



East Harlem Board Meeting Minutes

June 12th, 2017 – 5:00PM

The Board of Trustees of the NYC Autism Charter School (NYCACs) met on Monday, June 12th, 2017 at the NYC Autism Charter School 433 East 100th Street New York, NY10029

Attending Trustees:

Carol Santiago
Ashley Garrett
Chas Chigas
Ilene Lainer
Benjamin Hartman (Video Conferenced In)
Hugh O'Rourke
Hannah Hoch
Alvin Shih

Absent Trustees:

Rick Larios
Christine Sandler
Paul O'Neill
Pier LeGendre
Mitchel Baum

Attendees at the Invitation of the Board:

Julie Fisher, Executive Director
Mark Saretsky, Chief Financial Officer
Jessica Seeman, Head of School – East Harlem
Jennifer Connelly, Head of School – Bronx (Video Conferenced In)
Moira Cray, Transition and Community Outreach Director
Susan Michaelson, Special Compliance Officer
Christina Secharan, Executive Administrative Assistant

1. Call to order

Action: Ms. Santiago called the NYCACS East Harlem general meeting to order at 5:01pm.

2. Board Business

a. Minutes from 03-06-2017

- At 5:02pm the minutes of May 8th, 2017 East Harlem Board meeting were reviewed. **Action:** Ms. Hoch motioned to approve the minutes. Mr. O'Rourke seconded the motion in which the Board voted, and the minutes were unanimously approved.

3. Program Updates

a. Education

- **Staffing**

- i. At 5:03pm Ms. Seeman updated the Board that the East Harlem location has 1 to

2 positions left to fill (dependent upon current staff departures) with many suitable candidate options. The staff training in place is very systematic, with two large groups of staff will starting in July – the first group on July 10 and the second on July 24.

- **Initial Results of External Program Evaluation**

- i. At 5:04pm Ms. Fisher updated the Board on the annual external evaluation conducted at the end of May by Dr. Dennis Reid. Dr. Reid spent two days on site in classrooms, observing staff both at the school and in the community, and attending a student clinic. Ms. Fisher will provide the written report once available, but Dr. Reid conveyed very positive feedback in the post-visit debrief with senior staff. He was particularly impressed with the amount and level of group instruction being offered, as well as the low rates of problem behavior.

- **Epi Pen Guidelines**

- i. At 5:08pm Ms. Fisher informed the Board about a new epi-pen regulation stating that a school can now choose to have epi-pens on hand to administer in the case of an emergency to a person (student or staff) showing signs of an anaphylactic reaction even if they have no previous history of such a reaction (and, therefore, no prescription). After a discussion, it was decided that more research needs to be done by Ms. Fisher and Ms. Secheran, and the topic will be revisited at the next meeting.

- b. Facilities**

- At 5:20pm Mr. Saretsky updated the Board on the recent improvements to the school's Life Skills Center. Mr. Saretsky and Ms. Seeman recently conducted a walk through of the entire school, and created a list for upcoming summer renovations.

- c. Technology**

- At 5:24pm Mr. Saretsky updated the Board that the school has fully transitioned to MindShift, with twice monthly on-site visits. Ms. Fisher added that there are on-going Internet connectivity issues which MindShift has made a top priority.

4. Committee/Subcommittee Updates

- a. Finance**

- **FY 2017 YTD Financials**

- i. At 5:26pm Mr. Saretsky informed the Board that some of the administrative salaries are spread over two schools, reducing expenses. There is also a new salary ladder for classroom employees and new benefit package utilizing a PEO.
- ii. At 5:28pm Mr. Saretsky informed the Board that April ended with a surplus of \$106,000 mainly due to some contingencies that the school have not yet utilized. There are still a couple of months left in the fiscal year and Mr. Saretsky projects a small deficit by the end of the year. The projected deficit is lower than what was budgeted and the school will not need to rely on reserves.

- **Proposed FY 2018 EH Budget**

- i. At 5:35pm Mr. Saretsky discussed the budget for the upcoming year for the East Harlem School. Mr. Saretsky reiterated that most of the administrative salary will be shared between two schools and the new benefit packages will slightly lower benefit costs for the school and staff. The planned expansion for 2019 has

not been included in the budget. The deficit for the next year will go down to \$50,000, and it would have been a larger deficit if not for the Bronx location sharing expenses. Mr. O'Rourke approved the budget on behalf on the Finance Committee. **Action:** Ms. Garrett motioned to approve the proposed budget for 2018 fiscal year. Mr. Chigas seconded the motion in which the Board voted, and it was unanimously approved.

- **Governance**

- i. **Trustee Terms**

- At 5:49pm Ms. Santiago acknowledged and appreciated Mr. Chigas for serving on the Board for 9 years. This will be Mr. Chigas' last meeting as parent representative.
 - There are two trustee terms up for renewal. Ms. Lainer left the room in order for the Board to vote on her term renewal. **Action:** At 5:55pm Mr. Chigas motioned to renew Ms. Lainer's term for another three years. Mr. Shih seconded the motion in which the Board voted, and it was unanimously approved.
 - At 5:58pm Mr. Hartman was disconnected from the meeting to vote on his term renewal. **Action:** Ms. Lainer motioned to renew Mr. Hartman's term for another three years. Mr. O'Rourke seconded the motion in which the Board voted, and it was unanimously approved.

- b. **Adolescent Task Force**

- i. At 6:01pm Ms. Fisher provided an update on the adolescent task force. The next steps are to get input from people dealing with transitioning into adulthood from school. Ms. Fisher, Ms. Cray, and senior staff will also start to formulate the framework for the school expansion. Plans will be presented at the next Adolescent Task Force meeting in September.

5. Closing Items

- a. **Action:** Ms. Garrett motioned to adjourn the NYCACS East Harlem Board Meeting. Mr. Shih seconded the motion, in which Ms. Santiago adjourned the meeting at 6:03pm.