

**New Dawn Charter Schools Board of Trustees
May Meeting
Tuesday, May 31, 2022
11:00 a.m.**

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

**New Dawn Charter High School II
89-25 161st Street
Jamaica, NY 11432

347-505-9101**

Location: New Dawn Charter High School, 242 Hoyt Street, Brooklyn, New York 11217

Date: Tuesday May 31, 2022

Time: 11:00 AM

Board Members Present: Mr. Ronald Tabano, Chairperson, Ms. Jane Sun, Board Member, Ms. Katharine Urbati, Treasurer, Mr. Brian Baer, Board Members Absent: Mr. Jonathon Carrington, Board Member.

Staff Members/ Visitors Present: Dr. Sara Asmussen, Executive Director, NDCS, Mr. Jose Obregon, Director of Student Support & Operations, NDCS, Mr. Steve Ramkissoon, Director of Finance & HR, NDCS, Ms. Donna Lobato, Principal NDCHS, Mr. Zach Flory, Principal NDCHS II, Dr. Lisa DiGaudio, Curriculum Specialist, NDCS

AGENDA

I. Resolution: Agenda

Mr. Tabano asked the board members if there was a resolution to accept and approve the May 2022 Board of Trustees meeting agenda.

Motion: Ms. Jane Sun motioned to accept and approve the May 2022 Board of Trustees meeting agenda.

Motion Seconded: Ms. Katharine Urbati seconded the motion.

Vote: The board unanimously voted to accept and approve the May 2022 Board of Trustees meeting agenda.

II. Resolution: Minutes

Mr. Tabano asked the board members if there was a resolution to accept and approve the April 2022 Board of Trustees meeting minutes.

Motion: Mr. Katharine Urbati motioned to accept and approve the April 2022, Board of Trustees meeting minutes.

Motion Seconded: Ms. Jane Sun seconded the motion.

Vote: The board unanimously voted to accept and approve the April 2022, Board of Trustees meeting minutes.

III. Financials— Mr. Steve Ramkissoon – Director of Finance and Human Resources
Benchmark 4: Financial Condition
Benchmark 5: Financial Management

For the Brooklyn school, Mr. Ramkissoon reported that considering the depreciation and amortization totals, the net gains are much better than the negative net income previously reported. The net income is greater than 600K for the Brooklyn school. Also, Mr. Ramkissoon projected that the next two months for the Brooklyn school will be fiscally sound.

For the Queens school, Mr. Ramkissoon reported that it is at 923K net income is shy of the 1.3M projected. He stated that he is not certain that the school will meet the projected budget. Student enrollment has affected the projected budget. Depreciation does not have an impact on net income as it does at the Brooklyn school. However, Mr. Ramkissoon stated that the school may finish close to achieving net 1.1M income.

In summation, Mr. Ramkissoon stated that despite the low student enrollment, both schools are doing well. Mr. Tabano asked if there were any questions regarding the April 2022 financials. There were no questions from the board members. Mr. Tabano then asked if there was a motion to accept the May 2022 financials.

a. Resolution: Monthly Financials

Motion: Ms. Katharine Urbati motioned to accept and approve the May 2022 financials.

Motion Seconded: Ms. Jane Sun seconded the motion.

Vote: The board unanimously voted to accept and approve the May 2022 financials.

b. Discussion: Next year's budget

Ms. Urbati asked how the enrollment numbers will affect the budget. Mr. Ramkissoon reported to the board that this year, since March, both schools have shown a steady increase in enrollment. This increase in enrollment is attributed to several student open houses that both schools have hosted. These open houses have recruited more than forty (40) students for the Queens school and over sixteen (16) students for the Brooklyn school. If this recruiting and marketing strategy continues to be successful, Mr. Ramkissoon predicts that both schools will reach their three hundred fifty (350) student enrollment goal. Mr. Tabano asked Mr. Ramkissoon

what the student enrollment break-even number is. Mr. Ramkissoon responded that the break-even number is approximately two hundred fifty (250) students enrolled at both campuses.

For the next school year's budget, Mr. Ramkissoon stated that it includes teacher incentive initiatives which he feels will retain teachers and keep the school competitive. Mr. Ramkissoon then reported on economic data points. As of May 2022, inflation is at 8.5%. The US Government is expected to increase salaries by 4.6% for federal employees and Congress will ask for a 5.1% increase for federal workers. Social Security benefits are projected to increase by 5.7% in 2022. The NDCS personnel overall turnover rate is at 42% with a 53% turnover rate in Brooklyn, 44% in Queens, and 34% turnover in positions funded by grants. Regarding 403B plans, the average K-12 school matched 5.7% of its employee's contribution and the national matching average is 6.4%.

Mr. Ramkissoon presented the board with budget assumptions that included a 6% salary increase and the onboarding of fresh staff which will translates into an overall budget increase of approximately 8%. Mr. Ramkissoon also took into consideration inflation which is at 8.5% And a Social Security retirement increase of 5.7% in 2023. Additionally, Mr. Ramkissoon projected that General insurance rates will increase by 15% due to cyber threats and other factors.

Budget projections for both schools are based on three hundred-fifty (350) enrolled students at each site. Net income for the Brooklyn school is projected to be 1.4M and 1.1M for Queens. As far as the employee medical plan offered by NYS Freedom, the high plan will increase by 5.7% in cost. The low plan will decrease by 1.69% and the regular plan will go up by 7%. Mr. Ramkissoon was able to get NYS Freedom to offer a cheaper low plan. Regarding ancillary plans such as vision and dental, Mr. Ramkissoon stated there is no change. He also stated that he is looking for a third medical Insurance option with Mutual Insurance. Mr. Ramkissoon also briefed the board on General Insurance rates which he predicted will rise by 15%. Mr. Ramkissoon also discussed Ancillary benefits such as STD, LTD, Life, ADD, and UDI. These benefits are covered by UNUM Insurance Co. and rates are locked in for two years. Therefore, rates will not increase this year. Mr. Ramkissoon asked the board members if there were any questions.

Ms. Urbati stated that she felt enrollment numbers were generous, however, that there are places in the budget that can be adjusted if the schools do not achieve the desired numbers. Ms. Urbati also stated that she agrees that staffing next year is going to be a challenge and flexibility is needed to get the required staff onboard.

IV. Hiring, Recruitment, and School Updates

Benchmark 1: Student Performance

Benchmark 3: Culture, Climate, and Student & Family Engagement

Benchmark 6: Board Oversight & Governance

Benchmark 7: Organizational Capacity

a. Staff Hiring—Mr. Steve Ramkissoon

Mr. Ramkissoon reported to the board that last week there was both a student and staff recruiting event at both schools and that both events were successful. There were four (4) candidates that interviewed in Queens and one (1) candidate in Brooklyn. Therefore, he believes the schools should continue to sponsor these recruiting events. Mr. Tabano asked what venues are used to recruit staff and Mr. Ramkissoon replied that Indeed and Craig's List are used to advertise these events and job openings are posted as part of these employment open houses.

b. Promotions—Dr. Sara Asmussen, Executive Director

Dr. Asmussen reported that Mr. Obregon will resume his normal duties as Director of Operations and is relieved of any additional duties. Ms. Erica Fabiano will assume the supervision of the counselors and SPED teachers at both schools. Ms. Nazli Askin will supervise the career and college readiness program for both schools. Also, Mike DiFede is selected for the lead teacher position. His official title will be instructional coach. Mr. Abraham Ashe, science teacher in Queens, was reassigned to an internship coordinator position. Dr. Asmussen stated that those positions left vacant as a result of any promotions or reassignments need to be filled.

c. Student Recruitment—Steve Ramkissoon

Mr. Ramkissoon restated that student recruitment efforts are producing new students at both schools and that these recruiting efforts should continue.

d. School Updates—Ms. Donna Lobato – Principal NDCHS/Mr. Zach Flory – Principal NDCHS II

Ms. Lobato reported to the board that NDCHS has two hundred eight-seven (287) students enrolled. She expects to get a more students from ongoing student recruitment efforts. There are forty-one (41) students projected to graduate in June 2022 and thirty-three (33) in August 2022. Finally, Ms. Lobato informed the board that the local council member came to the school last week and met with staff.

Dr. Asmussen informed the board that Mr. Zach Flory was out today.

e. NDCHS 5-Year Report—Dr. Sara Asmussen, Executive Director

Mr. Tabano remarked that the 5-year report was outstanding. Dr. Asmussen agreed that the report was excellent and that New Dawn was going to recreate the same results for the Queens school. Dr. Asmussen also stated that the Organizational chart is still under review by the board of Regents. Additionally, the New Dawn Board received a good rating as opposed to the last rating of "approaching standards." Dr. Asmussen reminded the board that the voting will be conducted by the board of Regents on June 13, 2022, on the five-year renewal.

f. NDCHS II 3-Year Visit—Dr. Sara Asmussen, Executive Director

Dr. Asmussen informed the board that the three (3) year visit at the Queens school will take place on June 8, 2022. Dr. Asmussen also informed the board that one of the challenges will be

the actual day of the visit which takes place between two (2) days which students will not be in school. Students were encouraged to show up the day of the three-year visit. A positive aspect is that instruction at the Queens school is solid. Another issue may be attendance and enrollment. Since the country is still in a pandemic mode, attendance may be overlooked if good instruction prevails. As far as the outreach team efforts, 60% of the students who did not return was because these students decided to move on to other things beside their education. These students either left the state, got jobs, or decided on another path. Where the outreach team is having its greatest impact is on new students who were recently enrolled and stopped coming to school after two weeks. These students are more likely to respond to outreach efforts.

Mr. Tabano asked Dr. Asmussen about the two (2) non-instructional days. Dr. Asmussen confirmed that on those two (2) non-instructional days, the school will be open and staff will be working at the school. Mr. Tabano also asked who will be part of the State visit team. Dr. Asmussen confirmed that it will be Mr. Paolo Giovine and an unnamed consultant.

V. Facilities—Jose Obregon
Benchmark 6: Board Oversight & Governance

Mr. Obregon informed the board that he did contact Mr. Todd Phillips of Benchmark Contractors to discuss with him the unfinished handicap ramp and the leak on the roof door leading to the HVAC units. Mr. Phillips confirmed that he would get someone out to the Brooklyn school in June to look and resolve both issues.

Mr. Obregon also informed the board that the process for obtaining a final C of O for the Brooklyn school stalled since the person who was working on that project at Metropolis Group Inc. had left and no one was assigned to complete the task until Mr. Obregon and Mr. Brian Baer called Metropolis. Metropolis Group Inc. then assigned Ms. Kayla Liebman to the project and she was able to get the school a three (3) month extension on the current TCO. Ms. Leibman also confirmed that she has taken the necessary steps to get the school a final inspection with the DOB and the FDNY. Those agencies will notify the school by email when the inspection is scheduled. This TCO extension was acquired shortly after the FDNY conducted an unannounced inspection at the school and issued the school a citation for not having a current C of O or TCO.

At the Queens school, Mr. Obregon reported that rebar measurements were completed by a Barrone contractor in preparation for the work that will be conducted on the rooftop. This was needed to confirm location of structural support beams in the building. Barrone has indicated that they will start work on the roof in July 2022.

Mr. Obregon also informed the board that he is recommending the purchase of additional Chromebooks at both school locations next fiscal year under the Erate Emergency Connectivity Fund (ECF). The government will reimburse schools for the purchase of these devices for up to \$400 per device. The only restriction is that purchases must be made between July 1, 2022, and December 31, 2023. Additionally, Mr. Obregon informed the board that the Brooklyn school was approved for an additional 12K in CAT II Erate funding which can be used to purchase hardware to support the school network. Finally, Mr. Obregon did confirm that Spectrum has confirmed

final installation of Fiber lines at both school locations by July 2022. These fiber lines will be funded through CAT I funding.

Mr. Tabano asked if the school completed payment to GKV. Mr. Ramkissoon confirmed that the school has paid GKV in full but is waiting to obtain the C of O before it goes back to reconcile any additional expenses incurred such as the carbon monoxide detector on the rooftop and any additional expenditures on the acquisition of the C of O.

Mr. Brian Baer asked Dr. Asmussen and Mr. Obregon if they had a chance to review the Architect proposal for concerning the work on the rooftop in Brooklyn. Dr. Asmussen confirmed that she did review it and wants to go forward with the proposal. Dr. Asmussen also stated that she would like to start that project in July 2022.

VI. Grants & Reports—Sara Asmussen

Benchmark 1: Student Performance

Benchmark 3: Culture, Climate, and Student & Family Engagement

Benchmark 8: Mission & Key Design Elements

Dr. Asmussen reported to the board that all money is in and the Queens school is going to lead a consortium of schools for the homeless grant. There are two other schools that want to participate. It is not a huge grant but it is with Paul Le and they have good PDs. Dr. Asmussen stated that the school has done the ELL consortium with them for years and they are excellent. The same person who participated in the ELL consortium will be collaborating with the school on the homeless grant. This grant is projected to get bigger in the future. The Brooklyn school has already expended its funds and the expectation is that the schools will continue to participate in this grant in the future.

VII. New Business

Dr. Asmussen informed the board that two evaluations are now on the portal. One evaluation is the board evaluation, and the other is for the Executive Director. Mr. Tabano recommended that everyone get them done online and then discuss them as a group in June 2022. Mr. Tabano also stated that these evaluations must be completed by June 2022. Dr. Asmussen also reminded the board that the budget must also be approved by June. Therefore, a meeting to discuss any budget details is required. Since the June 2022 calendar is filled with numerous events including graduation and Regents exams. Mr. Tabano suggested that a board meeting be held on June 15 to discuss evaluations and the budget as part of the agenda. The board members all agreed to meet on June 15, 2022, at 11:00 A.M. to discuss these issues.

IX. Public Comment

No public comment made.

Adjournment

The board adjourned at 11:55 am.