

**Board of Trustees Meeting
November 3rd, 2016
639-55 St. Ann's Avenue, Bronx, NY 10455**

AGENDA

- I. Call to Order
- II. Public Comment
- III. Resolution to Approve Minutes from September 15th, 2016 and October 6th, 2016
- IV. Executive Director's Report
 - A. Update on Board Meeting Notices for the Public
 - B. Plans for Increased Parent Involvement
 - C. Sports Teams
 - D. DOE Construction Update
 - E. New Facility Update
- V. Resolution to authorize Catherine Toussaint, Director of Records and Finance, to represent SBECA in all TRS matters
- VI. 2015 – 2016 Fiscal Year Audit Review and Adoption
- VII. Board/Faculty Mixer – Thursday, December 1st, 6:00 pm at Mott Haven Bar & Grill
- VIII. 2017 Meeting Calendar
- IX. New Business
- X. Executive Session
- XI. Next Meeting – Thursday, December 1st
- XII. Adjournment



Board of Trustees Meeting

Thursday, November 3rd, 2016

639 St. Ann's Avenue, Bronx, NY 10455

Trustees Present: Nancy Biberman, Valerie Capers, Andrea Cohen, Eric Nadelstern, Davon Russell, Jodi Schneider

Trustees Absent: Lori Chemla, Felicia Franklin, Serigne Gningue

SBECA Staff Present: Ric Campbell, Ariel Nadelstern

WHEDco Staff Present: Katie Aylwin, Meredith Leverich

Call to Order:

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

Public Comment:

There were no attendees from the general public.

Ric Campbell said that a letter went home to parents to announce the Board meeting and a text blast was sent, but that he would follow up with school staff to see if there were other ways to increase parent attendance at these meetings. Mr. Russell said that he thought a flyer would be more effective and that one should be created and circulated in advance of each Board meeting.

Resolution to Approve Minutes from September 15th, 2016 and October 6th, 2016 Board Meetings

Mr. Russell stated that there had not been a quorum at the October 6th meeting, so the Board was not able to review the September meeting minutes at that time.

Eric Nadelstern made a motion to approve the September 15th, 2016 Board meeting minutes, as presented on November 3rd, 2016. Andrea Cohen seconded, and the Board unanimously voted to approve the minutes.

Eric Nadelstern made a motion to approve the October 6th, 2016 Board meeting minutes, as presented on November 3rd, 2016. Jodi Schneider seconded, and the Board unanimously voted to approve the minutes.

Executive Director's Report

Sports Teams

Mr. Campbell stated that two sports teams have formed and are competing in a charter school league: co-ed flag football and girls' volleyball. Katie Aylwin said that she has attended the games and that many parents have attended to support the kids. She said that it has been an effective way of fostering teamwork and a sense of community among the students. She said that one of the Physical Education teachers and some of the Extended

Day Faculty are coaching these teams, which have been named the SBECA Spartans. Mr. Campbell said that practice space is a challenge, especially as it gets colder and the outdoor space is not appropriate. Ms. Aylwin said that she is working with a teacher to identify other local schools that may be able to offer gym space.

DOE Construction Update

Mr. Campbell said that the required work to build a nurse's office and counseling rooms has been completed, and the facilities are now better suited for the school's needs. Space continues to be a challenge, but the site will be sufficient for the rest of the school year until the permanent facility is complete.

New Facility Construction Update

Mr. Campbell reported that the concrete has been poured at the new site, and that much of the steel work has been completed. He said that the exterior work is happening now. He also reported that the developer has reengaged the school's Tenant Representative as the building architect, which has created a conflict of interest. Mr. Campbell said that he is now participating in weekly update calls while this issue is being worked out, and that the school's attorney is working on a resolution. He said that the Tenants' Rep has not yet been paid for services it has provided to the school, since it may not be appropriate given the new circumstances.

Mr. Campbell also reported that the landlord of the school's first temporary site, located at 423 East 138th Street, indicated that he plans to deduct \$27,000 from the school's security deposit, which has still not been returned even though more than 60 days have passed since the school vacated the premises. Mr. Campbell inquired about the costs associated with the total amount requested, and the landlord did not provide an itemized invoice, so it remains unclear as to how that figure was determined. The school's lawyer is also addressing this matter, and has submitted a formal letter to the landlord threatening legal action should the deposit continue to be held.

Special Presentations

Mr. Campbell reported that the History Department Faculty led a special presentation for parents in October to engage parents in the curriculum.

Ms. Aylwin added that WHEDco's Teen Program students would be hosting a parent event that addresses "what I wish my parents knew when I was in middle school," which will give SBECA parents an opportunity to hear insights from teens who may have had similar experiences as the SBECA students. She added that the school social workers would be on-site during the discussion to help facilitate dialogue.

Parent/Teacher Conference Days

Mr. Campbell said that school would close for two days in November, to facilitate full-day Parent/Teacher Conferences. He said that parents would have an opportunity to meet individually with the entire Humanities team and then the Math & Sciences team. The faculty will dedicate 20 minutes to each student for each of the school's 220 students, which is why this event takes place during the day, rather than in two hours in the evening.

Resolution to Authorize Catherine Toussaint, Director of Records and Finance, to Represent SBECA in all TRS Matters

Mr. Campbell reminded the Board that Cat Eugenio had previously been the authorized employee managing enrollment of teachers in The NYS Teachers' Retirement System (TRS). He said that her role has since changed to

Parent Coordinator and that the school has hired Catherine Toussaint to take on some of the high-end administrative tasks that Cat previously managed, including TRS. He requested that the Board formerly authorize Ms. Toussaint for this role, which is required by TRS. Ms. Cohen asked about her credentials and Mr. Campbell said that she has ten years of experience in charter school administration.

Andrea Cohen made a motion to pass the following Board resolution; Eric Nadelstern seconded, and the Board unanimously voted to pass the resolution.

Be it resolved that Catherine Toussaint, Director of Records and Finance at the South Bronx Early College Academy Charter School (SBECACS), is hereby authorized by the Board of Directors as the designated school representative on matters of employee retirement as it relates to membership, deductions, donations, and benefits under the Teachers Retirement System of New York City (TRSNYC) plan, effective this 3rd day of November, 2016.

2015 – 2016 Fiscal Year Audit Review and Adoption

Mr. Russell reported that the Finance Committee had met in advance of the full Board meeting to discuss the school's audited financial statements, which include the planning phase beginning in December 2013, when the school was originally chartered, all the way through June 2016, which is the end of the first year of operations.

Mr. Russell directed the Board to Digant Bahl's memo, which highlights a few key points in the audit. He said that the memo indicates that, in Mr. Bahl's opinion, the school is in good financial standing and has met all auditing standards set by the government and the school's authorizer. He added that the memo indicates that there is \$200,000 cash on hand, which is a healthy amount to roll over from the previous year.

Ms. Cohen said that she had reviewed the audit carefully and that, on behalf of the Finance Committee, she recommended it be adopted by the full Board.

Eric Nadelstern made a motion to adopt the 2015 – 2016 Audit, as presented on November 3rd, 2016. Jodi Schneider seconded, and the Board unanimously voted to adopt the audit.

Board/Faculty Mixer

Mr. Russell said that there would be a Board/Faculty Mixer following the December 1st, 2016 Board meeting, which would give the Board an opportunity to meet some of the teachers and WHEDco staff working at the school. He said that a formal invitation would be circulated and that he hopes all are able to attend.

2017 Meeting Calendar

Mr. Russell stated that the meeting calendar had been set at the beginning of 2016 for the calendar year, and that 2017 dates should be agreed upon by the Board for advance notice to parents. The Board indicated that the first Thursday of the month continues to work moving forward. Mr. Russell said that it may make sense to move the January meeting back one week, so that people can get re-settled after the holidays, but to continue with the current schedule beginning in February. He asked Meredith Leverich to update the calendar and upload the full list of dates to the school's website.

New Business

Fiscal Protocols

Mr. Campbell said that, following the audit, Mr. Bahl recommended updating a few of the school's Fiscal

Protocols and Procedures, including requiring certain school employees to sign annual Conflict of Interest Disclosure Forms, in addition to the Board members, who are already expected to complete these forms on an annual basis. He said that additional changes would be brought to the Board at a future meeting, but that the school would implement this new protocol immediately.

Fundraising

Ms. Cohen said that she solicited a \$3,500 donation for the school and is hoping that it can facilitate additional programming, such as chess. Ms. Schneider recommended adding a Shakespeare program, which could engage many students in a variety of creative ways, including performing, set design, and costume design. She said that this may help students who are not currently participating on the school's sports teams feel more deeply connected to the school community. She said that, in her professional experience, these programs give students confidence, and that reading Shakespeare has been proven to improve literacy and other competencies. She said that she would investigate local options and report back. Ms. Cohen and Mr. Russell agreed that it would be a great use of the additional funds.

Executive Session:

The Board met in Executive Session to discuss the Executive Director's Performance Evaluation.

Adjournment:

The Board voted to adjourn the meeting at 6:45 pm.