

**New Dawn Charter High School  
Board of Trustees Meeting  
Minutes**

**Place:** New Dawn Charter High School  
242 Hoyt Street  
Brooklyn, NY 11217

**Date:** January 28, 2014

**Time:** 3:00 p.m.

**Present:** Sara Asmussen, Digant Bahl, George Crowley, Lisa DiGaudio, Michelle D. Millán, Samir Souidi, Ronald Tabano, Leslie Winter, Phillip Weitzman

**Absent:**None

Meeting came to order at 3:05 p.m. A quorum was present

**I. Resolution: Minutes from December Meeting**

Mr. Tabano asked if everyone was able to read the minutes. He asked and if there was anything that needed to be revised or added to the minutes.

**Motion:** Dr. Weitzman motioned that the minutes be accepted as written.

**Second:** Mr. Winter seconded the motion.

**Vote:** Unanimous

**II. Introduction of Digant Bahl**

Dr. Asmussen explained that NDCHS hired Accounting Solutions a year ago to take over the fiscal department. Mr. Bahl was asked to come in to discuss and review the financials with the board and set-up what the board expects to see on a monthly basis.

Mr. Winter stated that he would like something simple to read each month, which gives a measure of how the school is doing. Mr. Bahl explained that he provides accounting services to NDCHS, as well as, 7-8 other charter schools who outsource their accounting to Accounting Solutions. He stated that he has about 10 full-time bookkeepers who work in the city. Mr. Bahl distributed a “dummy” budget and summary as a guide to review how to read the budget. Mr. Bahl stated that he doesn’t usually give out the full budget to the Board because it’s too much information. Therefore, he usually distributes a snapshot of what is happening with the school, which gives enough information for the Board to perform their governance duties. Mr. Bahl created the sheet, “Key Fiscal Factors,” which

captures all the details of P&L and Five Fiscal Factors. Mr. Bahl stated that he can provide this form every month for the Board Meeting.

Mr. Crowley stated that he would like a more detailed report of budget vs actual and year-to-date totals, where variances can be seen. Mr. Crowley stated that he would like to see the budget to date and the expenses to date. Mr. Tabano stated that in any particular month, he would like live data. Mr. Winter asked if it's possible to show last year's expenses in comparison to the present year's expenses. Mr. Bahl doesn't recommend this because enrollment numbers changes from year-to-year and the budgets aren't comparable.

Mr. Bahl committed to preparing the financials for the Board by the third Tuesday of the month in order to give the Board time to review it prior to the Board meeting.

Mr. Souidi requested that actual monthly data be presented for easy reading. He stated that it's easier for him to read actual numbers rather than percentages. Mr. Souidi also requested that the monthly expenses be provided because the Board makes financial decisions on a monthly basis.

A group of Teachers entered the meeting. Kate Connors, Health/PE Teacher, apologized for interrupting the meeting and stated that they wanted to see [Dr. Asmussen] at 3:30pm, no matter what. Ms. Connors stated that [the teachers] loved working [at New Dawn], working with the kids and that they're so invested in the school that they formed a union and want to collaborate and hope that [Dr. Asmussen] accept their letter of recognition. Ms. Connors asked Dr. Asmussen if she would voluntarily collaborate. Dr. Asmussen stated that she had nothing to say. The group thanked the Board for their time and exited the room. Mr. Tabano stated that the Board will proceed with the meeting and discuss the subject in Executive Session.

Mr. Souidi asked if the financial information is extracted from Peachtree (NDCHS's accounting software). Mr. Bahl stated that information is exported from Peachtree and placed into EXCEL worksheets. Mr. Souidi also stated that he would like visuals in the form of charts/graphs.

Mr. Tabano asked if anyone had anything else to request.

### **III. Financial**

- a. Year to Date Finance Report
- b. Discussion concerning Board Packet
- c. Investment options

Dr. Asmussen stated that Bank of America pointed out that NDCHS have \$1.3 million in the bank and FDIC is \$250,000. Dr. Asmussen stated that it needs to be discussed what to do with this overage of money. Mr. Tabano suggested exploring other banks and ones who are reputable. Dr. Weitzman suggested that the school explore local banks,

like, Ponce DeLeon, banks with branches in the neighborhood and Chinese banks in Sunset Park.

d. Retirement Accounts & Flex Spending (commuter)

This was not discussed.

**IV. Facilities Report**

Dr. Asmussen stated that NDCHS is back at square one. Dr. Asmussen reached out to Industry City and Bush Terminal; she has not heard back from them. With the last deal, Dr. Asmussen received e-mails from the real estate agent that they could not get a residential zoning permit. This became confusing because it seems as though the developer was trying to get a school and apartment complex on the same lot. Mr. Winter asked is it worth looking into why the confusion; e-mails were sent out, but the real estate agent has not responded.

The school is now looking at Bush Terminal, which may work out because we're coming with our own contractor. This can happen much faster because it's raw space. As for the Army terminal, there isn't enough continuous space.

Mr. Winter asked if a phone call was made to the Economic Development organization. Dr. Asmussen has not. Mr. Winter stated that they may have an idea.

**V. Principal's Report**

The school is in the midst of Regents Exams. Living Environment is pretty good, which is an increase from last year. NDCHS is in the middle of scoring the other subjects. NDCHS is participating in instructional rounds. It's a collaboration of the PICCS principals that are visiting buildings and finding patterns of practice, which looks at how the building is operating from an outsider point of view. NDCHS's visit went well; there were some interesting things found, like more rigorous work is happening in non-regents classes.

32 students took the Living Environment test; it's projected that 62.5% passed.

Mr. Winter requested a sheet that summarizes the test results. Ms. DiGaudio stated that she will supply that information, in addition to graphs of last year's results in comparison to this year, for each of the tests.

Mr. Souidi asked how many students are taking the regents; 165 students are taking regents exams. Mr. Souidi asked how the teachers will be evaluated based on the tests. Ms. DiGaudio stated that the students take the regents in January and June; the teachers are evaluated on the Danielson framework for teaching. Ms. DiGaudio further stated that the NDCHS is developing student learning objectives (SLOs) and the students will be taking SLOs in March. The teacher evaluation is a combination is the Regents, SLOs and Danielson.

Based on the students who received first and second honors, Mr. Crowley requested data on how the for the rest of the students are doing. Dr. Asmussen stated that would be credit accumulation, which is being worked on.

NDCHS started out with 43 freshmen. Due several circumstances, NDCHS ended up with 34 freshmen, 16 of which who are moving to A/B week. This is a big indicator.

Mr. Tabano asked for an update on the Internship and credit accumulation based on it. There was a bump in the road with this; some students decided that they weren't going to do the internship and one student lost his internship. NDCHS is in the process of contacting those students and parents to come in to further explain the model of why they have to go to their internship or they have to transfer to another school.

Starting next semester NDCHS is getting a new attendance system, which will track students a lot better; attendance for A, B, C weeks, as well as job sites, will be easily tracked.

Mr. Winter asked what percentage of students has been hired by their intership. At this time none.

Mr. Souidi asked how many students there are by grade. There are percentages on the stat sheet, but Dr. Asmussen will put actual numbers on future reports.

Mr. Tabano stated that schools are continuously dropping students that cannot fit into the four year graduation rate. Many of these students need a few credits and one regent to graduate; this is not a bad thing for NDCHS.

#### **VI. Board Recruitment Updates**

At this time, there are no updates. Mr. Winter suggested that as per the previous discussion, once NDCHS look into local banks, we may want to invite managers, who also live in Sunset Park, to attend meetings and who may also be interested in being on the Board.

**Motion:** Mr. Winter motioned to adjourn the meeting to enter Executive Session.

**Second:** Mr. Souidi seconded the motion.

**Vote:** Unanimous

Meeting was adjourned at 3:49 p.m. to go into Executive Session.

Meeting returned from Executive Session at 4:08 p.m.

#### **VII. New Business**

There is no new business.

**VIII. Adjournment**

**Motion:** Mr. Crowley motioned to adjourn the meeting.

**Second:** Mr. Winters seconded the motion.

**Vote:** Unanimous

Meeting ended at 4:08 p.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, February 25, 2014 at 3:00 p.m. at New Dawn Charter High School.