

AGENDA

- I. Call to Order**
- II. Resolution to Approve Minutes from May 12, 2015 and June 23, 2015**
- III. Board Member Resignation**
- IV. Resolution to Approve the Hiring of the Following Faculty Members:**
 - A. Phylecia Palmer, Lead Special Education Teacher
 - B. Audra Benjamin, Part-Time Special Education Coordinator
 - C. Dennis Darkeem, Part-Time Art Teacher
 - D. Emily Packet, Lead English Teacher
- V. Resolution to Approve the Following Documents for Submission to NYSED:**
 - A. Discipline Policy
 - B. Employee Handbook
 - C. Academic Calendar
- VI. Resolution to Approve the 2015 – 2016 Budget**
- VII. Review of Vendor Bids:**
 - A. **Health Insurance:** Magii, Austin & Co, and Stanis.
 - B. **Building Insurance:** Austin & Co.
- VIII. Resolution to Stagger Board Terms**
- IX. Resolution to Elect the Following Board Candidates Pending NYSED’s Approval**
 - A. **Serigne Gningue** – Chair, Department of Middle and High School Education, Lehman College
 - B. **David Kirkland** – Executive Director, NYU Metropolitan Center for Research on Equity and the Transformation of Schools
- X. Principal’s Updates**
 - A. Faculty Recruitment
 - B. Student Enrollment
 - C. Retirement Plan
 - D. Facilities Update
- XI. New Business**
- XII. Executive Session**
- XIII. Adjournment:**

Next Meeting/Board Training: **Tuesday, August 11, 5:00 pm at SBECA (423 East. 138th Street)**

Board of Trustees Meeting
Tuesday, July 14, 2015
WHEDco | 50 East 168th Street, Bronx, NY 10452

Trustees Present: Andy Arons, Nancy Biberman, Valerie Capers, Andrea Cohen, Felicia Franklin, and Davon Russell

Trustees Absent: Lori Chemla and Eric Nadelstern

Other Attendees: Digant Bahl, Accounting Solutions of NYC; Ric Campbell, SBECACS; Cat Eugenio, SBECACS; Meredith Leverich, WHEDco

Call to Order

Davon Russell called the meeting to order at 4:27pm.

Resolution to Approve Meeting Minutes

The Board made a motion and unanimously passed a resolution to approve the meeting minutes from the May 12, 2015 and the June 23, 2015 Board meetings.

Board Member Resignation

Mr. Russell reported that Harvey Newman is moving out of the country and, as a result, has resigned from the Board. Mr. Russell said that he submitted Mr. Newman's letter of resignation to NYSED. He also stated that the board thanks Mr. Newman for the critical role he played in the school's application process and pre-opening operations. He will be missed.

Mr. Russell added that the Board currently has eight Trustees, which is expected to grow to ten shortly, should the two candidates identified from NYU and Lehman College be elected by the Board and approved by NYSED.

Faculty Retreat Update

Ric Campbell reported that the entire faculty participated in a week-long retreat during the first week of July, using space provided by NYU. The retreat served as a community-building activity, covering a wide variety of topics including educational philosophies, methods and research. NYU faculty visited with the SBECA faculty during lunch talk sessions on three of the five days. Mr. Campbell added that he will invite school faculty to attend the August Board meeting.

Resolution to Approve the Hiring of Faculty

Mr. Campbell circulated CVs for the following candidates: Phylecia Palmer, Lead Special Education Teacher; Audra Benjamin, Part-Time Special Education Coordinator; Dennis Darkeem, Part-Time Art Teacher; and Emily Packet, Lead English Teacher. Mr. Campbell added that these candidates would complete the school's faculty for the first year of operation.

The Board made a motion and unanimously passed a resolution to approve the hiring of the four submitted candidates.

Resolution to Approve Documents/Policies for Submission to NYSED

Academic Calendar

Mr. Campbell presented an updated Academic Calendar, which he stated followed the NYC's Dept. of Education Calendar for all holidays. He added that SBECACS's school year will begin on August 31st, a week earlier than DOE schools, and will extend beyond the DOE's school year, in compliance with the school's charter which calls for an extended school year. Mr. Campbell also noted that the charter school will use block scheduling, using an A/B schedule with alternating days. Fridays will be used for elective courses that will run as 11 week cohorts.

The Board made a motion and unanimously passed a resolution to approve the Academic Calendar.

Employee Handbook

Mr. Russell stated that he and Andrea Cohen held a Personnel Committee meeting to fully review and discuss the Employee Handbook, in order to make a recommendation to the Board. He proposed that a change be made to the vacation policy to increase the number of summer vacation days offered, from fifteen to twenty-five days. The Board discussed this proposal noting that the school's compensation structure offers higher salaries than the DOE and that the expectation is that teachers work a longer school year than that of DOE teachers. The Board also addressed the concern of teacher retention and noted that teachers need time to recuperate between school years. The Board agreed that, given the additional compensation offered, the school should not offer a full eight weeks, as the DOE does over the summer, but that three weeks was also not sufficient. The Board agreed to increase the vacation time to twenty-five days to allow teachers to take time off, while also ensuring that the staffing could support the extended school year model.

The Board made a motion and unanimously passed a resolution to approve the Employee Handbook, after making the approved edit to increase the summer vacation offered to twenty-five days.

Discipline Policy

The Board reviewed the Discipline Policy, which had been circulated during previous meetings.

The Board made a motion and unanimously passed a resolution to adopt the Discipline Policy.

Review of Vendor Bids

Health Insurance

Mr. Campbell presented bids from three different health insurance brokers. He recommended a plan that offers lower premiums and higher co-pays, which the school could cover by providing a "difference card" to employees. Mr. Campbell stated that the algorithm that the creator of the plan uses has been highly effective and affordable for other clients to date. He said that Digant Bahl, the school's external accountant, recommended the provider of this plan. The plan also came highly recommended by Frank

Hedley, the school leader at Voice Charter School, which is also enrolled in TRS and, as a result, has been a helpful resource for SBECA. The Board agreed that the school should purchase the proposed health insurance plan for the first year of operation to ensure that faculty had health insurance coverage beginning on August 1, 2015. The Board also requested additional information about the plan for further consideration for future years, when the school has a larger faculty.

Building Insurance

Mr. Campbell also presented Austin and Co. as the Building Insurance broker. He stated that Austin has been the school's D&O provider since the Board began meeting in January 2014 and that having one broker for the D&O, the building insurance and the general liability is advantageous, since there is umbrella coverage included.

The Board made a motion and unanimously passed a resolution to approve the purchase of Building Insurance from Austin & Co.

Resolution to Stagger Board Terms

Meredith Leverich stated that the school's original by-laws included staggered Board terms, which the Board voted to eliminate in 2014. She stated that the staggered Board terms were an important measure to ensure continuity, allowing Board members to transition in and out smoothly without a complete turn-over that may cause instability. Mr. Campbell proposed reinstating the staggered terms. Ms. Leverich said that, as initially intended, Board members could be assigned into three classes (one year, two years, and three years). The charter application included class assignments for the Founding Board, which could be used as a model. Trustees elected after the Board had first formed could be assigned into alternating classes based on their election dates in order to maintain balanced groups. Following each Trustee's first term of either one, two or three years, terms would be three years in length, consistent with the by-laws. Terms would begin in July and end in June, when reelection would take place during the June Board of Trustees meeting.

Ms. Leverich added that she had consulted with the Lawyers Alliance of New York to ensure the legality of this change, and that Linda Manley, the school's initial attorney, had indicated that an amendment to the by-laws could not shorten any Trustee's term of office. With that information in mind, the shortest Board term, one year in length, would begin on July 1, 2015 and extend to June 30th, 2016, which had been set as the end date of all Trustees' Board terms when the staggered terms practice had been eliminated. The other classes would extend beyond this, ending in June 2017 and June 2018 respectively.

The Board made a motion and unanimously passed a resolution to amend the by-laws by reinstating staggered terms.

Ms. Leverich said that she would send an updated Board roster with the new term information to NYSED, as well as the amended by-laws.

Resolution to Elect New Board Candidates

Mr. Campbell circulated CVs for David Kirkland, Executive Director of the NYU Metropolitan Center for Research on Equity and the Transformation of Schools, and Serigne Gningue, Chair of the Department of Middle and High School Education at Lehman College, and recommended that the Board elect these two candidates to the Board. He said that, as the school's educational partners, NYU and Lehman College should both have a Board presence.

The Board made a motion and unanimously passed a resolution to elect David Kirkland and Serigne Gningue to the Board of Trustees.

Discussion of Retirement Plans for Personnel Not Enrolled in TRS

Mr. Campbell proposed that the school contribute into a retirement system for administrators and other school staff who are not enrolled in the Teachers' Retirement System, at a rate of 10% of their salaries. He added that this contribution would be less than, but comparable to the contribution that the school would make for faculty with pedagogical titles, who are enrolled in TRS. As a result, the similar compensation would help build a sense of community and equity among staff. The Board discussed budgetary concerns the 10% rate could present, especially in later years when the size of the staff grows. Mr. Russell said that the Board could reassess the contribution in later years and could change the rate of the contribution. Ms. Cohen said that reducing the contribution for staff would likely make employees upset, but that a two tier system could be implemented, grandfathering in employees who have already been promised a higher contribution and then offering newer staff a separate benefits package in later years. Mr. Campbell added that the 10% contribution had been accounted for in the school budget.

The Board also discussed whether retirement contributions should be made retroactively, beginning July 1st, or if it could start on August 1st.

The Board decided to continue the conversation in Executive Session, as it involves a personnel issue regarding compensation and that it would not be appropriate to discuss in front of school staff present.

Resolution to Approve the 2015 – 2016 Budget

Digant Bahl of Accounting Solutions of NYC presented the school's Unaudited Balance Sheet and the 2015-2016 Fiscal Year Budget for Board review and approval. He reported that the Charter School Planning grant came in under budget during the start-up period, because some purchases had been pushed back to the next grant period. He also noted that the grant period runs from September 1st to August 31st, but that the school's fiscal year runs from July 1st to June 30th.

Mr. Bahl reported that the budget is based on the enrollment of 110 students, but that there are currently 116 enrolled. He said that Facilities costs were still a concern, but that the funding from the DOE would provide additional support. He also said that personnel costs were higher than what other school budgets typically show. Mr. Campbell added that salaries for new personnel could be lower in



later years, since the school could hire some less experienced teachers who would be coached by senior faculty members with more experience.

The Board made a motion and unanimously passed a resolution to adopt the 2015 – 2016 Budget.

Executive Session

Meeting Adjourned

The Board voted to adjourn the meeting at 6:56pm.