



Board of Trustees Meeting
Thursday, April 2nd, 2020
801 E 156th Street, Bronx, NY 10455

Board of Trustees Present: Nancy Biberman, Lori Chemla, Andrea Cohen, Felicia Franklin, Sabrina Hope King, Davon Russell, Jodi Schneider

Board of Trustees Absent: Valerie Capers

SBECA Staff Present: Jason Adolphus, Anthony Alejandro, Brian Blough, Maricruz Badia, Tanasia Brown, Jennifer Cannella, Shirley Castro, Toni Chavarria, Bryan Garcia, Melissa Gaspard, Anijeh Green, Joe Haas, Nina Krauss, Samantha Lugo, Elaine Martinez, Jessica Mesa, Mahelia Mighty, Yeatie Morgan, Mario Rodriguez, Natalia Ruiz-Corrales, Bruce Stansbury, Beatrice Tinio, Alysha Willis, Debbie Wong

WHEDco Staff Present: Katie Aylwin, Meredith Leverich

Members of the Public Present: 0

Call to Order

Davon Russell called the meeting to order at 5:10 pm.

Public Comment

Nobody in attendance requested to participate in public comment.

Meeting Minutes from March 5th, 2020

Andrea Cohen made a motion to approve the March 5th, 2020 minutes, as presented on April 2nd, 2020. Jodi Schneider seconded and the Board unanimously voted to approve the minutes.

COVID-19 Check-In

Mr. Russell congratulated the faculty on a quick and smooth transition to a Remote Learning Plan, which was rolled out the week of March 16th.

Mr. Blough said that Phase 1 of the plan includes a combination of paper-based work and online instruction. Surveys have been administered to families to assess needs, and devices and packets have been distributed to ensure that students can access Google Classroom and other content from home.

A virtual Town Hall was held on April 1st, which engaged 79 families. Faculty members are holding "office hours" for students and families, and are offering live sessions throughout the week. Each student is expected to engage in three to four hours of instruction per day.

Yeatie Morgan, an eighth grade ELA teacher, said that things are feeling better now that the school has been able to identify and address areas of confusion that arose during the first two weeks of the transition.

Jennifer Cannella, a sixth grade math teacher, said that she has offered live classes at 8 am and that she has had 20 – 25 students participating at a time. She also uploads the videos to YouTube, so that children who cannot participate in real time still have access to the information and support.

Device sharing is frequent among families with multiple school-aged children trying to complete work throughout the day.

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

Academic Programming: Remote Learning Plan

Mr. Blough reiterated some of the information shared previously and detailed the many steps that were taken to plan for and implement SBECA's Remote Learning Plan. He said that the plan had been submitted to NYSED, which has been supportive and continues to provide guidance. He also said that faculty and leadership are continuing to meet regularly and are tracking all actions and updates.

Mr. Blough said that SBECA will maintain its spring break to ensure that faculty and students have an opportunity to catch up on work and reenergize for the rest of the year.

The State exams in ELA and Math have been cancelled. The June Regents exams are currently still scheduled. SBECA will use a year-end iReady exam to track students' progress throughout the year, in lieu of the State exams. It is unclear how future State exams will be adjusted, if at all, given that students may not have the same opportunity to cover all standards during the remainder of the school year.

NYSED has offered a series of webinars to share updates and guidance on grade level promotion, and will continue to share information as updates develop.

Student Support Services

Beatrice Tinio, a co-Director for Student Support Services, reported that Special Education services are being offered via teletherapy, including counseling, speech, and hearing. She said that teachers are providing small group instruction using a variety of platforms, as well as phone calls, daily. Students are also expected to log into iReady for at least 30 minutes in Math and 30 minutes in ELA each week, which helps faculty determine growth and/or deficiencies. Response to Intervention (RTI) meetings are taking place via video conference.

Operations and Enrollment

Mr. Blough reported that there are 326 students currently enrolled.

Family Engagement

Ms. Natalia Ruiz-Corrales reported that she and other members of the administration and faculty worked collaboratively to conduct the school-wide outreach efforts to ensure that all families were reached and assessed for needs.

She said that she has also been offering Mindfulness and Spanish classes to faculty through Google classroom during this time.

School Culture

Mr. Blough said that the school is using a platform called Bark to monitor online interactions among students, including language that might signal mental health concerns to help the school properly and quickly intervene if needed. The Code of Conduct was circulated to families to remind the school community of online expectations.

Higher Education Partners

Mr. Blough said that two teachers will receive dual certification from MCNY in May. Other teachers are applying to certification programs for the next academic year.

Leadership Coaching

Mr. Blough reported that Dr. Peter McFarlane is continuing his leadership coaching, which now takes place via Zoom on a weekly basis. This work includes developing a three-year Comprehensive Education Plan.

Upcoming Events

Leadership continues to plan for a return to the school building, as well as a continuation of remote learning, as it is unclear how long calls for social distancing will last. The school is also thinking through options for the eighth grade graduation.

Finance Committee Report

Mr. Russell presented the current budget and variance report to review spending through March 2020. He said that there is currently a \$167k surplus projected for the current fiscal year, and that the 2020 – 2021 school year budget is being developed. He said that the new budget development process will have to take into consideration that future funding may not be at the level we had previously anticipated, given shortfalls in the State's revenues.

New Business

Next Meeting – May 7th, 2020

Adjournment

The Board unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting.