

## **Board Meeting Minutes**

**January 22, 2024 – 5:00PM**

The Board of Trustees of NYC Autism Charter Schools (NYCACS) met on Monday, January 22, 2024, at NYCACS East Harlem: 433 East 100<sup>th</sup> St., 2<sup>nd</sup> floor New York, NY 10029.

### **Attending Trustees:**

Alvin Shih  
Ashley Garrett  
Ben Hartman  
Carol Santiago-DeJesus  
Christine Sandler  
Elaine Florio  
Hannah Hoch  
Ilene Lainer  
Mark Saretsky  
Paul O’Neill

### **Absent Trustees:**

Alysia Steinmann  
Mitch Baum  
Naeema Livingston

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

Julie Fisher, Executive Director  
Tiffney Jones, Director of Finance  
Ashley Johnson, Administrative Director

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

- a. **Action:** The NYCACS general meeting was called to order at 5:03

### **2. Board Business**

- a. **Minutes from the 12-18-2023 Board Meeting**
  - At 5:04PM, the minutes from the Monday, December 18, 2023 Board meeting were reviewed.
  - **Action:** At 5:05PM, Mr. Saretsky made a motion to approve the minutes. Ms. Garrett seconded the motion and the Board voted, approving the minutes by majority vote. Ms. Hoch abstained as she was not in attendance at the previous meeting.

### **3. School/Operations**

#### **a. Impact Catalyst Final Recommendations**

- At 5:06PM, Mr. Pratt, Executive Director of the Impact Catalyst Consulting Firm reviewed the results of their work over the past 6-plus months which included looking at organizational function by role, assessing and addressing pain points and making recommendations for adjustments to allow for greater resilience, retention, and success. Mr. Saretzky and Mr. Hartman both posed questions related to financial viability and cost assessments. This was not part of the scope but will need to be analyzed in more detail. Ms. Santiago asked about succession planning. It was agreed that contingency plans will need to be put in place for senior positions, recognizing that paths forward will be particular to each situation and context.

#### **b. Shift in Long Term Disability Provider/Plan**

- At 5:44PM, Ms. Jones shared recommendations from the organization's financial advisor who reviewed the schools' long term disability plan and identified shortcomings. He recommended alternate pathways which were reviewed by the Director of Finance and finance committee members. This plan selected costs slightly less than the current plan under Justworks and provides greater coverage. Long Term Disability will be carved out from Justworks moving forward.

### **4. Miscellaneous**

#### **a. 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee**

- Ms. Lainer reminded Trustees that in 2025, NYCACS will have reached its 20<sup>th</sup> year. She sees this as an opportunity re-engage former teachers, board members, partners, and supporters with whom we may have lost touch through a targeted celebration or fundraising event/initiative. This anniversary might allow for us to raise money, broaden our circle of support, and get attention (press, being honored by other organizations, etc.). Ms. Garrett and Ms. Lainer volunteered to be part of the initial brainstorming.
- Action: At 5:59, Mr. O'Neill made a motion to create an ad hoc task force to pursue a 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration. Ms. Sandler seconded the motion at which point the Board voted and the motion was unanimously approved. Ms. Lainer stressed that this must be a full board effort.

### **5. Governance Committee**

#### **a. Board Review: Plan for Information Gathering and Assessment**

- At 6:00PM, Mr. O'Neill revisited the discussions that took place at prior meetings regarding board practices and the value of further examination. At the recent Governance Committee meeting, members discussed sending out a survey. Mr. O'Neill created a draft which is now being circulated to committee members. Once finalized, it will then go out to the larger board.

## **6. Closing Items**

- a. **Action:** At 6:04PM, Mr. Hartman made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Garrett seconded the motion at which point the Board unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting.