



Board Meeting Minutes

October 16th, 2017 – 5:00PM

The Board of Trustees of the NYC Autism Charter School (NYCACs) met on Monday, October 16th, 2017 at the NYC Autism Charter School East Harlem 433 East 100th Street, New York NY 10029

Attending Trustees:

Carol Santiago
Ashley Garrett
Alvin Shih
Christine Sandler
Ilene Lainer
Rick Larios
Hugh O'Rourke
Hannah Hoch
Alberto Garcia
Pier LeGendre
Mitchel Baum (Video Conference)

Absent Trustees:

Benjamin Hartman
Paul O'Neill
Naeema Livingston

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 (Audio Conference)
Moir Cray, Director of Transition and Community Outreach
Susan Michaelson, Compliance Specialist (Audio Conference)
Christina Secharan, Executive Administrative Assistant
Alysia Steinmann, Trustee Candidate

1. Call to order

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

2. Board Business

a. Minutes from 09-18-17

- At 5:02pm the minutes of September 18th, 2017 NYCACS Board meeting were reviewed. **Action:** Ms. Sandler requested a motion to approve the minutes and Mr. Larios seconded the motion in which the Board voted, and the minutes were unanimously approved.

3. School Update

a. East Harlem

- **Overview of First Month**

- i. At 5:03pm Ms. Seeman indicated that the three new students are adjusting and progressing within their new school environment. Parent clinics have started, and students 13 and older have begun grocery shopping off-site and going to Asphalt Green for fitness instruction. Additionally, two students have already started their work internship programs. The school is also hosting student observers from many programs, such as Sarah Lawrence and Weill Cornell. Ms. Seeman had a meeting with the leadership of P.S. 50, and target students will now have inclusion on site at P.S. 50.

b. Bronx

- **Overview of First Month**

- i. At 5:08pm Ms. Connelly informed the Board that the school is now fully enrolled, with the last the student having started last week. All students IEP meetings have been conducted and clinics with parents have begun. The Bronx school recently had its Back-to-School Night, in which 10 out of the 11 families attended (one set of twins). Student programming is currently in place and data are being collected on a digital platform, Thread. An overview of the Thread platform will be provided to Trustees at an upcoming meeting.

c. General

- **Prescription Language**

- i. At 5:13pm Ms. Fisher reviewed the policy for staff to obtain their NY State license in behavior analysis, discussed at previous Board meetings. Ms. Fisher has been researching the need for student prescriptions for ABA, - seemingly one of the requirements of supervised hours toward licensure. It was decided that Ms. Fisher will conduct further research into how other similar programs are interpreting and adhering to the regulations.

- **Funding**

- i. At 5:31pm Ms. Fisher informed the Board that she met with personnel from the Office of School Design and Charter Partnerships as well as the Northeast Charter School Network, to raise the per pupil allocation issue – namely that our rate has been frozen going on six years. She is waiting to hear back and will update the Board once there is more information.

4. Committee Updates

a. Governance

- **Trustee Candidate**

- i. At 5:32pm Ms. Santiago introduced Ms. Steinmann. Ms. Steinmann has two sons on the spectrum, lives in the East Harlem neighborhood, and is in the financial service industry. Ms. Steinmann was asked to leave the room in order for the Board to discuss and vote. **Action:** Ms. Sandler motioned to approve Ms. Steinmann as a Trustee on the NYCACS Board. Ms. Garrett seconded the motion in which the Board voted, and it was unanimously approved.

b. Finance

- **FY 2017 Audit Report and Tax Return**

- i. At 5:39pm Mr. Saretsky presented the FY 2017 Audit Report and the 990 Tax Return to each of the Board members. Mr. Saretsky requested that Trustees sign to acknowledge receipt of the 990 Tax Return. Mr. Saretsky informed the Board that the auditors presented this report to the Finance Committee last week. The audit was clean with no management letter. The schools continue to have strong balance sheets, even with the lack of increase in per pupil funding. The increase to 33 students and shared salaries of some administrative staff between both sites are beneficial to the budget currently, but in the long term the deficit will continue to grow if there is no increase in revenue. Eighty-one percent of expenses are allocated to school programming and fundraising has been consistent at 2%.

- **FYTD (July) Financials**

- i. At 5:49pm Mr. Saretsky reviewed the financials for July 2017. East Harlem broke even on revenue and expenses. The Bronx school will operate at a deficit due to the gradual increase in the number of students. Grants will fund deficits for the new term.

- c. **Hiring Subcommittee**

- At 5:58pm Ms. Fisher updated the Board on the process to date of the hiring committee. Based upon the candidates interviewed, as well as extensive discussion amongst the Trustees and other members of the hiring committee, it was decided that the COO role might be better split between two individuals – one overseeing operations, and the other finance. This finance person would continue to be Mark (with support from Anne) for the time being. It was proposed that a Director of Operations (DO) be hired to take on the Operations side. This role may be adjusted as decisions are made regarding needs within the finance arena, and as the DO's strengths are better assessed. A candidate has been identified for this role. He just today accepted the committee's offer.

- **Organization Chart**

- i. At 6:10pm the Board reviewed the proposed organization chart with the addition of a Director of Operations. After some discussion, it was determined that there should be the addition of a dotted line from Director of Operations to Chief Financial Officer (CFO), as well as a dotted line from the Office Managers to respective Heads of School (HOS). **Action:** Ms. Lainer motioned to approve the new organization charts for East Harlem and Bronx with the addition of a dotted line from Office Manager to HOS and a dotted line from Director of Operations to CFO. Mr. Shih seconded the motion in which the Board voted, and it was unanimously approved.

- d. **Operations Committee**

- At 6:13pm Ms. Fisher informed the Board that the meeting dates for the Operations Committee might change. She will advise as soon as possible.

5. Closing Items

- a. **Action:** Mr. Larios motioned to adjourn the NYCACS Board Meeting. Ms. Garrett seconded the motion, in which Ms. Santiago adjourned the meeting at 6:17pm.