

Board of Trustees Meeting
Tuesday, December 8th, 2015
423 East 138th Street, Bronx, NY 10454

AGENDA

- I. Call to Order**
- II. Public Comment**
- III. Resolution to Approve Minutes from November 17th, 2015**
- IV. Resolution to Approve the Appointment of Stefanelli Romano as Full-Time Special Education Teacher**
- V. Finance and Personnel Committee Meetings**
- VI. Executive Director's Report**
 - A. Budget Update (more detailed review in January after Finance Committee meets)
 - B. New Daily Class Schedule
 - C. Attendance and Student Count
 - D. Special Education Services
 - E. Josh Mandel
 - F. Student Recruitment for 2016-17
 - G. Faculty Recruitment for 2016-17
 - H. CSNYC Research
 - I. Kenneth Cole Visit and Other Projects
 - J. Parent Conferences on Dec. 2 and Dec. 3
 - K. Parent Involvement
 - L. Facility Update
- VII. 2016 Board Schedule:** First Thursday of the Month at 5:00pm
- VIII. New Business**
- IX. Adjournment**
Next Meeting: **Thursday, January 7th, 2016, 5:00 pm at SBECA (423 East. 138th Street)**

**Board of Trustees Meeting
Tuesday, December 8, 2015
423 East 138th Street, Bronx, NY 10454**

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

Trustees Absent: Nancy Biberman, Valerie Capers, Eric Nadelstern

SBECA Staff Present: Ric Campbell

Other: Serigne Gningue, Lehman College; Meredith Leverich, WHEDco

Call to Order

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

Resolution to Approve Meeting Minutes

The Board made a motion and unanimously approved the minutes from the November 17th, 2015 Board of Trustees meeting.

Resolution to Approve the Appointment of Stefanelli Romano as Full-Time Special Education Teacher

Ric Campbell restated that the school is eligible for approximately \$100,000 in additional funding for special education services, given that there are 32 students with IEPs currently enrolled. He then circulated the CV of Ms. Romano and said that he thought she would be a strong candidate for the Full-Time Special Education Teacher position that had been approved at the November 17th, 2015 Board meeting. Ms. Romano is bilingual in English and Spanish and has experience working in Bronx schools. If hired, Ms. Romano would “push in” to English classes, as the current Full-Time Special Education teacher works in Math Classes.

The Board made a motion and unanimously voted to pass a resolution to authorize Mr. Campbell to hire Ms. Romano, using the newly available funds to pay for her salary and fringe benefits.

Finance and Personnel Committee Meetings

Mr. Campbell stated that he would like for both the Finance and Personnel Committees to meet in late December or early January, so that the Committees could report to the full Board and prepare recommendations at the January 7th, 2016 Board meeting. Since January is half-way through the school’s fiscal year, it is an appropriate time to closely assess the budget and consider any necessary adjustments. Mr. Campbell added that the school’s accountant, Digant Bahl from Accounting Solutions of New York, would be attending the January Board meeting to present on the school’s fiscal health and answer any questions that the Board has about budget projections.

Executive Director's Updates

Budget Update

Mr. Campbell reported that as of November 30th, 2015, the projected net income for the end of the year is \$235,000. This is higher than originally budgeted, since enrollment has remained steady at 115 students and the budget calls for per pupil revenues for only 110 students. The school will incur an expense of approximately \$91,000 upon signing a lease for 766 Westchester Avenue, which is a previously-approved expenditure. Mr. Campbell also re-stated that there would be a more detailed budget update in January after the Finance Committee meets.

New Daily Class Schedule

Mr. Campbell reported that the average class size was 29 students per class at the beginning of the year, which posed a challenge for some teachers, especially around behavioral issues. In response, a new daily schedule has been implemented, which reduces the length of class periods and adds an additional section for each class. Although this change increases the number of minutes that each teacher is in the classroom, it also reduces the class sizes, which has been a welcome change. Mr. Campbell said that the teachers have responded well to the change.

Josh Mandel

Mr. Russell reported that Josh Mandel, a psychologist who currently works at The Collegiate School in Manhattan and has deep experience working in the South Bronx has expressed a desire to volunteer in a Bronx-based school, was introduced to WHEDco by Lucy Friedman of Expanded Schools, previously known as The After School Corporation (TASC). Mr. Mandel visited the school and met with Mr. Campbell and the Social worker, Katie McKaskie. He was also given a tour and left very enthusiastic about the prospect of volunteering and sharing his expertise with the school. Mr. Campbell said that they are working on a plan that would have Mr. Mandel at the school weekly working with faculty around issues of school culture and classroom management.

Mr. Campbell said that Mr. Mandel's involvement in the school, in conjunction with the smaller class sizes, may eliminate the immediate need to hire a Dean of Students to manage disciplinary issues. Mr. Campbell said that he would assess the impact of Mr. Mandel's presence after some time has passed and then revisit the issue, should it be necessary.

Attendance and Student Count

Mr. Campbell reported that enrollment has remained steady at 115 until recently when one student withdrew, bringing enrollment to 114. He said that he is communicating with the parents to discuss their reason for removing the child from the school.

Special Education Services

Mr. Campbell re-stated that additional special education services were needed and would be provided once Ms. Romano began working. Special Education Teachers will work within Math and English classes moving forward.

Student Recruitment and Faculty Recruitment

Mr. Campbell reported that he and his team had begun the student and faculty recruitment process for the 2016-2017 school year.

Parent Conferences & Parent Involvement

Mr. Campbell reported that one-on-one Parent Conferences were held on December 2nd and December 3rd from 1 – 6pm, during which parents could sign up for a block of time to meet with faculty. All of the slots were filled during those days, which represented approximately 60% participation. Additional dates have been added to ensure that all parents who want to participate in this way have the opportunity.

Mr. Campbell also reported that a Parent Council has formed, so that parents can feel engaged and have a forum to voice any concerns that may arise.

New York City Foundation for Computer Science Education (CSNYC) Research

Mr. Campbell reported that CSNYC has been working with the school's Computer Science teacher, Math teacher, and Physical Education/Health teacher to develop a research project that will track students' physical activity. Each student will receive a Fitbit that will track steps and other health-related data. Students are required to submit \$10 security deposits for the Fitbits and have their parents sign permission slips to allow them to participate and agree to return the equipment at the end of the study. As a school partner, CSNYC has dedicated a team to this project, and will likely continue to develop research projects based in the school.

Lori Chemla said that there are other organizations, such as Code Academy, that offer technology programs that may benefit the school. She suggested doing further research to determine if there are other ways to enhance the Computer Science curriculum.

Kenneth Cole Visit & Other Projects

Mr. Campbell said that Jodi Schneider, a Board candidate, is married to the CEO of Kenneth Cole and has arranged for a field trip on December 10th for 25 students, accompanied by 3 faculty, to visit the Kenneth Cole offices, which will offer students insights into careers in business and design. He added that there could be other field trip opportunities this year, including the Cornell Technion program located on the Google campus.

Facility Update

Mr. Campbell stated that negotiations are in the final stages with the 766 Westchester Avenue site. The current agreed-upon delivery date is December 1, 2016 with an occupancy date of January 1, 2017. As a result, the school will need another short-term lease from July 1, 2016 – December 31, 2016. If the developer decides that these targets are no longer feasible by September 1, 2016, then the school's plan would be to extend the short-term lease until the end of the year and begin occupancy of the permanent building in July 2017 before beginning its third year of operation. Mr. Campbell said that the school's broker, Michael Miller, is continuing the search for a short-term facility. He said that St. Jerome's and Boricua College are still possibilities and are being investigated further. He has also been in

communication with the DOE to find out if there are any co-location spaces available. Mr. Campbell said that he has also been in dialogue with the owner of the current site, 423 E. 138th Street; he may have another building available and may be willing to sign a short-term lease with the school. Mr. Russell said that there is a building on 137th Street and Alexander that should also be investigated.

2016 Board Schedule

Mr. Russell re-stated that a few Board members had indicated that Tuesdays pose scheduling challenges for them. As discussed during the November 17th meeting, Board meetings in 2016 will be held on the first Thursday of the month at 5pm at the school.

New Business

Andrea Cohen and Ms. Chemla stated that they would like to make year-end gifts to the school. Ms. Cohen pledged to purchase a book for each student and Ms. Chemla pledged to purchase a set of microscopes for the science classroom. Mr. Campbell said that he would work with them to facilitate their donations.

Adjournment

The Board voted to adjourn the meeting at 6:50 pm.