

Board Meeting Minutes

November 20, 2023 – 5:00PM

The Board of Trustees of NYC Autism Charter Schools (NYCACS) met on Monday, November 20, 2023, at NYCACS East Harlem: 433 East 100th St., 2nd floor New York, NY 10029.

Attending Trustees:

Christine Sandler
Ben Hartman
Mark Saretsky
Paul O'Neill
Alvin Shih
Hannah Hoch
Alysia Steinmann
Ashley Garrett
Ilene Lainer
Elaine Florio

Absent Trustees:

Carol Santiago-DeJesus
Naeema Livingston
Mitch Baum

Attendees at the Invitation of the Board:

Julie Fisher, Executive Director
Tiffney Jones, Director of Finance
Ashley Johnson, Administrative Director
Malcolm Green, Operations and Technology Manager

1. Call to order

- **Action:** The NYCACS general meeting was called to order at 5:05

2. Board Business

a. Minutes from Board Meeting 10-23-2023

- At 5:05 pm the minutes from the Monday, October 23, 2023 Board meeting were reviewed. Ashley Johnson's name was added under Attendees at the Invitation of the Board.
- **Action:** At 5:05 PM Ms. Hoch made a motion to approve the minutes with the addition mentioned above. Mr. Saretsky seconded the motion. At 5:06 the October 23rd, 2023 minutes were approved by majority vote. Ms. Steinmann, Mr. Hartman and Ms. Sandler abstained as they were not in attendance at the previous meeting.

3. School/Operations Update

a. General Report

- At 5:07 Ms. Fisher gave a brief overview of general school operations and trends, including turnover rates (which have improved slightly) and the school's enhanced staff training plan for new staff. PTO use and call outs are still very much a concern even with new initiatives to combat this issue. Student progress remains consistent and parent satisfaction and gratitude is high.

b. Per Pupil Task Force

- At 5:13 Ms. Fisher reviewed our proposed Per Pupil Funding ask which will be submitted to the NYC DOE Charter School Office this week. Ms. Fisher is also collecting letters of support from professionals and parents. Ms. Sandler recommended adding a information about demand (waitlist number). Ms. Fisher will include this in the supporting documents packet.

c. Impact Catalyst Progress and Next Steps

- At 5:22 Ms. Fisher reviewed the most recent meeting with Impact Catalyst. They have looked extensively at NYCACS job descriptions and task lists, benchmarked the structures of other autism education programs and charter schools, and held extensive meetings and interviews with staff, resulting in several recommended scenarios. These were discussed with Reimagining Leadership Task Force members (Ms. Lainer and Ms. Sandler) and subsequently with the leadership team internally. There was strong agreement across all on which scenario was the strongest at this point in the organization's growth and development. Currently, the leadership team is going through a process of re-assigning tasks based on the new proposed organizational chart. Results will be reported back to the task force in the coming weeks.

d. **Reminder:** The NYCACS 2023 Holiday Board Mixer will be held at the home of Ashley Garrett on November 29th starting at 5:30pm.

4. Finance Committee

a. Review of YTD September 2023 Financials

- At 5:27 Ms. Jones reviewed the financials. Year to date net for East Harlem is approximately \$98k and approximately \$14k for the Bronx. Combined net income compared to the proposed budget at this point in the year is \$142k.

b. BOA Account

- The NYCACS Bank of America account is still in the previous name (New York Center for Autism Charter School). To update to the current name (NYC Autism Charter Schools, we must open a new account under the current name and then close the previous one.
 - **Action:** At 5:34 Mr. Saretsky made a motion to approve Tiffney Jones opening a new account to update from our old name to our current name of NYC Autism Charter Schools and ultimately close accounts in the organization's original name. The signers will remain the same: Carol Santiago, Alysia Steinmann, Julie

Fisher, and Tiffney Jones. Mr. Hartman seconded the motion at which point the board voted and the motion was unanimously approved.

c. Long Term Disability Policy and Health Benefits

- At 5:36 Ms. Fisher reviewed concerns regarding our current long term disability insurance and health benefits. Ms. Jones and Mr. Saretsky will be looking at the quality of long-term disability (currently poor) and considering carving that out of Justworks to make coverage more substantial (at potentially the same or lower cost).
- Given the sizeable increase in our health benefits cost this year (23%), they will also actively investigate alternatives for next year.

5. Governance Committee

a. Board Membership and Future Planning

- At 5:49 Mr. O'Neill put forward that this may be a good time to take stock of the Board's current practices. He recommended that the Governance Committee begin to develop a process for determining any potential changes. Ms. Lainer and Ms. Sandler agreed that this is an opportune time to reassess Boards functions, specifically overall engagement, fundraising, and individual Board member expertise.
 - **Action:** Mr. O'Neill made a motion for the Governance Committee to conduct a review and make recommendations to the full Board regarding Board functioning. Ms. Garrett seconded the motion at which point the Board voted and the motion was unanimously approved.

6. Closing Items

- At 6:07 Ms. Sandler made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Garrett seconded the motion at which point the Board unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting.