

AGENDA

- I. Call to Order**
- II. Resolution to Approve Minutes from May 12, 2015**
- III. 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
- IV. Resolution to Approve the Following Documents for Submission to NYSED:**
 - A. Discipline Policy
 - B. Employee Handbook
 - C. Academic Calendar
- VI. Review of Vendor Bids:**
 - A. **Health Insurance:** Magii, Austin & Co, and Stanis.
 - B. **Building Insurance:** Austin & Co.
 - C. **Furniture:** United Supply Corp, Academy Furniture and Supplies, and W.B. Mason
- V. Resolution to Stagger Board Terms**
- VI. Review of Memorandums of Agreement with NYU and Lehman College**
- VII. Board Member Resignation**
- VIII. Possible Board Additions**
 - 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
- IX. Principal's Updates**
 - A. Faculty Recruitment
 - B. Student Enrollment
 - C. Retirement Plan
 - D. Facilities Update
- X. New Business**
- XI. Adjournment**

Next Meeting/Board Training: **Tuesday, July 14th, 4:00 pm at WHEDco**



Board of Trustees Meeting
Tuesday, June 23, 2015
WHEDco | 50 East 168th Street, Bronx, Ny 10452

Trustees Present: Andy Arons, Andrea Cohen (via video conference), Felicia Franklin, and Davon Russell

Trustees Absent: Nancy Biberman, Valerie Capers, Lori Chemla, Eric Nadelstern, and Harvey Newman

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

Call to Order

Davon Russell called the meeting to order at 4:08pm.

Quorum Issue

Mr. Russell stated that, due to extenuating circumstances, most of the Board members could not attend the meeting. He said that, since a quorum was not present, the Board could not vote on any resolutions during the meeting; however, the Board should discuss the items that would require voting so that everyone would be prepared for a vote during the July meeting. He added that the two Board candidates, one from Lehman College and one from NYU, would be committed to attending meetings, which would help prevent quorum issues in the future.

Board Member Resignation

Mr. Russell reported that he had recently had a conversation with Kristin Erat to discuss her role on the Board, since she had consistently had difficulty attending meetings. In their conversation, she said that she was supportive of the school, but could not maintain the time commitment required as a Board member. She submitted a letter of resignation to Mr. Russell, which he sent to NYSED for their records. He added that it was a very amicable separation and that she will continue to support the school in other ways.

Policies for Board Review

Ric Campbell circulated the Discipline Policy, the Employee Handbook, and the Academic Calendar for Board review. Felicia Franklin inquired as to the difference between the school's calendar and the DOE calendar. Mr. Campbell said that the calendars were the same, but that parent/teacher conference times may vary as needed to accommodate families' schedules and to facilitate more frequent conversations.

Review of Vendor Bids

Mr. Campbell circulated bids that had been submitted by vendors providing Health Insurance for staff, Building Insurance, and Furniture for Board review. Mr. Russell said that he and Andrea Cohen would

meet to discuss the Health Insurance packages as members of the Personnel Committee and would make a recommendation to the Board during the July meeting.

Review of Memorandums of Agreement with NYU and Lehman College

Mr. Campbell circulated Memorandums of Agreement with NYU and Lehman College. He confirmed that the terms of both partnerships had been agreed upon by each party and signed.

New Faculty

Mr. Campbell circulated CVs for three new teaching candidates: Phylecia Palmer, Lead Special Education Teacher; Audra Benjamin, Part-Time Special Education Coordinator; and Dennis Darkeem, Part-Time Art Teacher. Ms. Cohen inquired about the structure of the Special Education staffing. Mr. Campbell stated that, rather than hiring one experienced person, his strategy was to hire one highly-experience part-time person, who could mentor a less experienced, full-time person. This way, the department would have additional capacity, without going over budget. He added that Ms. Benjamin has been highly recommended by NYU, and will be able to coach Ms. Palmer in her role as Lead Special Education Teacher. As Ms. Palmer becomes more experienced, the expectation is that she will not need as much mentorship in following years, in the case that Ms. Benjamin decides to pursue other endeavors.

Parent Association

Mr. Campbell stated that parents had been inquiring about the formation of a Parent Association (PA) for the charter school. The Board discussed the role of a PA, and what the best approach would be to ensure that the parent voices were heard, without undermining the Board's ability to govern. Ms. Franklin shared her experience with PAs, stating that they could be very helpful in facilitating extra-curricular activities, such as sports, through fundraising activities and creating a sense of community among parents. Andy Arons agreed that it would provide an additional opportunity for families to feel engaged and provide a sense of pride and ownership over the school. Mr. Russell asked Mr. Campbell to explore how other charter schools have formed and managed PAs and what their roles typically are. The Board decided to revisit the discussion once the school year started and there was a better sense of interest among parents.

Principal's Updates

Facilities

Mr. Campbell reported that the build-out has been completed at the school's facility. He invited Board members to schedule a time to visit the school on June 30th, since he planned to be on-site that day.

Mr. Campbell also stated that he is continuing to work with the school's brokers from SCG Retail to identify a permanent site for the school, beginning in the second year of operation. He said that there are currently two sites that he is exploring: 766 Westchester Avenue, which would require new construction and could open by September 2016; and a site at 149th Street that was formerly used by ACS, which would require some build-out. He also reported that Civic Builders is developing a space at 158th Street for a high school, which could be another option down the line, should the school be

granted an extension into high school and need additional space. Mr. Campbell said that he would update the Board as his conversations with developers progressed and that he would present financial information associated with the sites to the Board at the July meeting. Mr. Arons requested that the Bronx Courthouse building be reconsidered, since the circumstances may have changed since SCG Retail last approached the building owner. Mr. Arons also inquired about the Conway building, which had previously been a potential site for 2016; Mr. Campbell stated that the owner was not willing to make a deal that the school could afford, given that the school would be unable to sign a lease for longer than five years.

School Uniforms

Mr. Russell reported that a WHEDco supporter had introduced Public School, a fashion company, to the school. He said that he and Mr. Campbell had met with representatives from the company, who seemed interested in designing and manufacturing school uniforms for the school pro bono. He added that he would follow up with Public School, but that the uniforms likely would not be ready by the beginning of this school year.

Adjournment

The Board voted to adjourn the meeting at 5:23pm.