

Please note that due to the reinstatement of the Executive Order from the Governor allowing virtual meetings, we are offering Zoom meetings again. If you attend in person, you must wear a mask and must be cleared through our COVID-19 protocols.

**November Meeting Agenda
New Dawn Charter Schools Board of Trustees**

**Tuesday, November 23, 2021
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**

Board Members Present: Mr. Ronald Tabano, Chairperson, Ms. Jane Sun, Vice Chair, Mr. Brian Baer, Secretary.

Board Members Absent: Mr. Jonathon Carrington, Board Member, Ms. Katharine Urbati, Treasurer

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, Ms. Nazli Askin, Data Specialist, NDCS, Dr. Lisa DiGaudio, Director of Curriculum and Instruction, NDCS

I. Resolution: November 23, 2021, Board Meeting Agenda

Motion: Mr. Brian Baer motioned to accept and approve the November 2021, Board of Trustees meeting agenda.

Motion Seconded: Ms. Jane Sun seconded the motion.

Vote: The board voted unanimously to accept and approve the November 2021 agenda.

II. Resolution: October 2021 Board Meeting Minutes

Motion: Ms. Jane Sun motioned to accept and approve the October 2021, Board of Trustees meeting minutes.

Motion Seconded: Mr. Brian seconded the motion.

Vote: The board voted unanimously to accept and approve the October 2021, Board of Trustees meeting minutes.

III. Financials— Mr. Steve Ramkissoon, Director of Finance and HR

Benchmark 4: Financial Condition

Benchmark 5: Financial Management

a. Resolution: Financials

Mr. Ramkissoon reported that the Brooklyn school is doing well with 31% of revenue collected and 32% of projected expenditures met. Mr. Ramkissoon believes that the Brooklyn school is on track to meet its financial goals. For the Queens school, Mr. Ramkissoon reported to the board that he will need to make an adjustment in projected revenue from the students predicted to enroll to the actual students enrolled. However, despite this adjustment, Mr. Ramkissoon projects that the school will still meet its financial goals.

Ms. Jane Sun asked how much cash on hand does the Queens school have and Mr. Ramkissoon confirmed that the Queens school has 219K. Ms. Jane Sun asked if this met the 60-day cash on hand requirements and Mr., Ramkissoon confirmed that it did.

Mr. Tabano asked for a motion to accept the monthly financials.

Motion: Ms. Jane Sun motioned to accept and approve the November 2021 monthly financials.

Motion Seconded: Mr. Brian Baer seconded the motion.

Vote: The board members voted unanimously to accept and approve the August 2021 monthly financials

b. Report of Final Audit

Mr. Ramkissoon confirmed that the final audit report is complete, that the report was accepted by the board, and that Dr. Asmussen has the report and will submit to the State. Dr. Asmussen also confirmed that she will submit the final audit report with the financial transparency policy for the school. Mr. Tabano thanked Mr. Ramkissoon on a job well done with the school financial audit.

IV. Resolution: Director of Curriculum & Instruction— Dr. Sara Asmussen, Executive Director

Benchmark 2: Teaching & Learning

Dr. Asmussen reminded the board that the Director of Curriculum and Instruction is not approved by the State yet even though it was submitted months ago. The Queens school will also need to add this position, and this requires a material change in the

charter. Dr. Asmussen requested that the board vote on making this change to the Queens school's charter. Mr. Tabano asked if there was a resolution to do such.

Resolution: A revision request to amend the charter schools' organizational chart to reflect significant changes. This revision is proposed to commence the 2122 school year, a determination regarding this revision has not yet been made and is currently under review by the New York State Education Department.

Motion: Ms. Jane Sun motioned to accept and approve a revision request to amend the charter schools' organizational chart to reflect significant changes. This revision is proposed to commence the 2122 school year, a determination regarding this revision has not yet been made and is currently under review by the New York State Education Department.

Motion Seconded: Mr. Brian Baer seconded the motion.

Vote: The board members voted unanimously to accept and approve a revision request to amend the charter schools' organizational chart.

V. Recruitment & Outreach

Benchmark 1: Student Performance

Benchmark 7: Organizational Capacity

Benchmark 8: Mission & Key Design Elements

Benchmark 9: Enrollment, Recruitment, & Retention

a. Staff Recruitment—Ms. Donna Lobato, Principal NDCHS

Ms. Lobato informed the board that there are still staff positions that need to be filled in both schools. In Queens, there is an Art and Science teacher position open. In Brooklyn, there is a science teacher, CTE guidance counselor, and internship coordinator position that needs to be filled. In Brooklyn, there was a SPED teacher that was hired who started last week. Additionally, the Dean position will be advertised shortly. Ms. Lobato also stated that despite recruiting efforts being made on various platforms, there is little activity regarding applications or potential recruits for open staff positions. Mr. Tabano confirmed that it is a challenge to recruit staff, and he has experienced the same at his Bronx school.

b. Student Recruitment—Mr. Steve Ramkissoon, Director of Finance and HR

Mr. Ramkissoon reported that recruiting meetings are happening bi-weekly. Last year, the board approved the mailing services of the company Vanguard with the purpose of contacting potential students by mail. Mr. Ramkissoon also stated that the recruiting team is also tracking which students are being contacted and who is doing the outreach. Additionally, the two New Dawn outreach workers are contacting long term absence students at both schools.

Before Mr. Tabano remarked that the Charter renewal meeting between the State officials and the members of the board went well and he expects that the results will reflect such accordingly.

c. Outreach Report & Dashboard— Ms. Nazli Askin, Data Specialist

Ms. Askin reported the following. The Brooklyn school currently has 258 students enrolled. This month, there was six (6) new enrollments and two (2) discharges. SPED percentage is at 44%, and ELL student percentage is at 11%. Free and reduced lunch percentage is at 84% for Brooklyn.

The Queens school has 222 students enrolled. This month there were three (3) enrollments and two (2) discharges. There are nine (9) students that are still pending enrollment SPED percentage is at 36%, and ELL student percentage is at 15%. Free and reduced lunch percentage is at 81% for Queens.

Mr. Tabano asked what the ELL percentages in the school district in Queens are. Dr. Asmussen replied that it was at 19%, but she will verify that number.

Ms. Askin also confirmed that the outreach team has contacted fifty (50) students between the two schools and 11 students have returned. For those that are not returning, the outreach team is attempting to find out if LTA students are enrolled in a different school or GED program. The outreach team will also try to contact LTAs through social media. The outreach team will attempt to meet with those students that have decided to take the GED and advise them that the test is challenging and difficult to pass if they are not prepared.

VI. Facilities— Mr. Jose Obregon, Director of Operations and Student Support Services

Mr. Obregon reported the following. The facility work that Barone promised to do is now completed except for the caging on the fourth floor on both stairwells leading to the roof. Barone is still looking for a contractor to complete that job. Facility projects that were completed include the fixing of lighting in the alleyway leading to the back yard, the installation of garbage sheds in the back yard, the re-paving of the backyard area, repair of the doors and push bar alarms on the doors on the roof landing, and the removal of any debris and excess fencing in the backyard. Barone Management also informed Growing Up Green that, hereafter, they will not use New Dawn's space to store their garbage. Barone also moved excess furniture that the Queens school was storing on the 4th floor and the basement. There still are some windows in room 306 that are not fully closing that Barone has promised to fix.

Mr. Tabano asked how the new pavement in the Queens school backyard looks and Mr. Obregon confirmed that it looked good. Mr. Flory agreed with that assessment. Mr. Flory also stated that the caging around the AC unit in the back yard still needs to be completed as well as the window bars on the neighbor's window to protect the glass when gym activities commence in the back yard.

For the Brooklyn school, Mr. Obregon reported the following. The open work order for electrical work to be completed at the Brooklyn school is now closed and the paperwork for the final TCO can go forward. Mr. Brian Baer confirmed this. Mr. Obregon also stated that Mr. Brian Baer is going to proceed to do the drawings for the modifications that are needed to stop the water from coming into the mechanical roof from the roof top. Mr. Baer confirmed that he spoke with Mr. Steve Attardi about the project and all he requires is a sketch which Mr. Bae will get to him.

Ms. Jane Sun asked if the outside security cameras were installed and operational. Mr. Obregon confirmed that they were installed but not networked yet or functional. Mr. Obregon promised that he will press MSP Networks to get it done sooner than later.

VII. Benchmark 6: Board Oversight & Governance

VIII. Grants & Reports— Dr. Sara Asmussen, Executive Director Benchmark 8: Mission & Key Design Elements

a. Stimulus Funds

Dr. Asmussen reported to the board that she reached out to SUNY regarding the Stimulus grant. One of the rules of the grant is that if you receive facilities funding you cannot receive the Stimulus grant. This disqualifies the Queens school for the grant. Dr. Asmussen also stated that she talked to representatives at the State and subsequently believes that unless you are a SUNY charter school, you will not receive this grant.

b. Update on Renewal Visit and Data

Dr. Asmussen confirmed what Mr. Tabano previously stated about the renewal visit. Dr. Asmussen also stated that the State Regents are strict when it comes to renewals. Dr. Asmussen is creating a video to send to the school's Regents, Ms. Kathy Cash, who was unable to attend during the renewal visit. Dr. Asmussen also stated that the school has a letter writing campaign from students and parents supporting the school and advocating for a renewal. Additionally, the school is reaching out to alumni so they can write letters supporting the school.

c. ESSER Part 2

Dr. Asmussen confirmed that the grant will fund the roof pavers in Brooklyn, but she has not received approval for the project in Queens.

IX. School Reports Benchmark 6: Board Oversight & Governance

a. Brooklyn— Ms. Donna Lobato, Principal NDCHS

Ms. Lobato reported that the second marking period has started. Seventeen (17) parents participated in parent-teacher conferences by Zoom and stated that she believes that this maybe a trend for the future. Also, COVID testing has started in the school. Counselors are teaching students in classrooms what is bullying and the repercussions for all. Finally, mid-year teacher observations will start shortly.

b. Queens— Mr. Zach Flory, Principal NDCHS II

Mr. Flory reported that similarly to Brooklyn, Queens had parent-teacher conferences and parent participation was comparable to the Brooklyn school. Teacher observations will begin on the same schedule as the Brooklyn school. The Art and language teacher resigned due to medical reasons. Interviews will be conducted to fill that position. The science teacher, is on leave and will be out through the January regents. He will return in the Spring. Subs were used the last two weeks to supplement these vacancies. Student activities over the last few weeks include bringing in guest speakers from the corporate world to share their experiences with students There will be a guest speaker soon from FIT that will also address the students. The new Youth Officer from the local precinct visited with Mr. Flory and the school Dean.

c. Curriculum & Instruction— Dr. Lisa DiGaudio, Director of Curriculum and Instruction

Dr. DiGaudio reported that training on Chalk is taking place and she has completed an alignment for the Myers-Briggs assessment. All students in internship are taking the career interest survey. Dr. DiGaudio has aligned those results to each of the 33 sectors in the in the assessment itself so that any student taking it can look at their results and then see how it connects across the board to all their instructional offerings. Finally, the school is developing a partnership with Mount Sinai partnership that will offer HIV/AIDS awareness presentations.

d. Update on Meeting with Landlord (Queens)— Mr. Ronald Tabano, Chairperson

Mr. Tabano stated that many things were accomplished by the landlord. He also confirmed that the Queens lease stated that the property in the Queens yard was as it is divided now. The backyard space was not as big as Barone thought it was and subsequently led the school to believe that it was bigger. Mr. Tabano also stated that he believes that Barone is trying to compensate by completing these facility projects to circumvent the school from asking for a rent reduction.

Mr. Tabano asked Dr. Asmussen if Barone is going to take care of the fencing project on the rooftop. Dr. Asmussen replied that they are supposed to give her an estimate. Mr. Tabano and Dr. Asmussen agreed that it must be at least a ten (10) foot fence.

X. Legal Compliance— Dr. Sara Asmussen, Executive Director

Benchmark 6: Board Oversight & Governance

Benchmark10: Legal Compliance

a. Policies Approved by NYSED

Dr. Asmussen read to the board policies that the State said they have approved although nothing to verify that in writing was received from the state. This applies to both schools. The approved policies include the by-laws, two years of parent handbooks, the discipline policy for both schools, a line in the school enrollment policy, and the complaint policy. The CTE and the investment policy for both schools were withdrawn. The CTE was withdrawn because it is a whole other application process through another office. The investment policy was withdrawn since the State does not require it. Therefore, the school does not need State approval. All of these withdrawals were approved.

b. School Attorneys—Presentation

Mr. Tabano introduced Mr. Steve Sedereas and Ms. Maria Groeneveld, attorneys at law, who worked with Davidoff Hutcher & Citron LLP law firm and did legal work for the school. Both Mr. Sedereas and Ms. Groenfeld left Davidoff Hutcher & Citron LLP law firm and are now working with Mandelbaum Salsburg. Both expressed their desire to continue representing NDCS since they are familiar with the school leadership team and the school. Mr. Tabano thanked them both and said that the board will have further discussions on the possibility of continuing to use their legal services.

Mr. Tabano discussed with the board members the option of switching to other attorneys if the school wanted to do such a thing. The board members agreed that it would be best to wait until any pending legal work is fully completed such as the “Friends of” project. Subsequently, after such legal work is completed, the board will then consider other attorneys to represent the school.

XI. Public Comment

No public comment.

XII. New Business

Mr. Ramkissoon stated that in our Queens lease, with the loan, we have annual true up. As per the lease agreement, it allows payment of up to 10% less than what is agreed upon according to the number of students. For example, if the school has less than 300 students, then the max the school will be required to pay is 30 students less than that. Mr. Ramkissoon confirmed that he sent Barone documentation proving that the school did not meet the projected number of students enrolled and that Barone needs to refund some of the rent payments. Barone is stating that they do not owe the school any monies. Subsequently, Mr. Ramkissoon informed the board that in the lease agreement, there is a clause which indicates that if the school fails to meet its enrollment numbers, the lease can be re-negotiated.

Mr. Tabano asked Mr. Ramkissoo to keep the board posted on any changes regarding this situation.

The board agreed that the next board meeting will be on December 21, 2021, at 11:00 AM.

XIII. Adjournment

The board adjourned at 11:50 AM.