



**Board of Trustees Meeting
Thursday, October 1st, 2020
Video Conference via Zoom**

Attendees:

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

Board of Trustees Absent: Nancy Biberman, Valerie Capers

SBECA Staff Present: Jason Adolphus, Anthony Alejandro, Brian Blough, Danielle Corbin, Brian Garcia, Melissa Gaspard, Josef Haas, Mbaye Hanne, Sophia Jones, Nina Krauss, Samantha Lugo, Elaine Martinez, Grizelle Medina, Yeatie Morgan, Ameera Nagle, Lucy Peralta, Dulce Rico, Natalia Ruiz-Corrales, Beatrice Tinio, Alysha Willis, Debbie Wong

WHEDco Staff Present: Katie Aylwin, Terron Jones, Meredith Leverich

Members of the General Public: 25

Call to Order

Davon Russell called the meeting to order at 5:07 pm.

Public Comment

Ms. Garcia, a parent, said that she was having a hard time understanding the in-person schedule. She asked which day(s) her son should be going to school in person. Mr. Russell said that Mr. Blough would provide an update during the Principal's Report portion of the meeting, which should provide additional clarity.

Resolution to Approve Minutes from September 3rd, 2020

Andrea Cohen made a motion to adopt the minutes from the September 3rd, 2020 Board meeting, as presented on October 1st, 2020. Sabrina King seconded, and the Board unanimously voted to approve the minutes.

Community Handbook Review & Approval

Meredith Leverich said that Brian Blough had circulated a revised version of the Community Handbook for the 2020 – 2021 school year for Board review. The document is not drastically different from the version shared last year, except for a few key changes, including updated faculty names and contact information, information on new platforms that the school has rolled out, and a caveat that certain items, such as the daily schedule, are subject to change as a result of COVID-19 and the need for distance learning. Mr. Blough also noted that the school's DASA Coordinator this year is Kimberly Young, the lead Dean from the School Culture Team.

Jodi Schneider made a motion to adopt the revised Community Handbook. Andrea Cohen seconded and the Board unanimously voted to approve the document.

Personnel Handbook Review

Mr. Russell said that the Personnel Committee had convened to review an updated Personnel Handbook for the 2020 – 2021 school year, prepared by Alysha Willis, Director of Human Resources and Budget. An additional review is needed to ensure that all policies are up-to-date, so the Committee is not yet prepared to recommend adoption. The Personnel Committee will convene again prior to the November Board meeting to finalize the handbook. In the meantime, if any faculty members have questions or concerns that they are waiting for the handbook to resolve, they should feel free to contact Ms. Willis for clarity.

i-Ready Deep Dive

Mr. Russell said that there will be a session for the Personnel and Education Committees dedicated to developing a deeper understanding of i-Ready, including why the school administration has determined that it's a predictive tool, what the data collection and analysis processes look like, and how the Board can monitor growth effectively throughout the year. Mr. Blough said that it's still not clear whether the State exams will be administered in the spring of 2021, so ensuring that everyone fully understands and feels confident in this monitoring system will be helpful for the community.

Principal's Report

September Highlights

Mr. Blough said that a hybrid model was offered in September for students who opted to come into the school building during that time. Remote learning has been well-attended so far. The school custodian cleans the building nightly.

Academic Programming

Shift to Remote Learning

Mr. Blough reported that the school will be moving to a fully remote model as of October 5th, 2020. This decision was informed by a new survey that went to families and staff in September. The survey responses indicated that over 70% of respondents preferred a fully remote model for October, mostly due to safety concerns around rising COVID-19 numbers and flu season.

The schedule will be retooled to accommodate the shift and ensure that all students are receiving appropriate remote instruction. Core class periods will increase from 45 minutes to 60 minutes each, and specials classes will be offered on Wednesdays to break up the week. Office hours and access to teachers will also be available every Wednesday.

A select group of students, including Students with Disabilities (SWDs), English Language Learners (ELLs), and students with compromised housing, will be invited to do their remote learning on-site at the school on Tuesdays and Thursdays, so that they can access additional in-person supports. ILT is provided as push-in or small group instruction, based on student need.

The school is providing technology and support to ensure that all families have sufficient wifi and can successfully participate in remote learning.

i-Ready Review

Mr. Blough shared an overview of i-Ready, a research-based, web-based, diagnostic assessment system that the school uses to pinpoint students' grade level equivalence, monitor student progress and inform instruction.

The school administered an i-Ready diagnostic for Reading and Math in September to collect baseline data for each student. Mr. Blough reported the following results from the September diagnostic:

Reading			
Grade	On Grade Level (Proficient)	One Grade Level Below Proficiency	Two or More Grade Levels Below Proficiency
Sixth	31%	28%	41%
Seventh	22%	20%	59%
Eighth	31%	16%	53%

Math			
Grade	On Grade Level (Proficient)	One Grade Level Below Proficiency	Two or More Grade Levels Below Proficiency
Sixth	20%	40%	40%
Seventh	17%	33%	51%
Eighth	15%	32%	53%

Mr. Blough said that, although the eighth grade students take the math diagnostic in i-Ready, it is not aligned with the Algebra curriculum, so the results are not as predictive as practice Regents exams. Bryan Garcia noted that, although there is summer slide, the students are beginning the year from a stronger place than they were at the beginning of last year.

The mid-year diagnostic will be administered in January and the final diagnostic will be administered in June.

Professional Learning Communities

Mr. Blough said that the school has formed Professional Learning Communities (PLC), informed by coaching conducted by Dr. Peter McFarlane. A small group of leaders works on specific community goals related to the three-year Comprehensive Education Plan, and then a larger group meets monthly.

Student Support Services

Beatrice Tinio, one of the Co-Directors of Student Support Services, restated that core classes will extend to 60 minutes, up from 45 minutes, to ensure compliance with the Integrated Co-Teaching Program implemented via remote learning. Tailored i-Ready lessons are also available for four days per week; this is a different function of i-Ready, separate from the diagnostic described earlier.

ILT support is offered remotely through breakout rooms in core classes to students who need additional support, including SWDs and ELLs. ILT will also have a remote learning block two to three days per week, based on i-Ready groupings to further support students who are two or more grade levels below proficiency.

Counseling has begun. A speech provider is on-site on Tuesdays for seventh grade students and a second provider has been identified to support sixth and eighth grade students.

There has been an increase in ELL students, including five students who are new to the country.



Ms. Tinio reiterated that SWDs and ELLs are prioritized to come into the building on Tuesdays and Thursdays to receive additional support, even as the school moves to a fully remote model. Students on-site will be logging into their classrooms through their Chromebooks, with in-class teacher support. Elaine Martinez reiterated that students who are not coming into the building will still receive all of their mandated services remotely.

Operations & Enrollment

Mr. Blough reported that enrollment continues to ebb and flow. There are still 308 students enrolled, although ongoing outreach continues with Schola to get closer to the school's budgeted number of 330 students.

Family Engagement

Mr. Blough reported that Parent Square has been a great tool to communicate with all or specific groups of families. Natalia Ruiz-Corrales said that the program also notifies the school if the messages are not sent successfully, which ensures that the school can follow up in a timely way.

Weekly huddles are happening, including a community viewing of Spartan News. Ms. Ruiz-Corrales added that the Monday morning huddles are a great time to check-in with families and share announcements, and the Wednesdays evening huddles are co-led by the Family Support team, which help connect families to other resources. The Family Newsletter continues to go out weekly. The school is also hosting curriculum nights for each grade levels, which helps families connect to the faculty and build community.

School Culture

Mr. Blough reported that there were over 60,000 activities monitored in the past week on Bark, the platform that monitors online activities for the school community. Of these, only 17 issues were identified by the system and addressed by the School Culture team.

Facilities

Mr. Blough reported that the school is following Department of Health guidelines in the school building, including temperature checks, daily surveys, electrostatic spraying, cleaning of the HVAC system, and mask and social distancing requirements.

Higher Education Partners

Mr. Blough said that Metropolitan College of New York (MCNY) student teachers have begun their work at SBECA and NYU students will start in October.

Leadership Coaching

Mr. Blough said that he continues to work with Dr. Peter McFarlane on the School Comprehensive Education Plan, as well as the formation and ongoing development of Professional Learning Communities to push grade level work forward.

Upcoming Events

Mr. Blough reiterated that the fully remote learning plan begins on Monday, October 5th, and students will receive schedules by the end of the week. The schedule will be fully linked to all sessions, including some that are optional, such as group lunch time and the Extended Day Program.

Saturday Academy will begin remotely on October 3rd.



The Social Emotional Learning PLC is planning an event to collectively mourn loss in 2020.

High school preparation sessions are ongoing. Maricruz Badia, the school guidance counselor, said that she is meeting with families individually through the month of October. She hosted four high school list development workshops, which helped families complete an interest survey. The DOE still has not announced changes to the high school admissions process. Ms. Badia will continue to move forward to ensure each family has a high school list and is aware of their options, including Catholic and private schools. Historically, SBECA has hosted in-person high school fairs, which will likely occur virtually this year.

New Business

Mr. Russell said that he would work to convene the i-Ready deep dive meeting, as well as a Finance Committee meeting to review the updated budget projections once they are finalized.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Thursday, November 5th, 2020 at 5:00 pm.

Adjournment

The Board unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting.