



**Board of Trustees Meeting  
Thursday, November 5<sup>th</sup>, 2020  
Video Conference via Zoom**

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

Board of Trustees Absent: Lori Chemla, Sabrina King

SBECA Staff Present: Jason Adolphus, Anthony Alejandro, Maricruz Badia, Brian Blough, Jennifer Cannella, Danielle Corbin, Bryan Garcia, Melissa Gaspard, Joe Haas, Mbaye Hanne, Stephanie Javois, Daniel Lucas, Samantha Lugo, Elaine Martinez, Yeatie Morgan, Natalia Ruiz-Corrales, Bruce Stansbury, Beatrice Tinio, Alysha Willis, Debbie Wong

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

Members of the Public Present: 31

**Call to Order**

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

**Public Comment**

No members of the public in attendance requested to make a public comment.

**Resolution to Approve Minutes from October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020**

Andrea Cohen made a motion to approve the minutes from the October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020 Board meeting, as presented on November 5<sup>th</sup>. Jodi Schneider seconded and the Board unanimously voted to approve the minutes.

**Review and Approval of the 2020 – 2021 Employee Handbook**

Mr. Russell stated that the Personnel Committee had convened on November 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2020 for a final review of proposed updates to the 2020 – 2021 Employee Handbook, prepared by Alysha Willis, Director of Human Resources and Budget. The Committee recommends that the Board adopt the document as presented on November 5<sup>th</sup>, 2020.

Jodi Schneider made a motion to adopt the 2020 – 2021 Employee Handbook. Felicia Franklin seconded and the Board unanimously voted to adopt the handbook.

**Review and Approval of 2019 – 2020 Draft Audit**

Mr. Russell stated that an outside agency conducts a fiscal audit following each fiscal year to ensure that the school's financial activities are sound. SBeca engaged a new auditor this year, A.G. Aaronson CPA PLLC, which began its engagement in July and worked with the school's team to conduct the FY20 audit. The Board Finance Committee met on October 27<sup>th</sup> to review the draft audit, along with Principal Blough, Accounting Solutions of New York and other key staff. Mr. Russell said that SBeca ended the year in the black and that there were no findings in the audit. Mr. Russell said that the Finance



Committee had approved the audit as presented on October 27<sup>th</sup>, 2020, and authorized Digant Bahl of Accounting Solutions of New York to submit it to the State Education Department and IRS prior to the November 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020 deadline. He requested that the full Board adopt the audit retroactively.

Nancy Biberman made a motion to approve the FY20 Audit. Felicia Franklin seconded and the Board unanimously voted to pass the resolution.

## **Principal's Report**

### Highlights from October

Mr. Blough reported that SBECA hosted an outdoor movie night on the roof, in partnership with the Extended Day Program, which was a positive way to build community while maintaining social distancing requirements.

### Academic Programming

Mr. Blough shared a video compilation highlighting remote learning in the Humanities classes. He said that the school is very proud of student engagement on the various platforms that faculty are using. He said that he will share a highlights video of STEM classes at the December meeting.

Vice Principals Bryan Garcia and Joe Haas reported on academic initiatives to enhance remote learning, including ongoing coaching and content meetings for teachers, small group targeting through office hours, and increased teaching time to 60 minutes per core class. Teachers are sharing best practices and providing students with more opportunities to make up or complete work. Saturday Academy has also begun virtually to offer additional support to a select group of students. Mr. Haas said that the school is also adapting its grading methods to account for effort in the virtual space.

### Comprehensive Education Plan

Mr. Blough said that the school's three-year Comprehensive Education Plan will be shared via the school's website and updated quarterly. The school has developed the following Professional Learning Communities to facilitate small groups of faculty members tackling the plan's various goals: Academic Leadership, School Development, Social Emotional Learning, Extended Day, Family & Culture, and Grade Teams.

### Attendance

Mr. Blough said that attendance has been fairly strong. Cumulative remote attendance as of 10/31/20 was 79.4% and is trending upwards, with the highest attendance rates occurring in the last two weeks of October (81.8%). Mr. Blough said that attendance is taken every session, not just once per day.

### Student Support Services

Beatrice Tinio, Co-Director of Student Support Services, provided an overview of billable minutes for students, based on their IEP categorizations. Students are categorized as needing support <20% of the time, 20% - 60% of the time, or >60% of the time. Ms. Tinio said that in-person support is offered on Tuesdays and Thursdays to a select group of students, including Students with Disabilities, English Language Learners and students living in transitional homes; an average of 30 students attend on those days and a total of 54 are enrolled for this additional support. The Student Intervention Team continues to meet weekly to review students of concern and develop intervention plans.



### Operations & Enrollment

Mr. Blough said that enrollment remains at 308 students and that the school continues to engage Schola to recruit new students.

### Family Engagement

Natalia Ruiz-Corrales said that SBECA continues to use ParentSquare to connect with families and that, following a school-wide effort to follow up with families, the school has a 98% effectiveness rate. The school continues to follow up with the 2% of families that are not currently reachable by phone or email to determine their correct contact information.

SBECA circulates a weekly newsletter and offers weekly online Family/Community Huddles and a Friday viewing of Spartan News, allowing families to connect and ask questions. SBECA is developing the Family Advisory Committee on Engagement (FACE) to identify ways to better engage families.

### School Culture

Mr. Blough reported that only 44 issues were identified among over 90,700 online activities within the past week. The School Culture team investigates and follows up on these issues. Students are required to have their cameras on, so that faculty can confirm their identity and ensure safety for all students.

### High School Admissions

SBECA Guidance Counselor, Maricruz Badia, said that the DOE has not yet announced any changes to the high school admissions process. The school is moving forward as it typically does to help students develop their high school lists. Ms. Badia has hosted six family and student workshops and conducted 56 individual family meetings to date. Another 48 individual family meetings have been scheduled, and 11 will be scheduled in the coming weeks. Ms. Badia says that the high school list that she shares with families includes schools with graduation rates of 80% or above.

She added that over 15 students are participating in SBECA's Specialized High School Standardized Test (SHSAT) tutoring class.

### Higher Education Partners

Mr. Blough said that four MCNY student teachers are participating in classes and attending staff meetings and workshop. Five NYU students are also supporting the school. This allows for additional small group work.

### Leadership Coaching

Mr. Blough reported that he continues his work with Dr. Peter MacFarlane.

### Upcoming Events

Mr. Blough said that Family Teacher Conferences will be held on November 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> via Zoom.

### **New Business**

Mr. Russell said that the Board is engaged outside of monthly Board meetings and continues to think about and implement ways to support the school community. If people have ideas, they should reach out to the school leadership team to share their suggestions.



Ms. Ruiz-Corrales said that in a recent family meeting, it was suggested that the school find ways to help kids be kids, outside of their academic work. For instance, perhaps the school could host a monthly birthday celebration or conduct a mass mailing to build morale.

**Next Meeting – December 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2020**

**Adjournment**

The Board unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting.