

Board Meeting Minutes

February 12, 2024 – 5:00PM

The Board of Trustees of NYC Autism Charter Schools (NYCACS) met on Monday, February 12, 2024, at NYCACS East Harlem: 433 East 100th St., 2nd floor New York, NY 10029.

Attending Trustees:

Alvin Shih
Alysia Steinmann
Ashley Garrett
Carol Santiago-DeJesus
Christine Sandler
Elaine Florio
Hannah Hoch
Ilene Lainer
Mark Saretsky
Naeema Livingston

Absent Trustees:

Ben Hartman
Mitch Baum
Paul O’Neill

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 01-22-2023 Board Meeting**
 - At 5:03PM, the minutes from the Monday, January 22, 2023 Board meeting were reviewed.
 - **Action:** At 5:04PM, Ms. Garrett made a motion to approve the minutes. Mr. Saretsky seconded the motion and the Board voted, approving the minutes by majority vote. Ms. Steinmann and Ms. Livingston abstained as they were not in attendance at the previous meeting.

3. Finance Committee

a. YTD December 2023 Financials

- At 5:05PM, Ms. Jones reviewed the Quarter 2 YTD Financials as of December 23. Both schools are operating better than plan and are showing a slight surplus rather than the projected deficit. This is primarily due to salary savings.

b. ERTC Update

- At 5:09, Ms. Fisher updated the Board on the potential for an impending government resolution that, if passed, would set a past date as the filing deadline for all ERTC claims, specifically January 31, 2024. In this case, Trinet (our former PEO responsible for filing these documents) would have missed the deadline, despite them having all required documents from NYCACS by June 2023. Ms. Fisher reviewed the timeline and communications with various members of the Trinet team. Potential outcomes were discussed, and next steps determined. It was agreed that NYCACS' legal counsel should send a letter to Trinet laying out expectations.

b. Shift in Long Term Disability Provider/Plan

- At 5:24PM, Ms. Jones updated the Board with new information regarding the carve out long term disability coverage being explored by the school. It was learned that the carve out from Justworks would have to include short term disability coverage as well, which would bring the cost up slightly. It was agreed that the schools should move forward with this carve out, but also be actively looking at alternate benefits options both in and out of the PEO landscape, prior to the current agreement with Justworks terminating in October 2024.

4. School Updates

a. Parent Concern

- At 5:37, Ms. Fisher discussed a concern raised by a parent in the Bronx campus. All necessary steps were taken in addressing the concern, including inviting both parents in for an observation and discussion.

b. Staff Departures and Returns

- At 5:42, Ms. Fisher reviewed staff departures and returns since the start of the year. She discussed some of the ongoing employment trends since COVID, including an increase in mid-year departures.

c. Re-Imagining Leadership Project

- At 5:46, Ms. Fisher gave an update on the Re-Imagining Leadership work since Impact Catalysts recommendations were shared at the last Board meeting. There was discussion amongst Trustees of costs associated with these changes.

d. Enrichment Programming

- At 5:52, Ms. Fisher discussed and shared photos of the enrichment programming that kicked off this past week - the photography program run by Ms. Garrett as well as the baseball program run by coaches from the Baseball Center NYC. Students and staff seemed to really enjoy these experiences.

5. Fundraising

a. Fitness Fundraiser

- At 5:58, Ms. Fisher reviewed funds generated from the recent fitness fundraiser.

b. Pop-Up Photography Gallery Benefit

- At 6:01PM, Ms. Fisher discussed the upcoming Photography Gallery Benefit set for April 11, 2024, and thanked Ms. Garrett for all of her work on the photography program as well as this celebratory event. She also thanked Ms. Steinmann for securing underwriting for the event from Ernst and Young. Trustees were encouraged to provide names to Ms. Poli (Development Director) for folks they would like to receive invitations and/or to request materials that will facilitate independent invitations sent by Trustees.

6. Governance Committee

- At 6:09, Ms. Fisher stated that the Board survey discussed by Mr. O’Neill at the last Board meeting had been finalized. She will be sharing the final electronic version with the members of the Governance Committee and then distributing it to Trustees within the next week or two.

7. Compensation Task Force

- At 6:12, Ms. Fisher stated that she will be attending a meeting later this week hosted by the NYC Charter School Center that will provide additional salary benchmarks. She will recirculate a poll to assess Trustee interest in participating in this task force and look to schedule a meeting in the coming weeks.

6. Closing Items

- a. **Action:** At 6:15PM, Ms. Sandler made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Saretsky seconded the motion at which point the Board unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting.