

MINUTES: Board Meeting on January 21, 2021

The monthly meeting of the Board of Trustees of The Bronx Charter School for Children was held virtually on January 21, 2021 via Zoom.

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

Absent: Sydney Blair, Suellyn Scull

Guests: Candice Manzano, Director of Operations; Anastasiya Rosenbaum, Director of Finance

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

Executive Director Report (attached)

Denise reported on the plans for hiring a K-5 Principal. She expanded on the phases that she outlined in the report. She is “looking for a story,” and though most of the process will be done virtually, she hopes to have the candidates come into the building. Her experience criteria are more than 5 years in supervisory role, teaching experience, stability in previous employment, and certification. In addition to the 3 phases, she will invite the three top finalists to meet with other stakeholders, including board members, to hear their recommendations. Although she values the feedback, Denise makes the final decisions about hiring and firing and she will make that clear to other stakeholders. Two of the candidates who applied last year continue to show an interest.

Denise would like to identify the principal by May.

The school district is still in the Yellow zone. For the school to be open, 20% of its community (51) needs to be tested, scheduled for Tuesday, January 26. If the school’s infection rate is below the zone’s, testing does not need to continue. It was suggested that the school look into pool testing, as done in some private schools.

Academic Committee

Scholars in all grades made progress on the NWEA tests, more significant in K and 2, and in the domains that were taught in the upper grades. There are plans for intervention and for examining the pacing of the curriculum. The lack of hands-on, particularly in math, is evident and oral fluency in reading using microphones has been difficult to measure. Concern about how teachers are holding up with remote learning was expressed.

Development Committee

Krista reported on the work that Impact 100 was not awarded. The topic of a community relations meeting was “how are you keeping scholars engaged.” It was a webinar style meeting and for next month’s meeting a different style is being considered. The NY Psychosocial Association will present on the topic of “how do you get kids out while staying in.” Recruitment

for Big Brothers Big Sisters of NYC (BBBS) is ongoing and the school may connect with a different organization.

Finance Committee

Anastasiya reported that nothing much has changed since last month. Before considering the forgiveness of the PPP loan and approval of grants, a deficit of \$326,000 is projected for the end of year. The committee has started working on the budget for next year and continues to be concerned about the per pupil amount.

Governance Committee

Paul reported that the lawyers have not yet signed off on the three manuals - Employee, Operations and Family Handbooks. He will send the Board changes before the next meeting for final approval.

Facilities Committee

Bruce updated the Board on the three sites for MS that the committee is pursuing. They expect to hear about St. Lukes next week. The 110 E 149th Street site is no longer available and the Bergen site for which we sent a letter of intent wouldn't be available for 3 years. Nicole is taking the lead on exploring possible co-development structures involving the Park Canal property. The committee continues to seek to identify other possibilities.

At 388 Willis, as the building ages, the school will be required to spend more money: most recently, about \$2000 to replace a combustion motor and gas meter.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:41 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Brigitte Bentele