters of intent to the first two, both of which would be available in the fall and would need to be refitted for MS. The third option of building on purchased land would be available in three years. The committee is also looking for other possibilities. With the next lease renewal we may consider bringing the lower and middle schools together. Candice reported that the current facility is still dealing with the same leak issues.

Jane reported that the goals from the 2018 Board retreat have been achieved: enlarge the Board, expand wrap-around services, hire a Director of Development, and decide to expand to a MS. She is looking into hiring consultants to work with us on a retreat this year.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:11 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Brigitte Bentele