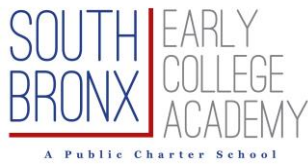


**Board of Trustees Meeting
April 6th, 2017
639-55 St. Ann's Avenue, Bronx, NY 10455**

AGENDA

- I. Call to Order
- II. Public Comment
- III. Resolution to Approve Minutes from March 2nd, 2017 Board Meeting
- IV. Executive Director's Report
 - A. Update from NYSED - Enrollment
 - B. Student Recruitment for 2017 – 2018 School Year
 - C. Lottery – April 20th
 - D. Faculty Recruitment for 2017 – 2018 School Year
 - E. State Exams Update
 - F. Facilities Update
 - G. Litigation against Towne Partners, LLC (landlord at former site – 423 E. 138th Street)
 - H. NSF Grant Proposals
 - I. Scratch Foundation Event
 - J. April 4th Concert
- V. New Business
- VI. Next Meeting – Thursday, May 4th, 2017
- VII. Adjournment



Board of Trustees Meeting
Thursday, April 6th, 2017
639 St. Ann's Avenue, Bronx, NY 10455

Trustees Present: Lori Chemla, Andrea Cohen, Felicia Franklin, Davon Russell, and Jodi Schneider

Trustees Absent: Nancy Biberman, Valerie Capers, Serigne Gningue

SBECA Staff Present: Ric Campbell, Cat Eugenio

WHEDco Staff Present: Katie Aylwin, Meredith Leverich

Number of Attendees from the General Public Present: 3

Call to Order:

Davon Russell called the meeting to order at 5:15 pm.

Public Comment:

Jennifer Santos, whose daughter Nevaeh Alverio is a student at the school, raised concerns about safety, including students being outside during inclement weather and bullying among students. She also said that her daughter had an accident during the school day, but that Ms. Santos had not been notified by the administration at the time of the incident and instead learned about it at the end of the day. Ms. Santos said that the discipline policy was inconsistent and that there are times when an entire class is punished when one student should be held accountable, and, as a result, students have been held back from their lunch break and do not have sufficient time to eat between classes. She said that the staff is overworked and that there should be additional staff to share the workload. Ms. Santos added that the quality of the school uniforms is poor. She also said she felt that the preparations for the state exams were insufficient and that students did not learn strategies for test taking.

Mr. Russell thanked Ms. Santos for attending and participating in the meeting.

Resolution to Approve Minutes from March 2, 2017 Board Meetings

Andrea Cohen made a motion to approve the minutes from the March 2, 2017 Board meeting, as presented on April 6th, 2017. Lori Chemla seconded, and the Board unanimously voted to approve the minutes.

Executive Director's Report

Student Recruitment

Ric Campbell reported that the school has received 631 applications for the 2017 – 2018 school year before the April 1st deadline to be included in the lottery, including over 400 for sixth grade, over 100 for seventh grade, and nearly 100 for eighth grade. Applications submitted after April 1st will be added to the wait list in the order in which they are received. He said that the lottery will take place on April 20th and will be conducted by Accounting Solutions of NYC, the school's accounting firm. He added that Loeb & Troper, the school's auditing

firm, will attend as a third-party observer to ensure that the process is done in accordance with charter school law.

Update from NYSED Regarding Enrollment

Mr. Campbell reported that he and Mr. Russell had a conference call with David Frank from NYSED to discuss the possibility of increasing the approved student capacity for the 2017 – 2018 school year, beyond the current approved number of 326 students. Mr. Frank advised that changing the number of students served is considered a material change to the school's charter agreement and that the deadline for requesting such a change for the 2017 – 2018 school year was December 2016. Mr. Frank informed them that the school can enroll above that number, but will not be eligible for per pupil funding for any students beyond 326. Mr. Campbell said that enrolling additional students will help ensure that the enrollment never falls below 326, which is what the budget demands, should any students leave throughout the year. He confirmed that the school would have the capacity to serve the additional students, even without funding for them, and expects class size to be 28 students per class.

Mr. Russell added that, if the school over-enrolls and then applies for the material change to the charter by December 2017 to increase the capacity for the following school year, NYSED would give a decision in February 2018; if they approve the increase, the school can begin collecting additional per pupil funding for those additional students from that point forward.

Mr. Campbell said that SUNY, another charter school authorizer, allows its schools to enroll 10% over the approved capacity and allows the schools to receive per pupil funding for those additional students. Mr. Frank indicated that NYSED is considering adopting that policy, as well. If the policy changes this year, then that would resolve the issue for SBECA, allowing the school to enroll above the 326 threshold and receive per pupil funding for those additional students without having to request a material change to the charter agreement. Mr. Campbell said that he expects NYSED to decide on this potential policy change this May.

Ms. Chemla inquired about the school's student attrition rate. Mr. Campbell said that 23 students have left the school for various reasons this year, including moving out of state and requiring additional special education services, since the school year began in August 2016. He said that Cat Eugenio has done some analysis on the reasons why students have left, and that they would present her report at the May 4th Board meeting.

Faculty Recruitment

Mr. Campbell reported that interviews with candidates are ongoing for the 18 open positions for the 2017 – 2018 school year. He said that he would be meeting with current faculty during the last two weeks of April to determine who will be returning next year, and which positions may need to be filled. He said that, so far, positions have been offered to candidates for the open Physical Education, Mathematics, and Dance positions.

State Exams Update

Mr. Campbell reported that the faculty began preparing students for state examinations in Mathematics and English Language Arts (ELA) on January 3rd, and that strategies to improve students' scores have included small group instruction, additional tutoring during elective time, take-home packets during the February recess, and Saturday sessions. He added that Auriel Watson, who brings 12 years of experience with the KIPP charter school network, where she contributed to test success in her schools through a variety of roles, joined SBECA as a full-time Special Education faculty member in January to oversee test preparation. He said that the ELA exams were

administered in late March and that the effort and degree of preparation was much greater than last year. He added that a pep rally was held the day before the examinations began to energize the students. Mr. Campbell said that preparations are ongoing for the math exams, which will be administered in early May.

Facilities Update

Mr. Campbell reported that the developer is still promising a July delivery date and has increased the work schedule to six days/week to ensure completion. The walls, plumbing and electrical work have all been completed. Mr. Campbell said that he is on-site weekly to monitor progress. He also added that the new building will include a multi-purpose room, where phys. ed. and dance classes can take place, as opposed to in the cafeteria where those activities currently happen. He said that he hopes to apply for a grant to enhance the multi-purpose space with specialty floors that are more conducive to dancing.

Spring Concert

Mr. Campbell said that the band and choral students performed concerts this week, including a performance at Lincoln Center. The Board watched a video of one of the student performances.

National Science Foundation Grant Proposals

Mr. Campbell said that he had worked with the school's partners at Fordham University and Lehman College to submit two grant applications to the National Science Foundation, each worth up to \$1.4 million. If selected, the school could receive up to \$100,000 to cover costs already budgeted, such as faculty salaries and equipment. Additional funds would be used to develop a curriculum that integrates computer science into other program areas and train faculty. Mr. Campbell said that Kelly Powers, SBECA's Director of Computing and Technology, brings notoriety to the school's computer science initiatives, given her national reputation in the field.

Scratch Foundation Event

Mr. Campbell said that four SBECA students attended a Scratch Foundation gala in Tribeca recently to present their coding projects and represent student participants. He said that they were the only middle school participants in attendance and that they had an opportunity to share their coding projects with Mitch Resnick, the founder of the organization and a professor at MIT.

New Business

NYSED Visit

Mr. Russell reported that representatives from NYSED would be visiting the school on May 18th. Mr. Campbell said he would let the Board know when the time had been confirmed, so that anyone available that day could attend and meet SBECA's NYSED representatives.

Board Development

Meredith Leverich reported that SBECA was not accepted into the spring 2017 cohort of Cause Strategy Partner's BoardLead Program. She said that she would investigate other Board matching programs and report back about other opportunities. Mr. Campbell said that he would be meeting with representatives from Fordham in the coming weeks and would inquire about their participation on the Board, given that they are a new higher education partner.

Girls Who Code

Ms. Chemla said that the Girls Who Code group is building an app to help children in the foster care system. Mr.

Campbell suggested that the participating students should present their work at a future Board meeting, once the app is complete.

Shakespeare Program

Andrea Cohen inquired about the Shakespeare program. Jodi Schneider said that the group was making progress and that there would be a production in June at the partner organization's space, which would give the students an opportunity to perform off-site. She said she would share more information when a date is set, so that Board members can attend.

Executive Session

The Board met in Executive Session.

Legal Fees

The Board came out of Executive Session. Andrea Cohen made a motion to authorize Ric Campbell to engage Susan Briggs, the school's attorney, to provide additional legal services. Lori Chemla seconded and the Board unanimously voted to authorize the expense.

Adjournment

The Board came out of Executive Session and voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 6:35 pm.