

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

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

Date: February 10, 2015

Time: 3:00 p.m.

Board Members Present: Ron Tabano, Samir Souidi, Leslie Winter

Staff Members Present: Sara Asmussen, Lisa DiGaudio, Michelle D. Millán

Guests Present: See attached Sign-In Sheet

Absent: George Crowley, Phillip Wietzman

Meeting came to order at 3:23 p.m. A quorum was present

I. Call to Order

II. Resolution: Minutes from December 2014 Meeting

Mr. Tabano asked if everyone had a chance to review the minutes. Everyone stated that they reviewed the minutes and had no questions.

Motion: Mr. Souidi motioned that the minutes be accepted as written.

Second: Mr. Winter seconded the motion.

Vote: Unanimous

III. Facilities Report

a. Commissioner's Response to Co-Location Request

Dr. Asmussen stated that last August the State recommended that NDCHS file for co-location. NDCHS received a rejection letter concerning the co-location request. Attached is a letter from James Merriman listing the schools whose applications were accepted for co-location. Schools whose applications were accepted went to Success Academy and Icahn. The law says that any schools that are expanding in grades will get facility relief.

b. Resolution: Lawyer's Alliance Contract

This was previously discussed and approved during Executive Session and now needs to be voted on.

Motion: Mr. Winter motioned to accept the Lawyer's Alliance Contract.

Second: Mr. Souidi seconded the motion.

Vote: Unanimous

c. Resolution: Appeal to City

As the law states, any school that is expanding grades will get facility relief, NDCHS' response, as it was put out by the pro-bono lawyer, is that NDCHS is a transfer school and will grow to 500 students and should not be penalized because it's a transfer school. However, the attorney received a response denying NDCHS's request for facility relief. The attorney replied back that the point of the law is to help new and struggling charter schools and NDCHS falls under that category.

Mr. Souidi asked if this process is being done by other schools. Dr. Asmussen stated yes and that each school who received a facilities relief rejection letter, hired their own attorney. NDCHS was lucky to get a lawyer who would do this pro bono. The lawyer is supervised by someone at his own firm and by the Lawyer's Alliance.

Mr. Winter asked if it would be reasonable to file a class action suit (with other charter schools) and combine it as one big case. Dr. Asmussen stated that the schools are conferring with each other and the lawyers are also talking to each other regarding this case. Mr. Tabano stated each school may have a different argument, which is why the cases may not be able to be combined.

d. Update on Space

This will be discussed during Executive Session.

IV. NYSED Oversight Visit Discussion

Dr. Asmussen requested that the Board move the March Board meeting to March 10, 2015 at 2:45pm. After the meeting, the Board will then meet with the State from 3:30pm – 4:30pm. The State requested that all board members be present during this visit. Mr. Winter will not be in the country during that time.

Dr. Asmussen reviewed the protocol which outlines what the visit will entail.

V. Policy and Procedure Updates

a. Resolution: Updated Safety Plan

Dr. Asmussen stated that Dr. Weitzman felt there were some inconsistencies in the Safety Plan and requested that this be deferred until the next board meeting.

b. Resolution: Updated Discipline Plan

Dr. Asmussen reviewed the changes that were made to the Discipline Policy. Although it's a good plan, it was written before the school was open. The revised policy now deals with the realities of the school. For example, the school had a zero tolerance policy when it comes to absences and lateness. As a transfer school, it is difficult to send a student home who has not been regularly attending, therefore, the student is allowed to attend in hopes that they will remain in school. Dr. Asmussen looks at these students as works in progress.

Other major changes are that there is no in-school suspension and teachers are not allowed to kick students out of class. If a student is being problematic, the teacher can call security and security and/or administration will come to the class to deal with the student.

The revised policies are much clearer and more realistic than when the school opened.

Mr. Tabano requested a log of incidents that were reported, the nature of those incidents and their outcomes.

Motion: Mr. Souidi motioned to accept the revised Discipline Policy.

Second: Mr. Winter seconded the motion.

Vote: Unanimous

VI. Financial Report

There were no big cost changes and Mr. Crowley did not have questions regarding the report.

VII. Student Data

a. Attendance

Mr. Winter noted that there was an improvement in attendance. Mr. Winter asked what is being done to increase attendance. Dr. Asmussen stated that students get phone calls home; letters are sent home and home visits conducted. The school has also gotten PINS and ACS involved.

b. Student Enrollment

VIII. Principal's Report

Regents Exams: Mr. Souidi suggested a comparison of newly enrolled students who took the exam and their results and those students who were already enrolled in the school and their results.

IX. New Business

Mr. Tabano asked if there was any new business. There was no new business. The meeting temporarily adjourned at 4:33pm to go into Executive Session.

X. Executive Session

The general meeting was called back to order.

XI. Resolution: Facility and Student Decisions made in Executive Session

Mr. Tabano requested a motion concerning the student discussed in the Executive Session.

Motion: Mr. Souidi motioned to allow the student to return to New Dawn in the spring semester.

Second: Mr. Winter seconded the motion.

Vote: Unanimous

Mr. Tabano requested a motion concerning the hiring of the land use attorney.

Motion: Mr. Winter motioned to hire the land use attorney to begin work on obtaining a Special Permit in zoning to build out the new school.

Second: Mr. Souidi seconded the motion.

Vote: Unanimous

XII. Adjournment

Meeting ended at 4:53 p.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, March 10, 2015 at 2:45 p.m. at New Dawn Charter High School.