

MINUTES: Board Meeting on December 17, 2020

The monthly meeting of the Board of Trustees of The Bronx Charter School for Children was held virtually on December 17, 2020 via Zoom.

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

Absent: Sydney Blair, Joanne Carris, Hayden Chan, Nicole Schmidt

Guests: Nedra Bowers, MLL Supervisor; Bethany Goldszer, Director of Development and Community Partnerships; Marie Fornes, SpEd Coordinator; Candice Manzano, Director of Operations; Anastasiya Rosenbaum, Director of Finance; Kristen Silfies, Assistant Head of School and Middle School Head

Jane called the meeting to order at 4:34pm. The minutes of the virtual November meeting were approved as emended.

Executive Director Report (attached)

Denise described “winter miracles” and “grab and go pot luck dinner” that are planned for families during the holidays.

Academic Committee

Trimester 1 ended on December 4. Kristen Silfies noted highlights: four systems are in place for monitoring learning: 1) weekly spreadsheets, of quiz grades for K-5 and exit tickets for grade 6; 2) summative spreadsheets; 3) observations of teachers; 4) meetings about data with curricular leads and Kirsten weekly. She also reported on teacher support through TLC meetings and coaching. Nedra Bowers reported that there is one classroom with a trained teacher that has all MLL students. An emphasis is placed on consistency of complete language. Marie Fornes described the small groups with SWD students for differentiating instruction. Some grades had interruptions when a SpEd teacher left. Teachers in ICT classrooms communicate with SpEd teachers and related services that support them. In answer to a concern about the underwhelming math scores in grades 3-6, Denise mentioned that she is looking into pre and after school tutoring programs.

Executive Order 202.79

This order concerns testing within different zones, colored according to the percentage of virus spread. Currently TBCSC is in a yellow zone, which requires 20% of students and staff to be tested randomly. There are two options: someone on site will do the testing for which a scholar needs to sign a consent form; or, school will partner with a clinic. Candice and Denise are meeting about how to proceed.

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 55% of the goal has

been reached. Jane encouraged participation of Board members and asked for the gifts to be made before the end of the calendar year.

Finance Committee

Anastasiya reported that the month closed better than predicted, with a \$107,000 surplus due to additional funding and lower expenses. Assuming the per pupil stipend will not be cut, a projected deficit of over \$300,000 is projected. She applied for PPP loan forgiveness, implemented Procurify, completed the AV11 form, sent the 990 form to auditors, is working on the 1099 forms, and will update the Board about E-Rate soon.

Governance Committee

Paul reported that the lawyers will sign off on the three manuals - Employee, Operations and Family Handbooks - in the next month. Changes were made primarily related to Covid and sexual harassment. He will send a summary of the changes to the Board. It was suggested that the lawyers need to be more proactive. Paul and Jane will speak with them. Suellyn, Jane, Krista and Paul will meet with Denise about her 2021 goals. Jane will write a mid-year review.

Facilities Committee

Bruce updated the Board on the three sites for MS that the committee is pursuing. They have toured St. Lukes and sent a letter of intent for a 15 year lease with the option of subleasing or terminating it. After reviewing the proposals from architects, they decided on Loci Architects. The Board unanimously approved a contract for their fee estimated initially of up to \$30,000 to determine what needs to be done and approximately what it will cost. Once this information is in hand we will need to negotiate with the diocese, who between us will be responsible for the cost of specific changes. In this regard it is likely that any costs borne by the diocese will be in the form of rent credits over part or all of the term of the lease. The owners of the 3 floors at 110 East 149th Street decided to lease the entire building to another charter school. There is another site of two buildings for sale at Park and Canal that would require a complex construction effort. Nicole is leading an effort to have a developer purchase them and for us to rent part of them.

Board Engagement

Working with a consulting company on board engagement is postponed until the January meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:03 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Brigitte Bentele