Board of Trustees Meeting

Tuesday, October 20, 2015, 6:00 PM

Meeting Minutes

Trustees Present
Marshall Kesten, Treasurer
Rosa Agosto
Duarna Oller, Chairperson
Mallory Locke (Skype)
Francisco Lugoviña
Laura Chavez (Skype)
Dr. Samuel De Leon

Trustees Excused
Dr. Richard Izquierdo, Founder
Paloma Hernandez, Secretary
Kenzena Brown- Torres

Staff Present
Richard Burke, Head of School/Principal

Call to Order:
Chairperson Oller called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Distribution of Agenda:
The agenda for the meeting was distributed to all Board members.

Chairperson Ms. Oller begins the evening by welcoming board members and auditor Gus Saliba. Ms. Oller opens the floor to the auditor who reports school financial to be in good standing. Ms. Oller confirms that everyone has received Akin Rawlins resume. Akin introduced himself to the board members and expressed his excitement for an opportunity to become part of the team.
Ms. Oller talks about the November board meeting that will coincide with the 2\textsuperscript{nd} DOE visit. She discusses the importance of everyone’s presence on this day and reiterates the deadline for the renewal application as November 2\textsuperscript{nd}. Ms. Oller will be scheduling a task force meeting to discuss all logistic necessary for the renewal visit.

**Approval of Minutes:**

Ms. Oller motioned to approve the September 15, 2015, Board Minutes, seconded by Mallory Locke. All were in favor, and the motion is passed.

**Committee Reports:**

**Finance Report:**

The school recognized revenues just over 1\% higher than originally budgeted through September. Projections anticipate revenues will be less than 1\% higher than budgeted through the end of this FY. Expenses through September are 19\% lower than budget, primarily due to the payroll lag and timing of the report. Spending is expected to increase after the school year begins and we anticipate expenses at the end of the fiscal year to be slightly over budget (1\%). Areas of the budget for this fiscal year include compensation, incentives, benefits, general and administrative expenses, professional services and curriculum & classroom. These are based on current spending that will be reviewed on a monthly basis and updated and offset with savings from other budget lines as necessary.

The balance sheet shows that the school remains in a comfortable cash position. The main operating account should be in good shape to meet the cash flow needs of the school. The school appears to have positive cash flow through the rest of the year.

**Head of School/Principal:**

September was a very productive month. We had a strong start to the year, a surprise speech by the Mayor and the first of 2 DOE visits.

We have gotten the school up to speed in record time, and many outsiders were impressed by what is happening. At the mid-month point, the Mayor gave his speech from the auditorium on Educational Goals. This was exciting as we were able to have our school news team members present and also because our scholars and teachers kept pressing on without missing a beat. Multiple visitors commented on how unaffected and focused our school was while hundreds of visitors moved through our school.

There is a lot to be done, but in reflecting on September we have built a strong foundation. We are building wider capacity and educational access points for our language learners, pressing for
rigor and student-centered work and providing authentic experiences of inclusion in our co-taught classrooms.

Walking through the halls you see engaged, happy scholars and staff. As the DOE stated in their review of the day, the culture and feeling of warmth and safety is very apparent. DOE expressed their excitement to come back and visit the school. Two St Johns Doctoral students visited the school and provided STEM tutoring to the 11th grade IEP students. They will be coming in four days of the week. Our 11th-grade scholars started taking college courses, internships start in November and our school turned to continuing our strong instruction and preparations for the 2nd DOE visit.

Abacus is visiting Friday, and they will be doing an evaluation of the ELL program. The Education Committee believes that Abacus will be of great value to the school. Finance committee states they can accept the resolution for Abacus taking into consideration our increase in the count in the schools per pupil. Mr. Lugoviña motioned to approve the resolution seconded by Ms. Oller. All were in favor; motion was passed.

Directors Reports:

High School DTL Report September 2015- Ms. Buckman

For the month of September, our staff and students have put in a lot of work in preparation for our DOE visit. The visit went very smoothly; teacher and students were in their natural state of learning and facilitating. There was evidence of learning in the classrooms with very little to no behavioral issues. High School PDs in the morning have proven to be very beneficial. We can discuss our students and bring to light issues that we can triage and correct right away. As we are growing the student culture, it’s great to see that students are participating in the new sports programs. Student Government has begun, and it was exciting to see our scholar’s campaign and vote as elections were held. This year we decided to have all grade levels participate in the PSAT testing this year. 10th and 11th grade received Kaplan tutoring while the data for 9th grade will be used as a diagnostic for teachers and leadership.

Middle School DTL Report for September 2015- Mr. Blough

September was a month of momentum in the Middle School. We were ready to start the year. The month started with an orientation day September 3rd. This was a smooth and exciting day where the scholars watched an orientation video showing a message from our founder, what the school’s mission is and seeing highlights from last year. Then they transitioned to their
Homerooms for the first time and started their year. This process was smooth and built purpose for our community. From the first week of school, we’ve been observing and working with teachers on planning, the co-teaching models, student engagement and rigor. We’ve added training experiences from Creative Classroom Solutions and Dr. Marshall George. The teachers had a September 11th training at the Metropolitan Museum of Art that was powerful and rewarding for the teachers.

All of these things were leading up to our first of two Department of Education renewal visits. For the Middle School, the observations were positive. We had a young renewal team, and they were able to see some positive things from both veteran and young teachers. The renewal team observations were scheduled for 15 min “pop-ins” so even though they saw positive things, they missed so much of the “activity” portions of the lessons that were filled with rigor and student-centered activity. There is still a lot of work to do, but we are proud of the community, nonetheless.

**DTL for Special Programming: -Mr. Sharpe**

Music classes are in full swing! All students have the opportunity to participate in electronic music, band, and/or chorus, and they will give their first performance this month at the Latino Heritage Celebration. The art classes with Mr. Velez, Ms. Blough, and our visiting artist Alice Mizrachi have begun plans to update some of the older murals in the hallways. The American Flag next to the auditorium will be completely redone while the 9/11 memorial will be revitalized, keeping the original integrity of the piece. Test preparation and Saturday Academy have now begun. Our 10th and 11th graders took PSAT classes with Kaplan K-12 to prepare for the October exam, while our 6th, 7th, and 8th graders began Saturday Academy. The customized curriculum created by literacy consultant Katherine Patterson was designed to bring struggling scholars up to grade level through scaffolded activities connected to the week's ELA classroom activities.

**Director of College Transition- Ms. Muhammad**

**September**

During the months of September/October, Ms. Muhammad has organized a trip to a college fair, for not just all of our 11th-grade scholars, but for a select number of 10th-grade scholars, as well. Scholars were provided questions and talking points so that our scholars communicated clearly and effectively with school representatives. Scholars were also provided notepads and a writing utensil to take notes accordingly. College trips have also been planned. Thus far, scholars have visited two CUNY schools: Hunter and Lehman. Before scholars are escorted on
College tours a pre-lesson on visiting schools is provided as well as a post-lesson and reflection after each visit. On each school visit, scholars are provided talking points and also take notes in their “college/university” interactive notebooks. With each outing, scholars are encouraged to wear professional attire.

Public Comments:

A parent commented on how impress he is with the progress of the school and the work that is being done. He voiced interest on behalf of Ms. Haynes to form part of the board. He expressed Ms. Haynes concern for not receiving communication back in regards to her petition.

The Board went into an Executive Session.

Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

Submitted: ________________ Date Submitted: ____________________