



## **Board Meeting Minutes**

**May 9th, 2016 - 5:00PM**

The Board of Trustees of the NYC Autism Charter School (NYCACs) met on Monday, May 9th, 2016 at the NYC Autism Charter School 433 East 100<sup>th</sup> Street New York, NY 10029

### **Attending Trustees:**

Carol Santiago  
Rick Larios  
Hannah Hoch  
Paul O'Neill  
Hugh O'Rourke  
Mitchel Baum  
Alvin Shih

### **Absent Trustees**

Chas Chigas  
Benjamin Hartman  
Ashley Garrett  
Ilene Lainer

### **Attendees at the Invitation of the Board:**

Julie Fisher, Executive Director  
Mark Saretsky, Chief Financial Officer  
Moirra Cray, Director of Transition and Community Outreach  
Nicole Pearson, Director of Education  
Susan Michaelson, Special Education Compliance Specialist  
Christina Secharan, Executive Administrative Assistant

#### **1. Call to order**

**Action:** Ms. Santiago called the general meeting to order at 5:02pm.

#### **2. Board Business**

- a** At 5:03pm the minutes of April 18th, 2016 meeting were reviewed. **Action:** Mr. Larios requested a motion to approve minutes. Mr. O'Rourke seconded the motion in which the Board voted, and minutes were unanimously approved.

#### **3. General Updates**

##### **a. Interim Director of Education**

- At 5:03pm Ms. Fisher updated the Board on identifying an interim Director of Education. Jessica Seeman, current project manager of the school's data collection pilot and former project manager for the recent NY State Dissemination grant, will begin June 1<sup>st</sup>. She will overlap and train with exiting Director of Education, Nicole Pearson, for the entire month.
- At 5:05pm Ms. Santiago, on behalf of the Board, acknowledges Ms. Pearson's hard work and dedication while holding the title of Director of Education.

- At 5:05pm Mr. Baum discusses the vetting committee and internal candidates that are being considered for the Head of School position for the new site. Ms. Santiago interjects that there will also be public postings of the position on NYCACS website.

**b. External Program Evaluation**

- At 5:08pm Ms. Fisher explains that on a yearly basis an external program evaluator is brought into the school to provide an outside prospective on NYCACS. This year Dorothy Siegel, Project Director of ASD Nest Program, performed the external evaluation.
- At 5:11pm Ms. Fisher presents to the Board Ms. Siegel's evaluation of our program and opens the floor to any questions or concerns the Board might have.
- At 5:18pm Mr. Baum inquires if there were any recommendations provided from Ms. Siegel that did not make it in to the report. Ms. Fisher reinforces that Ms. Siegel's report captured most of what was discussed and briefly reviewed the biggest takeaways. She indicated that the report was shared with Clinical Supervisors and discussed at a recent senior staff meeting.

**c. NYSAA**

- At 5:25pm Ms. Pearson informs the Board that the new NYSAA platform has come with some challenges, including electronic errors that occurred during student assessments. She reported that the majority of students have been assessed but due to these errors, some students will have to be retested. Some discussion ensued about applicability to our population.

**d. Web Based Performance Evaluations**

- At 5:32pm Ms. Pearson presents the roll out of a new staff performance evaluation system called Teach Point. Teach Point is a web-based system that allows staff to easily access and review their own evaluations in advance of performance reviews with supervisors. One of the Clinical Supervisors has utilized this system already and reported that it saves time and minimizes unnecessary paperwork.

**e. Data Collection Pilot**

- At 5:34pm Ms. Fisher discusses with the Board that Ms. Seeman continues to pilot three different data collection systems. If used, such a system will likely be rolled out at the new charter school in September 2017, perhaps scaling back to East Harlem further down the road.

**f. Outreach and transition Planning**

- At 5:43pm Ms. Cray updates the Board on outreach efforts such as visitors NYCACS hosted and will be hosting in the future (i.e., Jobpath brought visitors from Mumbai, India)
- She referenced conferences that staff have or will be attending, including NY State ABA, Autism NJ and ABA International.
- At 5:45pm Ms. Cray presents the new Transition Handbook for parents (not exclusive to NYCACS parents) that she created to help guide parents and caregivers through the transition into adulthood. Mr. Baum suggests an e-version to be added to the website.

**4. Committee Update**

**a. Governance**

- Board Self Evaluation Results
  - i. At 5:49pm Ms. Fisher informs the Board that this will have to be discussed at the next scheduled board meeting as 50% of Board members still need to complete the survey.
- Trustee Candidate
  - i. At 5:56pm Ms. Fisher presents a formal bio of Charles Stanley, who will be a possible Finance Committee addition. Ms. Fisher will schedule a visit to the school and then Mr. Stanley will meet with members of the Governance Committee.

#### **b. Operations**

- Root Cause Consultation – final, final thoughts
  - i. At 5:58pm Ms. Santiago address the final memo from Root Cause and further discussion briefly ensues. The engagement with Root Cause is complete. Ms. Fisher indicated that lessons learned from the structure of this engagement can be applied to future consultation arrangements.
- Health Benefits Review
  - i. At 6:13pm Mr. Saretsky updates the Board that the employee healthcare policy is up for renewal as it always is at this time of year. The recommendations presented by Mr. Saretsky to the Operations and Finance Committees have been reviewed and agreed upon. The school will continue with our current health insurance plan, which has a broad network of providers. There will be some increases in the out of pocket maximums, but decreases in the cost of emergency room use.
  - ii. At 6:19pm Mr. Saretsky addresses staff compensation and recommended an increase in the bonus pool by 10K, to be included in the budget being voted on at next month's meeting. Discussions around compensation will continue throughout the fiscal year.

#### **5. Executive Session**

- a At 6:20pm Ms. Santiago moves the meeting to an Executive Session.

#### **6. Additional Items and Public Comment**

- a There were no additional items or public comment.

#### **7. Closing Items**

- a **Action:** There was a motion to adjourn after which Ms. Santiago adjourned the meeting at 7:15pm.