

Board Meeting Minutes

March 18, 2024 – 5:00PM

The Board of Trustees of NYC Autism Charter Schools (NYCACs) met on Monday, March 18, 2024, at NYCACS East Harlem: 433 East 100th St., 2nd floor New York, NY 10029.

Attending Trustees:

Alvin Shih
Alysia Steinmann
Ashley Garrett
Ben Hartman
Carol Santiago-DeJesus
Christine Sandler
Elaine Florio
Hannah Hoch
Ilene Lainer
Mark Saretsky
Mitch Baum

Absent Trustees:

Paul O'Neill
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 5:04

2. Board Business

- a. **Minutes from the 02-12-2023 Board Meeting**
 - At 5:04PM, the minutes from the Monday, January 22, 2023 Board meeting were reviewed.
 - **Action:** At 5:05PM, Ms. Florio made a motion to approve the minutes. Mr. Saretsky seconded the motion and the Board voted, approving the minutes by majority vote. Mr. Hartman abstained as he was not in attendance at the previous meeting. Ms. Lainer suggested that it be noted that the surplus identified in the finance section was due to staffing shortages.

3. Finance Committee

a. YTD December 2023 Financials

- At 5:07PM, Mr. Saretsky reviewed the January 2024 financials. He reviewed operating, reserve, and escrow funds. Both East Harlem and the Bronx are doing slightly better than planned. This is primarily due to salary savings from staff turnover and leaves as well as interest income.

b. FY24 Forecast

- At 5:12PM, Mr. Saretsky reviewed the FY24 Forecast. NYCACS will end the year with a deficit of \$241k. The budgeted deficit was \$532k. The savings is primarily due to revenue generated from additional students enrolled mid-year (slightly over the planned number stated in the school's charter), salary savings due to turnover and staffing shortages, and interest income.

c. ERTC Update

- At 5:15, Ms. Fisher updated the Board on the ERTC filing process. As of now, the filing deadline for 2020 remains April 15, 2024 and the filing deadline for 2021 remains April 15, 2025. A letter was sent by counsel to Trinet – the organization's former PEO responsible for completing the filing. They responded indicating that the 2020 submission would, in fact, be filed by the upcoming April deadline. Ms. Fisher will continue to communicate with counsel to ensure Trinet's compliance with both the 2020 and 2021 filing deadlines.

4. School Updates

a. Re-Imagining Leadership Project

- At 5:18, Ms. Fisher gave an update on the Re-Imagining Leadership work. The Leadership Team continues to work on clarifying roles with a focus now shifting more to Operations since Clinical roles descriptions and task lists have been nearly finalized. The team is also keeping a tab for a handful of tasks that do not fit within existing roles and will suggest solutions. Ms. Lainer raised the potential need for a social work position and/or overall sensibility that stems from such a background.

b. Lottery

- At 5:27, Ms. Fisher reviewed the number of applications submitted for each school thus far. The Bronx school has received 181 applications, and the East Harlem school has received 160 applications. This is more than in any previous years. Historically, a large number of applications come in within the week or two prior to the deadline which is April 1st.

5. Fundraising

a. Pop-Up Photography Gallery Benefit

- At 5:42PM, Ms. Fisher and Ms. Garrett discussed the upcoming Photography Gallery Benefit set for April 11, 2024. Trustees were encouraged to reach out to Ms. Poli (Development Director) for anything they might need to help spread the word.

b. Baseball All Star Game

- At 5:55PM, Ms. Fisher reminded Trustees about the upcoming Baseball All Star Game scheduled for May 17th (rain date on May 22nd).

c. MBJ Foundation Mid-Cycle Grant

- At 5:56PM, Ms. Fisher shared that the MBJ Foundation (from which the schools received a significant grant earlier this year) will be providing an additional mid-cycle grant. They also committed to providing the organization with grants for the next three years.

6. Governance Committee

- a. At 5:58PM, Ms. Fisher stated that a detailed summary of the Board survey results was circulated to the Governance Committee which will meet later this week. There will be discussion with the larger Board at the April Board meeting.

7. Compensation Task Force

- a. At 5:59PM, Mr. Baum provided a summary of the recent Compensation Task Force meeting. Additional benchmark information will be gathered but much of the schools' ability to adjust compensation depends upon an increase in per pupil funding. The task force will also be looking at additional supports/training for staff to incentivize retention.

8. Per Pupil Funding Task Force

- a. At 6:05PM, Mr. Saretsky reviewed the recent Per Pupil Task Force meeting and the materials and support documents gathered and shared with point people at the NYC DOE.

9. Closing Items

- a. **Action:** At 6:14PM, Ms. Florio made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Hartman seconded the motion at which point the Board unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting.