

# South Bronx Early College Academy Charter School

Board of Trustees Meeting  
Thursday, December 11<sup>th</sup>, 2014

WHEDco  
50 East 168<sup>th</sup> Street  
Bronx, NY 10452

## AGENDA

- I. Call to Order
- II. Resolution to Approve Minutes from November 13<sup>th</sup>, 2014 Meeting
- III. New York State Teachers' Retirement System Discussion & Resolution
- IV. Resolution to Approve New Enrollment Policy
- V. Resolution to Approve Fiscal Policies & Procedures
- VI. Facilities Discussion
- VII. Principal's Updates
  - A. Personnel Updates – Stephanie Lane
  - B. Education Partners
  - C. Student Recruitment
  - D. Fundraising
  - E. Branding: Letterhead, Logo
  - F. Website
- VIII. Next Meeting/Board Training: January

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December 11, 2014  
WHEDco | 50 East 168<sup>th</sup> Street, Bronx, NY 10452

**Board of Trustees Present:** Nancy Biberman, Valerie Capers, Lori Chemla, Andrea Cohen, Felicia Franklin, Davon Russell

**Board of Trustees Absent:** Andy Arons, Kristin Erat, Eric Nadelstern, Harvey Newman

**Other Attendees:** Ric Campbell, SBECACS; Cat Eugenio, SBECACS; Rebecca Kramnick, WHEDco; Meredith Leverich, WHEDco

## Call to Order

Davon Russell called the meeting to order at 4:12pm.

## Approval of November 13, 2014 Meeting Minutes

The Board unanimously voted to approve the meeting minutes from November 13, 2014.

## Introduction of Felicia Franklin

Mr. Russell introduced Felicia Franklin, who was elected to the Board at the November 13, 2014 Board meeting and recently approved by NYSED. Ms. Franklin said that she has lived in the Concourse Village neighborhood of the South Bronx for most of her life and is the mother of two. Her children attended the Dalton School, during which time she served on Dalton's Board for a six year term. She said that she is currently in her last year of a six year term at the Grace Church School, as well. She said that she is excited to be part of the South Bronx Early College Academy Charter School's Board, since this school will bring the high quality education, which she sought out for her own children in Manhattan, directly to children in the South Bronx. Ms. Franklin said that her husband is a high school literature teacher at Lehman High School.

Mr. Russell said that the Board currently has 10 members, but will look to grow to 11 by adding someone with an expertise in Finance. He added that the ultimate goal is to have 13 Board members.

## Facilities Discussion

Ric Campbell restated that the school is currently seeking a temporary facility solution for the first and possibly second year of operation, as well as a larger and more permanent space that the school can occupy once the enrollment is at capacity in later years. He reported that he has a meeting scheduled to see the former Catholic high school, St. Pius V, located at 500 Courtlandt Avenue near 148<sup>th</sup> Street and Third Avenue, which could serve as the short-term solution for years one and two. He said that he would know more about the cost of that facility after visiting it on Monday, December 15<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Campbell also reported that Faye Premer, the Vice President of Civic Builders (CB), notified him that CB's CEO David Umanski had approved pro bono work for the charter school during this stage of the school's relationship with CB. This will allow the school to move forward with the advantage of CB's expertise, without taking on a financial burden at this time. Mr. Campbell also reported that SCG Retail, the school's brokers, had arranged a tour of five additional spaces, each of which CB will consider for viability. In the coming months, CB will be performing due diligence before submitting proposals to any of the property owners, in collaboration with SCG Retail.

Mr. Campbell also stated that the school is expecting to hear back from the NYC DOE about the school's co-location request by December 21<sup>st</sup>, which will mark the end of the five-month period following the receipt of our formal request letter. He explained that if the DOE is unable to offer co-located space in District 7, then the school has 30 days to appeal the decision and request additional funding to pay for private space at an additional 20% of

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per pupil funding. If the school is entitled to this funding, then the timing of the decision and the flow of the funds may impact the school's ability to secure some of the identified sites.

### Principal's Updates

#### Hiring Faculty

Mr. Campbell reported that he is planning to hire Stephanie Lane, a science teacher with seven years of teaching experience at the International Community High School and the Marble Hill School for International Studies, in the coming weeks. Mr. Campbell circulated Ms. Lane's resumé and stated that he has had the opportunity to witness Ms. Lane's talent for engaging students in her classroom.

Mr. Campbell said that he will need to meet with the Personnel Committee to finalize the Personnel Policies and review a contract before he can officially offer Ms. Lane a teaching position. He also added that, as a member of the founding faculty, Ms. Lane will be able to assist in the interview and hiring processes, which will help ensure that the staff dynamic is healthy and collaborative as the team continues to grow.

#### Educational Partners

*Lehman College:* Mr. Campbell reported that a service agreement with Lehman College has been drafted. He said that one aspect of this agreement indicates that 10 teaching candidates from Lehman College will be placed at the charter school throughout the fall semester. This group of students will all be enrolled in a class for 5<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> grade certification and will take their college course together at the charter school, allowing them to link their practical classroom experience with their theoretical work. The agreement will also embed Lehman's Computer Science Education Initiative into the charter school by placing graduate students in Lehman's Computer Science program in residencies.

*NYU Steinhardt School of Culture, Education and Human Development:* Mr. Campbell reported that he has submitted a 10 page proposal to the head of Steinhardt's Teaching Program, which details a substantial partnership similar to the original Service Agreement with Bard College. The agreement with NYU would place two graduate students in each of the four core disciplines (English Language Arts, Social Studies, Math and Science) in a full-year residency program in the school. There is also the possibility for other integrations, since the Steinhardt School also includes arts education such as dance, theater, and music, which would support and enhance SBECACS's mission. Mr. Campbell said that there is a possibility of adding NYU's "Next Generation Partnership" program through the Silver School of Social Work, as an additional layer. This program has been piloted in a school in Newark, New Jersey, but could be fleshed out further at SBECACS, since the charter school's service agreement with WHEDco will embed WHEDco social workers in the school. Mr. Campbell said that he believes that a partnership with NYU will leverage additional funding opportunities.

The Board asked whether or not it was ok to have more than one educational partner, since the original plan for the school only included one. Mr. Russell confirmed that he had already brought that question to Susan Megna from NYSED, who confirmed that having multiple educational partnerships does not pose an issue since the service agreements with both institutions are consistent with the commitments set forth in the school's charter application.

#### Fundraising

Mr. Campbell reported that there are state and federal grants, as well as institutional grants that the school can explore. The Board asked who would be responsible for grant writing. Mr. Campbell said that, depending on capacity, he or another school employee could write grant proposals. Other options include WHEDco's development team providing grant writing services as an in-kind donation to the school or hiring a freelance grant writer. Mr. Russell said that individual philanthropy is also applicable and that the Board could engage their networks.

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### Student Recruitment

Mr. Campbell said that the school has received 20 applications so far. He also said that he and Cat Eugenio have been reaching out to elementary schools in District 7 to meet with principals and promote the school. He added that the Principal of PS157 is very impressed with the school's mission and design, and is advertising the school to the families of her 5<sup>th</sup> grade students. Ms. Eugenio added that the school will use the Common Charter Application on the NYC Charter Center's website, which will increase the number of applications received.

### Branding

Mr. Campbell circulated several draft logos for the school and solicited feedback from the Board. He said he would work with the designer to finalize a version and would circulate it soon. Then he and Ms. Eugenio can move forward with purchasing business cards, printing letterhead, and launching the website.

### **NYC Teachers' Retirement System**

Mr. Russell reminded the Board that they should not think about TRS as Mr. Campbell's personal preference, but rather a commitment to recruiting the high caliber teachers that we said we would when applying for the charter school. He also said that he had called Susan Megna at NYSED to get advice on this matter and that, during their phone call, Ms. Megna affirmed the understanding that most NYC DOE teachers would not leave positions that offered TRS to work at a charter school without the same benefit. She also said that some schools hire less experienced teachers because their models allow for it, but that our model, including the aspect of graduate students placed in full-year residencies, requires more experienced teachers.

Mr. Russell said that he also had a phone call with Harvey Newman to discuss Mr. Newman's concerns on the matter, since he is unable to attend this Board meeting. He said that Mr. Newman expressed concern about the financial burden, but said that he understood that this was a commitment that was made in the school's charter. Mr. Russell said that Eric Nadelstern also could not attend the meeting, but had previously sent an email expressing his support of offering TRS in order to recruit highly qualified teachers.

Andrea Cohen noted that, per the Board's request at the last meeting, Mr. Campbell had provided a cost breakdown of other retirement packages that might be considered comparable, but that her understanding was that not offering TRS was a deal-breaker from the teachers' perspective.

Mr. Campbell restated that the cost of TRS is already accounted for in the budget, and that there are other line items that could be adjusted, should the need arise. He also restated that TRS would only be applicable for "pedagogical titles," so that slightly restructuring the art and music programs could reduce TRS costs to the school. Mr. Russell added that the Board and Mr. Campbell would act prudently and would work to build a reserve.

The Board voted unanimously to enroll in the New York City Teachers' Retirement System.

### **Fiscal Policies & Procedures**

Mr. Campbell said that he would circulate the updated Fiscal Policies and Procedures before the next Board meetings, so that the Board would have time to review and be prepared for a vote to approve them in January.

### **Board Training**

Mr. Russell said that the Northeast Charter School Network would provide a Board Training at one of the upcoming meetings. He said that Meredith Leverich would coordinate a date and let the Board know once the training was scheduled.

### **Adjournment**

The Board voted to adjourn the meeting at 5:35pm.