



Board Meeting and Retreat Minutes

October 21, 2024 – 5:00PM

The Board of Trustees of NYC Autism Charter Schools (NYCACS) met on Monday, October 21, at 5:00PM at NYC Autism Charter School East Harlem 433 East 100th St., 2nd floor New York, NY 10029

Attending Trustees:

Ashley Garrett
Carol Santiago-DeJesus
Christine Sandler
Elaine Florio
Ilene Lainer
Jason Stock
Mark Saretsky

Absent Trustees:

Alysia Steinmann
Ben Hartman
Hannah Hoch
Mitch Baum
Naeema Livingston
Paul O'Neill

Attendees at the Invitation of the Board:

Julie Fisher, Executive Director
Tiffney Jones, Director of Finance
Malcolm Green, Facilities and Technology Manager

1. Call to order

- **Action:** The NYCACS general meeting was called to order at 5:06PM

2. Board Business

- **Committee and Task Force Scheduling**
 - At 5:06, Ms. Fisher discussed committee and task force scheduling difficulties. She discussed possible solutions, including bringing someone in to assist with scheduling. In the short term, she asked that all Trustees respond as quickly as possible to doodle polls. If securing an assistant cannot be done quickly, Ms. Fisher will reach out for available blocks and preschedule committee and task force meetings at a realistic cadence.

- **Minutes from the 08-27-2024 Board Meeting (this was held until quorum was reached at 5:30PM)**
 - At 5:29PM, the minutes from the Monday, September 16, 2024 Board meeting were reviewed.
 - **Action:** At 5:30PM, Ms. Florio made a motion to approve the minutes. Ms. Garrett seconded the motion, and the Board voted, unanimously approving the minutes.

3. Finance Committee

- **FY24 Draft Audited Financials and 990s**
 - At 5:10PM, Ms. Jones presented the draft audit report and 990s, both of which were reviewed with the Finance Committee by the auditing team at the most recent meeting. NYCACS received a clean audit report with no management letter.
- **YTD August 2024 Financials**
 - At 5:17PM, Ms. Jones reviewed the year-to-date financials. Both schools are operating very close to plan with small deficits as budgeted.
- **Employee Retention Tax Credit (ERTC)**
 - At 5:20, Ms. Fisher provided an update on the ERTC submissions. The 2020 claim was already submitted by the schools' former PEO (Trinet). We are awaiting a status report on the 2021 submission.
- **Fundraising**
 - At 5:22PM, Ms. Fisher reminded the Board of the upcoming Giving Tuesday effort. Trustees will be sent template language to use in their efforts to solicit funds from their networks. Both Ms. Fisher and Ms. Poli will be available to assist with whatever Trustees require in these efforts.
 - At 5:25PM, Ms. Fisher shared that a three year grant was promised from the MBJ foundation, totaling \$150,000 (\$50,000 per year).

4. Governance Committee

- **By-Laws**
 - At 5:28PM, Ms. Fisher updated the Board on progress toward adjustments to the by-laws. Mr. O'Neill incorporated changes reviewed at previous meetings. Final comments are being included and disseminated to the committee. Updated draft by-laws will be presented to the full Board at the November meeting.
- **Trustee Candidate**
 - At 5:31PM, Ms. Fisher discussed Trustee candidate Susanna Kvam Norris, who has been a member of the NYCACS Associate Board since 2018. Mr. O'Neill met with Ms. Norris several weeks ago and recommended her to the Governance Committee members who supported her nomination.
 - **Action:** At 5:33PM, Ms. Florio made a motion to offer a seat on the Board to Ms. Kvam Norris. Mr. Saretsky seconded the motion and the Board voted, unanimously approving Ms. Kvam Norris' seat on the Board.

5. Re-Imagining Leadership Task Force

- At 5:35PM, Ms. Fisher provided an update on the work being done as part of the Re-Imagining Leadership Task Force. She is working to finalize functional job descriptions for each role and hopes to have them out to committee members by end of week. This work will be shared in more detail with the larger Board at future meetings.

6. 20th Anniversary Planning

- At 5:36PM, Ms. Fisher updated the Board on progress with 20th Anniversary Planning. A rough cut of the celebration video should be complete by the end of this week. Additionally, Ms. Garrett is working on creating a save the date (to go out in January) and an invitation for the April 24th celebration. The NYCACS Leadership Team is planning an event for students and families as well, to take place during the day.

7. Per Pupil Funding

- At 5:38PM, Ms. Fisher provided an updated on efforts toward an increase in per pupil funding. She will circulate a meeting invite to all Board members to attend her next scheduled meeting with the lobbyist on Tuesday, November 4th at 9:30AM.

8. Executive Session

- At 5:40PM, Ms. Florio made a motion to move into executive session to discuss an employee performance issue and to finalize the ED performance review. Ms. Garrett seconded the motion at which point the board voted and the motion was unanimously approved.
- At 6:32PM, Ms. Sandler made a motion to move out of executive session. Ms. Garrett seconded at which point the board voted and the motion was unanimously approved.

9. Closing Items

- **Action:** At 6:32PM, Ms. Garrett made a motion to approve a \$12,000 salary increase for the Bronx Head of School. Ms. Florio seconded the motion at which point the Board unanimously voted to approve the increase.
- **Action:** At 6:33PM, Ms. Florio made a motion to approve a \$20,000 salary increase and change in title to Co-Head of School for the East Harlem Assistant Head of School. Mr. Saretsky seconded the motion at which point the Board unanimously voted to approve the increase and title change.
- **Action:** At 6:34PM, Ms. Sandler made a motion to approve a sum of \$50,000 to be used across the following areas for the Executive Director: 5% salary increase, bonus, and retirement fund deposit, the division between the latter two being at the discretion of the Executive Director. Ms. Lainer seconded the motion at which point the Board unanimously voted to approve the increase and bonus.
- **Action:** At 6:36PM, Ms. Florio made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Sandler seconded the motion at which point the Board unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting.