

**Board of Trustees Meeting
December 7th, 2017
801 East 156th Street, Bronx, NY 10455**

AGENDA

- I. Call to Order
- II. Public Comment
- III. Resolution to Approve Minutes from November 2nd, 2017 Board Meeting
- IV. Response to Public Comment from November 2nd, 2017
 - A. PTA
 - B. Busing
- V. Executive Director's Report
 - A. Academic Programming Update
 - B. Deposition Regarding Former Site (423 E. 138th Street)
- VI. Ford Research & Solutions
- VII. Charter Revision Request
 - A. Change of Community School District
- VIII. New Business
- IX. Executive Session
- X. Next Meeting – January 11th, 2018
- XI. Adjournment

**Reunión de la Junta
7 de diciembre de 2017
801 East 156th Street, Bronx, NY 10455**

AGENDA

- I. Inicio de Sesión
- II. Comentarios Públicos
- III. Moción para aprobar las minutas de la Reunión de la Junta del 2 de noviembre de 2017
- IV. Respuestas a los comentarios públicos de la Reunión de la Junta del 2 de noviembre de 2017
 - A. Asociación de Padres y Maestros (PTA)
 - B. Transportación escolar (autobuses)
- V. Informe del Director Ejecutivo
 - A. Programación Académica
 - B. Declaración sobre el Plantel Anterior (423 E. 138th Street)
- VI. Consultores: *Ford Research & Solutions*
- VII. Solicitud de Revisión de Chárter
 - A. Cambio de Distrito Escolar
- VIII. Asuntos Nuevos
- IX. Sesión Ejecutiva
- X. Próxima Reunión – 11 de enero de 2018
- XI. Cierre de Sesión



Board of Trustees Meeting
Thursday, December 7th, 2017
801 E. 156th Street, Bronx, NY 10455

Board of Trustees Present: Nancy Biberman, Valerie Capers, Andrea Cohen, Felicia Franklin, Serigne Gninuge, Davon Russell, Jodi Schneider

Board of Trustees Absent: Lori Chemla

SBECA Staff Present: Kelly Powers, Auriel Watson, Jason Adolphus

WHEDco Staff Present: Meredith Leverich

Members of the Public Present: 4

Call to Order

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

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Approval of Minutes from November 2nd, 2017 Board Meeting

Andrea Cohen made a motion to approve the minutes from the November 2nd, 2017 Board Meeting as presented on December 7th, 2017. Felicia Franklin seconded and the Board unanimously voted to approve the minutes.

Response to Public Comment from November 2nd, 2017 Meeting

Request to Form a PTA

Davon Russell said that the school administration could convene a group of parents to support some of the activities in the school, including the 8th grade graduation ceremony; however, the group should not function as a PTA at this time, given the regulations around the structures and financial operations of formal PTAs or PAs. He said that this can be explored moving forward, assuming the school staff has the capacity to facilitate once other priorities are managed and there are parents open to taking ownership of the responsibilities required. He said parent involvement is important to the school, and thanked the parents for their enthusiasm for supporting the students.

Transportation

Ric Campbell reported that the school is continuing to advocate for student safety when traveling to school, given the concerns about the dangers of crossing Westchester Avenue. He said that, as a middle school, SBECA is not eligible for a crossing guard, since they are reserved for elementary schools. He said that he has communicated with the community officers in the precinct to request a traffic agent, but

that a letter from the Board would be helpful in those efforts. Mr. Russell added that engaging with the school's City Council Member may also be an effective strategy.

Executive Director Report

Academic Programming

Mr. Campbell reported that the next interim assessment will be held on December 18th, 19th and 20th, before the holiday break.

Kelly Powers reported that the new schedule facilitates approximately two additional hours of math instruction per week for every student. In addition to the regular math classes held every other day, each student is enrolled in math RTI on the opposite days. Faculty in the Math, Science, and Computer Science departments are helping to facilitate the interventions. She added that, during parent conferences, parents requested homework for students to help them develop skills outside of the school day. In response, the school has facilitated home access to Con Academy, one of the math intervention programs. However, the program requires internet access, which may prevent some students from engaging at home. There is also a math-based, video-game elective that 25 students in 7th and 8th grade are enrolled in, called Boot Strap. The expectation is that students will show some progress when taking the next interim assessments.

Ms. Powers also said that the 90-minute blocks in the new schedule improve safety by reducing the amount of time that students are in the hallways. Mr. Campbell said that the new schedule also facilitates more common time for faculty to meet and plan collaboratively. He added that the number of kids enrolled in the Extended Day portion of the school-day has been reduced by approximately 100 students, whose families were given the opportunity to opt out. Those students now leave at 3:15, which facilitates smaller group settings during the last two hours of the day.

Auriel Watson reported that Read 180, the literacy RTI program, has been rolled out. There are three rotations of 45 or 90 minutes. Ms. Watson is leading the initial trainings to the teachers facilitating the program, but will bring in coaches later in the year, once teachers already have a strong foundation. She said that there is one teacher per grade dedicated to RTI, and that the ELA and History faculty members are syncing their lesson plans to ensure the same standards are taught in each of the classes to help students master skills. Observations have increased, including filming teachers, so that they can review their work to identify and develop effective teaching strategies. She said that daily data collection drives instruction.

The Board asked Jason Adolphus about his experience as a dean and teacher. He said that he is the 7th grade dean and teaches 8th grade US History. Mr. Adolphus said that the three deans share the goal of keeping kids in classes to increase learning time. He said that most behavior infractions are considered Tier 1, so minimal consequences are administered. He said that the school subscribes to a Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports model, and offers students incentives to behave well, such as "Kudos of the Week." He said that students are recognized and celebrated for achievements.

Deposition Regarding Former Site (423 E. 138th Street)

Mr. Campbell reported that he was deposed on November 28th, 2017, as part of the school's ongoing dispute with Towne Partners over the portion of the unreturned security deposit following the school's completion of its one year lease in 2016. He said the deposition lasted approximately three hours. The other party's attorneys have requested additional documents, and then the school will have to decide how to proceed next. He asked if any Board members would be willing to form a sub-committee to help determine the best next course of action, with the counsel of the school's attorney. Andrea Cohen and Nancy Biberman said that they would lend their legal and real estate expertise to this matter.

Ford Research & Solutions

Mr. Russell reported that, as determined at the November 2nd Board meeting, the Personnel and Education Committees had identified and engaged a consultant to help the school with a turn-around plan. The selected consultant is Ford Research & Solutions, led by Jim Ford and Roblin Webb, two charter school experts. Mr. Russell reported that Mr. Ford and Ms. Webb conducted two days of site visits at the school earlier in the week, which included classroom observations and a series of interviews with a cross-section of SBECA Board members, administrators and faculty. They have provided a preliminary report for the Board, but will outline more detailed recommendations at a later date.

Charter Revision Request

Mr. Russell reported that he and Mr. Campbell had a phone meeting with David Frank and other representatives from NYSED, and were notified that NYSED will be issuing a Notice of Deficiency. The school will be required to create a Corrective Action Plan, with the guidance of Mr. Ford and Ms. Webb, and will report quarterly to Nicole Henderson, the school's NYSED liaison.

Mr. Russell stated that the previously discussed proposed charter revisions, including a change to the organizational structure, should wait until Mr. Ford and Ms. Webb provide feedback to the Board. He said that he would formally request an extension to the charter revision request deadline, to see if a request would be considered after December 15th, 2017.

Mr. Campbell reported that, in addition to the material revisions that may be considered later, the school should make an immediate request to amend the Community School District (CSD) listed in SBECA's charter. He said that the school is currently chartered for CSD 7, and that the new site, located at 801 E. 156th Street, Bronx, NY 10455, is just outside the District 7 line. He said that the lines were initially unclear to him, but he can now confirm that the long-term site falls within Community School District 8.

Andrea Cohen made a motion to request a revision to the Community School District listed in the school's charter from CSD 7 to CSD 8. Nancy Biberman seconded, and the Board unanimously voted to approve the resolution.



New Business

Mr. Russell inquired about the high school application process. Mr. Campbell said that representatives from Bronx High School for Computer Science visited the school recently, and that many students were enthused about that opportunity, given SBECA's extensive computer science curriculum. He added that some students would soon sit for the Bard High School Early College entrance exam.

Executive Session

The Board voted to go into Executive Session.

Adjournment

The Board came out of Executive Session and voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting. The next meeting will be held on Thursday, January 11th, which is the second Thursday of the month.