



**Board of Trustees Meeting
Thursday, March 5th, 2020
801 E 156th Street, Bronx, NY 10455**

Board of Trustees Present: Valerie Capers, Andrea Cohen, Sabrina Hope King, Davon Russell, Jodi Schneider

Board of Trustees Absent: Nancy Biberman, Lori Chemla, Felicia Franklin

SBECA Staff Present: Maricruz Badia, Toni Chavarria, Bryan Garcia, Melissa Gaspard, Anijeh Green, Joe Haas, Merrill Kazanjian, Jessica Mesa, Mario Rodriguez

WHEDco Staff Present: Katie Aylwin, Meredith Leverich

Members of the Public Present: 8

Call to Order

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

Public Comment

Nobody in attendance requested to participate in public comment.

Charter School Renewal Update

Mr. Russell reported that the Board of Regents had voted to renew SBECA's charter for a three-year term, beginning on July 1, 2020 and extending through June 30, 2023. He congratulated the faculty and his fellow Board members for everyone's hard work that resulted in this positive outcome.

Meeting Minutes from January 9th, 2020

Mr. Russell said that the Board did not have a quorum present at the February 6th, 2020 meeting and therefore could not approve the draft minutes at that time. Sabrina Hope King made a motion to approve the January 9th, 2020 minutes, as presented on March 5th, 2020. Andrea Cohen seconded and the Board unanimously voted to approve the minutes.

Meeting Minutes from February 6th, 2020

Jodi Schneider made a motion to approve the February 6th, 2020 minutes, as presented on March 5th, 2020. Andrea Cohen seconded and the Board unanimously voted to approve the minutes.

Addendum to WHEDco-SBECA Partnership Agreement

Mr. Russell said that, in response to the NYSED Renewal Site Visit Report, which raised concerns about WHEDco's compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), WHEDco's General Counsel and SBECA Trustee Andrea Cohen have drafted and reviewed an Addendum to the Partnership Agreement to verify that WHEDco staff with access to SBECA student data are prohibited from disseminating that information and must comply with SBECA's FERPA Policy. He said that, upon approval by

the Board of Trustees, he would send the agreement to NYSED for their records. He added that the practice of confidentiality has already been in place and will continue to be a priority.

Andrea Cohen made a motion to adopt the addendum, as presented on March 5th, 2020, to ensure that WHEDco complies with SBECA's FERPA Policy. Sabrina Hope King seconded, and the Board unanimously voted to adopt the addendum.

Resolution to Engage Dr. Peter McFarlane

Mr. Russell reported that Principal Brian Blough had identified that leadership coaching could be a useful support to him and the Vice Principals, who are responsible for providing ongoing support and feedback to the rest of the faculty. Sabrina Hope King had recommended her colleague at Fordham University, Dr. Peter McFarlane, as he has extensive experience in coaching, including in turn-around schools. Mr. Russell said that Mr. Blough and Mr. Haas both know Dr. McFarlane from their higher education pursuits. He added that Dr. McFarlane has set up a schedule to visit the school on Mondays to provide support and guidance, and to report back to the Board by phone regularly. Mr. Russell confirmed that he had checked multiple references, all of which provided positive feedback on Dr. McFarlane's abilities.

Mr. Russell said that an extended engagement with Mr. McFarlane will require Board approval, given the cost threshold outlined in the school's Fiscal Policies & Procedures.

Jodi Schneider made a motion to engage Dr. Peter McFarlane to provide leadership coaching services at SBECA, as described in his proposal submitted on February 7th, 2020. Andrea Cohen seconded, and the Board unanimously voted to approve the engagement.

Mr. Russell added that there would be some areas of Ford Research & Solutions, Inc.'s proposed scope of work that could be reduced, given that Dr. McFarlane will be on-site on a more regular basis.

Finance Committee Report

Fiscal Policies & Procedures Manual

Mr. Russell said that he, the school's Fiscal Team, Digant Bahl of Accounting Solutions of New York, and Jim Ford of Ford Research & Solutions met for a final review of the school's revised Fiscal Policies and Procedures on February 12th, 2020. He said that all outstanding items had been addressed and agreed upon by the meeting participants, and noted that a red-lined version had been circulated to the Board more than a week ago to ensure sufficient time for review.

Andrea Cohen made a motion to amend the Fiscal Policies and Procedures document, as presented via email to the Board on February 25, 2020. Jodi Schneider seconded, and the Board unanimously voted to amend the document.

Review of 990 from Tax Year 2018

Mr. Russell said that the school's auditor had shared SBECA's draft 990 for tax year 2018, which had been shared with the Board more than a week ago to ensure sufficient time for review.

Andrea Cohen made a motion to adopt the 990 as presented on March 5th, 2020, and to instruct Accounting Solutions of New York to file before the May 15th, 2020 deadline. Sabrina Hope King seconded and the Board unanimously voted to adopt and file the document.

Principal's Report (see presentation attached for more information)

Principal Blough was out sick, so Vice Principal Bryan Garcia reported on Mr. Blough's behalf, in collaboration with other members of the leadership team and faculty.

February Highlights

Mr. Garcia said that SBCEA students were among attendees at the Madison Square Garden performance of the Broadway production of *To Kill A Mockingbird*, which inspired students to want to read the book. ELA teachers are adapting their lesson plans to incorporate it into the curriculum.

Family-Teacher Conferences, community service at PS 333, and a Black History Month Celebration took place in February.

Academic Programming

Math

Mr. Garcia said that sixth and seventh grade teachers are re-teaching previously taught Standards based on the results of the Interim 3 assessment and have rolled out a competition among cohorts, based on the results of daily Exit Tickets for each class. Eighth grade Algebra will take a mock Regents Exam on April 21st, and the resulting data will inform additional preparation before the actual exam is administered in June. The mock Regents exam is expected to be predictive of performance on the official State test.

ELA

Mr. Garcia said that, following the poor results from the Interim 2 ELA assessment, particularly in sixth grade, additional work has been done to assess student data from a variety of sources and determine specific deficiencies to target. Dr. Hope King inquired about the method for merging data from multiple sources and the reliability of the analysis. The Vice Principals and Merrill Kazanjian said they would reevaluate the process and report back at a later date.

Mr. Garcia shared a list of adjustments implemented in response to mid-year data.

Social Studies

Mr. Garcia said that the eighth grade cohort took a US History assessment and that 11.8% of students demonstrated proficiency at that time. Vice Principal Josef Haas said that the Regents exam is graded on a significant curve and that 45% of students are expected to pass the exam in June, based on this assessment.

Attendance

Mr. Haas said that attendance has dropped slightly since mid-February, as a result of some families taking extended trips during mid-winter recess. He said that there has been significant improvement in attendance compared to the same time-frame during the 2018 – 2019 school year; 90%+ attendance was 74% at this time last year, and is currently 86.3%, and overall attendance was 91.1%, compared to 94.6% now.

Student Support Services

ELA teacher Melissa Gaspard reported on Special Education growth, on behalf of the Student Support Services team. She said that 18% of Students with Disabilities (SWDs) are either proficient or approaching grade level proficiency. She added that cohorts have been homogenized for ILT classes to meet students' individual needs more effectively. Overall, 25% of SWDs have achieved growth of at least one grade level in ELA and 37% have achieved growth in Math.

The Response to Intervention strategies continue for all students, including SWDs. Across grade levels, 15 SWDs and English Language Learners (ELLs) were on the Q2 Honor Roll with a grade point average of 85% or above.

Operations and Enrollment

Mr. Garcia said that 329 students are currently enrolled.

The Board inquired about recruitment for the 2020 – 2021 school year. Family Engagement Coordinator Natalia Ruiz-Corrales said that she did not have an exact number, but knew that over 100 applications had been received for the upcoming school year.

Family Engagement

Ms. Natalia Ruiz-Corrales reported that the weekly family newsletter is distributed via text to share updates with parents. Two instances of “Coffee with the Principal” have taken place to date, although no families participated in the second event. A parent in attendance requested that these events be scheduled on Saturdays so that working parents could attend and Ms. Ruiz-Corrales said she would explore that option.

Family workshops are ongoing.

High School Admissions

SBECA’s Guidance Counselor, Maricruz Badia, reported that she is working with students on high school selection. She held a meeting with Jodi Schneider and an admissions director to strategize ways to improve access to independent, boarding and parochial schools for SBECA students, given the timeframes of those application requirements. She and Ms. Ruiz-Corrales said that they would work together to build internal capacity for this effort.

Facilities Update

Mr. Garcia reported that an emergency plumbing issue had arisen, but had been resolved.

School Culture

Mr. Garcia said that there were two instances of students being removed from class and sent to the School Culture Center and three instances of out-of-school suspensions in February.

Kickboard usage has dropped since February, although remains above average compared to all schools using Kickboard. Mr. Garcia said that teachers would increase their inputs moving forward.

In March, the Culture team will host Spirit Week, to build morale prior to the State exams. He said that SBECA would participate in The Youth Empowerment Show, but said he wasn’t familiar with the initiative and that more information would be provided at the following meeting.

Higher Education Partners

Mr. Garcia said that Fordham has placed one student teacher at SBECA in the Algebra classroom.

Two SBECA teachers will graduate from programs at MCNY, through which they will receive dual certification.

Leadership Coaching

Mr. Garcia said that, as Mr. Russell stated earlier, Dr. Peter McFarlane is providing leadership coaching to Principal Blough and the two Vice Principals. Dr. McFarlane is helping the team develop a three-year Comprehensive Education Plan and will be on-site every Monday throughout the month of March.

New Business

Mr. Russell said that, as concerns build around coronavirus, the Board and school leadership are monitoring the situation closely and will communicate updates to families as the situation develops.

Next Meeting – April 2nd, 2020**Adjournment**

The Board unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting.