



**Board of Trustees Meeting
Thursday, May 7th, 2020
Video Conference via Zoom**

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

Board of Trustees Absent: Lori Chemla

SBECA Staff Present: Jason Adolpuhs, Maricruz Badia, Brian Blough, Jennifer Cannela, Shirley Castro, Danielle Corbin, Dennis Darkeem, Bryan Garcia, Melissa Gaspard, Anijeh Green, Joe Haas, Sophia Jones, Nina Krauss, Samantha Lugo, Elaine Martinez, Jessica Mesa, Ameera Nagle, Abanoub Rezk, Dulce Rico, Mario Rodriguez, Natalia Ruiz-Corrales, Beatrice Tinio, Alysha Willis, Debbie Wong

WHEDco Staff Present: Katie Aylwin, Meredith Leverich

Members of the Public Present: 12

Call to Order

Davon Russell called the meeting to order at 5:05 pm.

Teachers' Appreciation Week

Mr. Russell wished the teachers a happy Teachers' Appreciation Week on behalf of the Board, and thanked them for all they continue to do for students at this critical time.

Public Comment

Erina Lettsome, a mother of an eighth grade student, said that she had a suggestion for ways to celebrate the graduates, but that she would share later after she listened to the meeting. Mr. Russell said that he would open the public comment portion of the meeting at the end to facilitate.

Felecia Bartley, a mother of a sixth grade student, thanked the school for doing a superb job. She said that the faculty has been consistently available to respond to questions regarding work. Keep up the good work.

Resolution to Approve Minutes from April 2nd, 2020

Andrea Cohen made a motion to approve the April 2nd, 2020 meeting minutes, as presented on May 7th, 2020. Nancy Biberman seconded and the Board unanimously voted to approve the minutes.

Resolution to Approve WHEDco-SBECA Partnership Agreement for 2020 – 2023 Charter Term, Pending NYSED's Review and Approval

Mr. Russell said that SBECA's partnership agreement with WHEDco as a service provider would expire on June 30, 2020, per the original charter term. He said that a new agreement had been developed, which mimicked much of the initial agreement, but included a reference to the FERPA policy, per feedback that NYSED had given recently, and also eliminated references to a planning phase. He said that, upon Board review and approval, the agreement would be sent to NYSED for their review and approval, before being executed. The next agreement has a term that aligns with the school's renewal term, July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2023.



Andrea Cohen made a motion to approve the new agreement, pending NYSED's approval. Nancy Biberman seconded, and the Board unanimously voted to adopt the resolution.

Principal's Report

Highlights from April 2020/Teachers' Appreciation Week

Mr. Blough acknowledged the faculty for Teachers' Appreciation Week. He said that some members of the faculty surprised him with a parade outside his house for Principal's Appreciation Day.

Academic Programming / Remote Learning Plan

Mr. Blough reported that SBECA is now moving to phase three of its remote learning plan and continues to adjust based on lessons learned. Paper packets will continue to be used and mailed to students; however, all work will be submitted remotely using scanning apps and will have weekly deadlines, so that families don't have to visit the school to drop off completed packets. Weekly assessments will be administered through Google Forms. This consistent timeline helps faculty identify challenges and develop interventions as needed. Weekly agendas and expectations are shared to promote a structured school day.

Report cards will be sent via mail the week of May 11th. Family-Teacher conferences will take place online in May. Community building activities, such as Spartan News and a year-end talent show are moving forward in their new formats.

Assessments for Science and Social Studies will be administered in the first week of June, which will also allow students to catch up on any missed work. iReady assessments for ELA and Math will be administered during the last week of June, which will serve internally as a way to track progress throughout the school year, in lieu of the State exams and the Regents exams, which have been cancelled.

Vice Principals Bryan Garcia and Joe Haas reported on the current units of study for each grade level across the four core subjects. Google Classroom, Nearpod, Illuminate, and other online platforms continue to facilitate distance learning across grades.

Attendance / Participation

The response rate over time has improved as students continue to acclimate to distance learning and the new expectations. In the sixth week of remote instruction, 65% of students completed work on time, while others took additional opportunities to complete late work.

Student Support Services

SBECA and the Committee on Special Education (CSP) conducted 12 IEP meetings since the school building closed, 10 of which included family participation, to ensure that IEPs are appropriate in the remote setting. Teletherapy services are offered to those who need it; 75% of students who require speech therapy are participating weekly and 100% of those who require hearing services are participating twice per week and have closed captioning on their zoom meetings.

The ENL team has a "Meet and Mingle" to increase participation.

The Student Intervention Team closely tracks a group of students who are high-need academically or social-emotionally.



Operations and Enrollment

As of April 30th, 395 applications for the 2020 – 2021 school year have been received. The lottery will be held online on May 20th; applications will be accepted until that day.

Family Engagement

Natalia Ruiz-Corrales reported that SBECA shares a resource newsletter with families weekly and held a town hall with the principal on April 1st. Outreach efforts continue to be a school-wide initiative to assess family needs. The *It's About Us* mentoring workshops for families are now offered remotely every other Saturday.

High School Admissions

Students who were accepted into high schools with a 79% graduation rate or less received personal phone calls home to strongly encourage them to apply to a charter high school.

Two students were admitted into the DOE Summer Discovery Program, which helps students gain admission into specialized high schools. Six students were admitted into the BEAM sixth grade program.

High school admissions workshops are scheduled for seventh grade families at the end of May.

Facilities Update

Mr. Blough said that he visits the school weekly and that the building is currently ready for the 2020-21 school year, having been cleaned, painted and sanitized. Additional automatic hand sanitizer stations have been installed around the building. HVAC, sprinkler and fire inspections have been completed. New Konika printers have been delivered per the school's lease agreement.

School Culture

The School Culture team is responsible for monitoring online activities through Bark, the platform SBECA is using to monitor online behavior. Bark has tracked nearly 120,000 online activities by students; only eight of these have been flagged as problematic and were addressed. The Culture Team has shared the online expectations as part of the Code of Conduct with families as a reminder, and are warning students and alerting families when issues arise.

The SBECA Talent Show will air on the Spartan News on May 8th, and a watch party will be scheduled so that the students can experience it together (virtually) and cheer each other on.

Higher Education Partners

Multiple staff members have applied to certification programs for the 20-21 school year. NYU is offering online workshops to partner schools in May and June. Social work interns continue to be engaged remotely.

Leadership Coaching

Mr. Blough reported that he continues to meet with Dr. Peter McFarlane. Together, they are developing a three year Comprehensive Education Plan, using the charter renewal benchmarks, which will be presented at the June 4th Board meeting. They are also developing summer plans.

Upcoming Events

Mr. Blough said that Family-Teacher Conferences, e-sports teams, student and family town halls, virtual graduation plans, and summer PD are all being planned or rolled out in the coming weeks and months.



Mr. Blough said that students will need to clear out their lockers at some point, so plans are in motion to schedule times that ensure social distancing.

The faculty will have more information for families regarding grade level promotion in the fourth quarter.

Public Comment Part II

Ms. Lettsome asked if she could request a cap and gown for her child. She suggested that the school find ways to make graduation special, such as the “Don’t Rush” challenge with caps, gowns and diplomas. Mr. Blough suggested that she bring her ideas to the eighth grade town hall to discuss with the committee planning virtual year-end events.

Ms. Lettsome also asked if there were plans for the fall, especially if it continues to be unsafe to be in close proximity with others. She asked if remote learning would continue to be an option for families even if schools are open. Mr. Blough said that plans are developing and that they would have more information at a later date.

Finance Committee Update

Mr. Russell said that the Finance Committee would meet prior to the June 4th Board meeting to review and discuss a draft budget for the 2020 – 2021 school year. He said that the per pupil funding from the State may not be set in stone by that time, which may require a conservative budget.

New Business

There is no new business.

Adjournment

The Board unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting.