

MINUTES: Board Meeting on March 26, 2020

The monthly meeting of the Board of Trustees of The Bronx Charter School for Children was held virtually on March 26, 2020 via Zoom.

Present: Denise Alexander (Ex-Officio), Brigitte Bentele, Joanne Carris, Hayden Chan, Bruce Greenwald, Krista Hammond, Paul Libretta, Jane Ehrenberg Rosen, Mark A. Samuel, Nicole Schmidt, Suellen Scull

Absent: Sydney Blair, Larry Slous

Guests: Candice Manzano, Director of Operations and Development

Jane called the meeting to order at 4:34pm. The minutes of the January meeting and the virtual closure meeting in March were approved.

Development Candidates

Krista Hammond reported that a few candidates saw the school before it closed. The committee has interviewed two of these and asked them to meet us today; only one is able to be at today's meeting. Bethany Goldszer joined the virtual Board meeting at 5:00pm. She gave us a quick overview of her interest in the position and her experience. Board members asked questions to which she gave detailed, expansive, candid responses. The candidate left the meeting after 45 minutes. Board members debriefed and, after learning that Krista and Jane had recently interviewed another impressive candidate, decided that the Development Committee would interview new candidates virtually even though they will not be able to see the school.

Head of School Report: School closure

The focus this week has been to give access and check that all families are active on class Dojo which doesn't require an iPad or computer; they can use phones. Students are in attendance. Support has been given to families who speak Spanish. Data is stored for every user. Teachers can see how student performed. They have office hours that are posted during which students have access to them. There is support for students with IEPs with one-on-one. This week has been spotty. The assignments are due on Friday. Is the curriculum the same as what is being used by other schools? There are some DOE resources for parents. Kahn Academy is a good resource. ListServe has been formed for Denise to communicate with other principals. It's difficult to predict to what extent will students be same place at end of year? Nothing replaces the teacher in the classroom.

Academic Committee

The committee met virtually before this meeting to discuss plans for Middle School curriculum. The math team made a decision to use Open Resources Illustrative Math; the ELA team is considering two programs: Expeditionary Learning and Pearson. A presentation of the final decisions will be made at the April board meeting.

Development Committee

It was decided that we would delay sending the donor letter that had been distributed.

Finance Committee

Jo Kim resigned, effective March 31. Instead of being an employee she will be an independent contractor. The contract will go to September 30. Larry vetted the contract. The Board approved the contract.

Bruce reported that the budget is as predicted. Denise and Bruce are scheduled to meet about next year's budget, with the assumption that there is not a lot of fallout from the current crisis. It will then be circulated to the finance committee, brought to the Board and voted on by the Board in a subsequent meeting.

Governance Committee

By law we have to do the lottery. It will be done from Candice's home, with announcement. It also needs to be recorded; zoom has that capability. We will be selecting 6th graders in the lottery as well as K-5. A board member needs to be present during that process.

Facilities Committee

Nothing to report.

Middle School Report

Human Resources Update: Leadership

Before closure Denise was in the process of looking for K-5 leadership. Hiring is also on hold; this is a concern. The evaluations are not completed but there is enough data from classroom observations to make decisions about salaries. At this point two will not be invited back and two teachers are not planning to return.

Facilities Update

Bruce reported that it is most likely than not that we'll have to be in a temporary space in the fall of 2021.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:19 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Brigitte Bentele