

MINUTES
January 27, 2014
NYCACS BOARD MEETING

The Board of Trustees of the NYC Autism Charter School (NYCACS) met on Monday, January 27, 2014 at the NYC Autism Charter School located at 433 E. 100th Street (at PS/IS 50), New York, NY. The following Trustees attended: Maureen Bateman, Mitch Baum, Charles Chigas, Ashley Garrett, Ben Hartman, Steve Jorgensen, Ilene Lainer (via telephone), Nancy Needle, Hugh O'Rourke, Virginia Ryan, and Carol Santiago. The following Trustees were absent from the meeting: Alan Capper, Ophelia Rudin, and Laura Slatkin. The following individuals were present at the invitation of the Board: Julie Fisher, Executive Director, Mark Saretsky, Chief Financial Officer, Moira Cray, Director of Transition and Community Outreach, Susan Michaelson, Quality Assurance Manager, Shirley Torres, Administrative Assistant. The meeting began at 4:35 p.m. and adjourned at 6:25p.m.

1. **Call to Order** – Ms. Needle called the general meeting to order at 4:35 p.m.
2. **Board Business**
 - a) The minutes of the meeting of November 18, 2013 were reviewed.
 - i. **ACTION: The minutes of the November 18, 2013 meeting were approved.**
 - b) Mr. Jorgensen and Ms. Needle reviewed and discussed a Board timeline for upcoming activity related to planning and renewal. They encouraged all committee chairs to review it and refer to it moving forward.
3. **Education Update**
 - a) **Staffing and student update** - Ms. Fisher informed Trustees that two NYCACS students (siblings) have transitioned out. One boy and one girl were selected from the active lottery waitlist. They both began after the holiday break and are doing well. Two new staff members began in December and one additional instructor was hired for gap coverage.
 - b) **Young adult programming update** - Ms. Cray provided an update on ongoing young adult programming, including work readiness and community based instruction activities.
 - c) **Air conditioning proposal** – Ms. Fisher put forth a proposal for a facility project to install air conditioning in hallways and interior spaces previously without air conditioning. Some of these interior spaces are critical for students, such as de-escalation areas and the instructional bathroom, and have been unusable during hot summer months. The estimated cost for this project is \$125,000 and will require a proposal submission to the DOE as per charter legislation around facilities upgrades in excess of \$5,000.
 - i. **ACTION: Motion to submit this proposal to the Department of Education and allocate up to \$150,000 to fund it was approved.**

- d) **Dissemination grant update** – An update on dissemination grant activities was provided. The dissemination grant coordinator, Ms. Seeman, is currently out on maternity leave. Ms. Simon, who has been involved in the dissemination work with Ms. Seeman, will be taking the lead until she returns.

4. **Committee Updates**

- a) **Fundraising Committee** - Ms. Santiago announced that the Annual Appeal is running lower than planned. In order to achieve the school fundraising goal, Spring events are being planned. Mr. Saretsky reported that the school has received a small grant from the Flutie Foundation.
 - i. Mr. Baum revealed the school's brochure and indicated that he will be finalizing content within the next few weeks.
- b) **Finance Committee** - Mr. O'Rourke reported no significant change in year to date financials.
 - i. Mr. Saretsky announced that there is some expense savings due to the higher turn over in staff. Mr. Saretsky and Mr. O'Rourke are currently working on a forecast for end of year financials.
- c) **Supervision and Administration Committee** – The previously distributed personnel manual was reviewed and discussed.
 - i. **ACTION: Content of the updated personnel manual was approved.**
 - ii. Joan Gary consultation contract was reviewed and discussed.
- d) **Trustee Committee** - Ms. Bateman reviewed Trustee guidelines. She highly encouraged attendance at all board meetings and reiterated that all Trustees are welcome as guests to all committee meetings, regardless of membership. Ms. Fisher reminded Trustees that RSVPs are appreciated in order to allow for an accurate head count and ensure a quorum.
- e) **Education Committee** - The previously distributed parent manual was reviewed and discussed.
 - i. **ACTION: Motion to approve updated parent manual was passed.**
- f) **Special Projects Committee (in conjunction with Education Committee)** - Mr. Jorgensen reviewed recommendations made by the independent program consultant and staff responses. Ms. Fisher indicated that some of those recommendations were not feasible but those that were applicable have been or will be incorporated into instruction and/or staff training. Mr. Jorgensen also reviewed Young Adult Program planning to date and put forth a preliminary proposal (see attached) that included: 1) identifying an appropriate off-site space for approximately 10 students and 2) expanding to 40 students overall, allowing the school to maintain its current PS50 space.
 - i. **ACTION: Motion to accept the proposal of the Special Projects committee was approved.**

5. **Additional Items and Public Comment**

- a) The next Parent Association meeting will take place on Thursday, February 6 from 5:30-7pm. It will be titled "The Road to Adulthood: Transition Tasks to Pave the Way".

Meeting was adjourned at 6:25pm.