

**Board of Trustees Meeting  
February 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2017  
639-55 St. Ann's Avenue, Bronx, NY 10455**

**AGENDA**

- I. Call to Order
- II. Public Comment
- III. Resolution to Approve Minutes from January 12<sup>th</sup>, 2017
- IV. Executive Director's Report
  - A. Portfolio Presentation Update
  - B. Student Recruitment for 2017 – 2018 School Year
  - C. Faculty Recruitment for 2017 – 2018 School Year
  - D. Test Prep Update
  - E. National Science Foundation Grant Proposals
  - F. American Museum of Natural History Partnership Update
  - G. Lehman College Partnership Update
  - H. Setting Aside Funds in Interest Bearing Account
- V. Finance Committee Meeting – Mid-February
- VI. Board Development
- VII. New Business
- VIII. Next Meeting – Thursday, March 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2017
- IX. Executive Session
- X. Adjournment



**Board of Trustees Meeting**  
Thursday, February 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2017  
639 St. Ann's Avenue, Bronx, NY 10455

**Trustees Present:** Nancy Biberman, Lori Chemla (by phone; did not participate in voting), Andrea Cohen, Felicia Franklin, and Davon Russell

**Trustees Absent:** Valerie Capers, Serigne Gningue, and Jodi Schneider

**SBECA Staff Present:** Ric Campbell

**WHEDco Staff Present:** Katie Aylwin, Meredith Leverich

**Number of Attendees from the General Public Present:** 0

**Call to Order:**

Davon Russell called the meeting to order at 5:08 pm.

**Public Comment:**

There were no members of the public in attendance and, therefore, no public comment. Ric Campbell explained that Parent Teacher Conferences had been taking place all day, so parents had been coming throughout the day to talk to faculty about their children's progress during one-on-one sessions.

**Resolution to Approve Minutes from January 12<sup>th</sup>, 2017 Board Meeting**

Davon Russell stated that this resolution would have to wait until the March 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting, given that there was not a quorum present in person.

**Executive Director's Report**

Portfolio Presentation Update

Mr. Campbell reported that almost all of the students gave portfolio presentations to a group of their peers, parents and faculty in January. Approximately 50 students did not receive a passing grade, based on the rubric that was used, so they will receive additional guidance and have an opportunity to re-do their presentations. Mr. Campbell said that the presentations were filmed, so he will share one or two of highest-scoring presentations with the Board at a future meeting. He added that the presentations in June will use a rubric that raises performance standards and will require students to present on two subjects, instead of one, allowing them to continue to develop their presentation skills.

Parent Teacher Conferences

Mr. Campbell said that 84% of parents had signed up to participate and that ongoing parent engagement remains a priority.

### Student Recruitment for 2017 – 2018 School Year

Mr. Campbell reported that he and Cat Eugenio will be attending open houses in the coming weeks and doing outreach to feeder schools in Community School District 7. He said that additional outreach is being done this year in Community School District 8, given that the location of the new building is near the border and may be of interest to families in the neighboring district. He added that 200 applications have been received so far for 115 6<sup>th</sup> grade seats; however, most have come from the Common Application offered by the NYC Charter Center, so it is difficult to gauge how many of those families seek SBECA as their top choice. He said that this year's goal is to collect 400 applications by the April 1<sup>st</sup> deadline.

### Faculty Recruitment

Mr. Campbell said that Emily Packet is leading the school's Faculty Recruitment efforts this year and that the open positions have been posted to four websites. He added that he would be speaking to current faculty soon to determine which staff members planned to return and which, if any, planned to leave at the end of the year, so that he could ensure that all open positions are filled. Mr. Campbell said that soliciting recommendations from current teachers have brought in the best candidates.

### Test Prep Update

Mr. Campbell reported that Shanon Colligan and Auriel Watson, two of the school's Special Education faculty members, are leading the school's test prep efforts to help students improve their scores on the State examinations in English Language Arts and Math. He said that the school is implementing an 8 – 10 week test prep program, using small group instruction. Additional staff have been hired temporarily, some from the Extended Day Program faculty, to facilitate this initiative. He added that teachers are discussing the tests with parents during the Parent Teacher Conferences and will distribute a letter from Ric about the examinations.

### National Science Foundation Grant Proposals

Mr. Campbell reported that the school will submit two proposals to the National Science Foundation (NSF) for grants that help schools integrate computer science into other subject areas. SBECA has already been doing this type of work, under the leadership of Kelly Powers. Fordham University and Lehman College are partnering with us on these proposals, which could bring in up to \$1 million in funds, which will help off-set salary costs. Mr. Campbell added that Ms. Powers is spearheading the applications and has won NSF grants in the past.

### American Museum of Natural History Partnership Update

Mr. Campbell reported that, as part of the school's partnership with the American Museum of Natural History, SBECA's sixth grade science teachers will pilot a curriculum on climate change that they helped develop over the summer.

### Higher Education Partnership Update

Mr. Campbell reported that he submitted a proposal to Lehman College for SBECA to serve as a Professional Development site. The partnership proposal that he submitted formalizes the school's original understanding of its partnership with Lehman.

Mr. Campbell added that Fordham is a new higher education partner that has committed to placing two student teachers in each subject. He added that this commitment to placements across subject areas is in line with the school's intention of serving as a teacher training school.

### Setting Aside Funds in Interest Bearing Account

Mr. Campbell reported that, per previous Board requests, he has moved \$300,000 of the school's reserves into interest bearing accounts. Approximately two-thirds of those funds have been placed in a long-term account, bearing 1.25% interest, and approximately one-third has been placed in a short-term account, bearing 1.08% interest, which is higher than originally anticipated. In a year, the long-term account is expected to yield \$3,500.

### **Finance Committee Meeting**

Mr. Russell indicated that the school's accountant, Digant Bahl of Accounting Solutions of NYC, has suggested that the Finance Committee convene to review the school's financial statements as of January 31<sup>st</sup>, 2017. The Committee scheduled a conference call for Tuesday, February 14<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 pm.

### **Board Development**

Mr. Russell stated that the Board currently has eight Trustees and recommended that new candidates be identified in order to grow to the target number of eleven. The Board discussed the areas of expertise that should be represented and determined that candidates with finance backgrounds and experience with the Department of Education or higher education institutions would be strong additions. Mr. Campbell said that a representative from Fordham could be added, given the school's recent partnership. The Board agreed to continue thinking about ways to identify these candidates. Mr. Russell requested that Mr. Campbell reach out to the NYC Charter Center to see if they know candidates looking for board service.

### **New Business**

The Board discussed the political climate surrounding charter schools and ways to effectively communicate the school's mission to potential donors who may be wary or may not fully understand how charter schools work. The Board asked Mr. Campbell to draft a paragraph that could be sent to Board members' friends and colleagues to defend SBECA as a charter school and address some of the public's concerns.

### **Executive Session**

The Board met in Executive Session.

### **Adjournment**

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