

**New Dawn Charter Schools Board of Trustees  
April Meeting  
Wednesday, April 27, 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  
Zoom Meeting

**Date:** Wednesday, April 27, 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; Ms. Nazli Askin, Data Specialist, NDCS; Ms. Emily Predmore, Remote Learning Specialist NDCS; and Ms. Amy Scheiderman, Board Effects

## **I. Agenda**

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

**Resolution:** April 2022 Agenda

**Motion:** Mr. Brian Baer motioned to accept and approve the April 2022 Board of Trustees meeting agenda.

**Motion Seconded:** Ms. Jane Sun seconded the motion.

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

## **II. Minutes**

**Resolution:** March 2022 Minutes

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

**Motion:** Mr. Brian Baer motioned to accept and approve the March 2022, Board of Trustees meeting minutes.

**Motion Seconded:** Ms. Jane Sun seconded the motion.

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

**III. Board Effect Training—Board Effects & Emily Predmore  
Benchmark 6: Board Oversight & Governance**

Ms. Emily Predmore and Ms. Amy Scheiderman, Implementation Specialist from Board Effects, presented the board members with a demo on the platform's capabilities. The presentation included accessing meeting information, reviewing, and annotating meeting books, and additional resources including next steps. Ms. Amy Scheiderman stated that Dr. Asmussen will distribute login credentials and guides after the demo. Board members will access Board Effects through a web platform or through a mobile device app. Board Effects can be accessed through any current browser or smartphone. Ms. Amy Scheiderman then reviewed the program platform and all the information tabs including the homepage, the library tab, the directory, messaging, and approval tab. Ms. Scheiderman also informed the board about the Board Effect Support contact information should any help be need with the program. Board members will be able to access any board related materials on this platform including board agendas, board minutes, contract bids, finance reports, student performance reports, etc. Ms. Amy Scheiderman also briefed the board on the downloadable app that can be used on any told the board members smartphone. She spoke about the navigational tool bars on the app as well.

Mr. Brian Baer asked Ms. Scheiderman if events be exported out into a Google or an Outlook calendar. Ms. Scheiderman confirmed that they can be and demonstrated how this can be done. Ms. Sun asked if the school website can be accessed through the board effect platform. Ms. Scheiderman responded that it cannot. However, a link to the board website can be added on the board effect platform. Ms. Urbati asked, if notes are exclusively for the person making the notes. Also in regard notes, can notes be made on items that require approval and will everyone be able to see those notes. Ms. Scheiderman stated that notes would not be visible to all but only to the admin personnel. Ms. Scheiderman concluded her presentation and informed the board members that she is available anytime if any other questions should arise.

Dr. Asmussen formally introduced Ms. Emily Predmore as the remote learning specialist and the person who will be the lead in managing the Board Effects platform for the school. Dr. Asmussen stated that this program will reduce the number of emails sent regarding board business and will streamline communication among board members.

**IV. Financials—Steve Ramkissoon**

**Benchmark 4: Financial Condition****Benchmark 5: Financial Management****Resolution: Monthly Financials**

Mr. Ramkissoon reminded the board members that the schools are at the end of the third financial quarter. He also stated that there are no major changes in the financial reports for both schools from last month's report. Both schools are reporting a positive cash flow despite having below projected student enrollment. To date, the Brooklyn school has 246 students enrolled. Operating net income is showing a negative 131K, however there is a \$606,000 in Depreciation Amortization. After factoring that depreciation amortization, the school has a \$475K positive income.

For the Queens school, Mr. Ramkissoon reported that there are 216 students enrolled. Programmed recruiting efforts are expected to result in enrollment of more students. The rental/lease charges are still project based on a 300-student enrollment. However, currently, Mr. Ramkissoon does not see any formidable challenges in meeting the school financial goals. If any monies are reimbursed by Barrone, this will affect the bottom line positively.

Mr. Tabano asked if there were any questions regarding the April 2022 financials. There were no questions. Mr. Tabano then asked if there was a motion to accept the April 2022 financials.

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

**Motion Seconded:** Ms. Jane Sun seconded the motion.

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

**V. Hiring, Recruitment, and School Updates****Benchmark 7: Organizational Capacity****Staff Hiring—Steve Ramkissoon**

Mr. Ramkissoon reported that the hiring process is progressing slowly. Queens has few open staff positions. Last month two staff members left including one at the Brooklyn school and the other at the Queens school. There is a job fair programmed at both schools next month. Last year, the job fair produced a few candidates, and several were hired. Currently, there are two (2) internship positions open in Queens in addition to an office assistant position, a SPED teacher position, and an ELA teacher position that are also vacant. In Brooklyn, there is a Science and SPED teacher position vacant. It is expected that during contract renewal time, there will be some staff that will chose to leave. Mr. Ramkissoon and Ms. Donna Lobato have met with every employee that will be asked to return next year. During that meeting, those employees were asked to return and were informed that they can expect their contract. Most of those employees expressed their willingness to return. Further, during those interviews, questions were asked of those employees that are asked to return. These questions included what can be done to improve the school culture and use those responses to make any changes necessary that will improve NDCS. Mr. Ramkissoon also recommended that the schools do an online anonymous survey to

gauge what employees think and how they feel regarding their employment experience at NDCS.

### **Student Recruitment—Steve Ramkissoo**

Mr. Ramkissoo reported that student recruitment is going well and better than expected. There will be another student recruitment day soon.

### **School Updates—Donna Lobato/Zach Flory**

Ms. Lobato reported to the board that the fourth marking period has begun, and Regents will be administered in June. Teachers are working to prep the students for those upcoming exams. Preparations for the June graduation is also continuing. Ms. Lobato projects that there will be approximately sixty (60) students graduating. There is the possibility that the graduation numbers may be higher if certain students pull through and pass all their courses. Regents exam waivers have helped students this year.

Ms. Lobato also reported that this month, staff from both schools have interchanged work locations with the goal of improving relationships and teamwork between both schools. Additionally, this will help all staff see and adopt any new strategies that may improve their pedagogy or job performance techniques for those that hold non-teaching roles. Feedback from staff regarding this initiative is positive. Ms. Lobato also reported that Mr. Flory and she will also interchange schools in the coming days.

Mr. Zach Flory reported that currently there are 229 students enrolled in ATS for Queens. There are also eighteen (18) students that are currently being processed for enrollment. Mr. Flory also reported that the attendance committee is meeting regularly and is doing student reach out. There is success in getting some students to come back physically.

Mr. Flory also informed the board that he is continuing to interview for vacant internship coordinator positions. There are two candidates that look promising. Mr. Flory also informed the board that the school is continuing to prepare for the upcoming State visit. Mr. Flory is collaborating with his teachers to improve student-focused instruction. Regarding stay interviews, Mr. Flory stated that he is enhancing the work environment so that staff feel comfortable in the facilities. Additionally, Mr. Flory is encouraging communications among his staff to enhance transparency.

## **VI. Facilities—Jose Obregon**

### **Benchmark 6: Board Oversight & Governance**

#### **Update on both buildings**

Mr. Obregon reported to the board that for the Queens facility, he received architectural plans from Barone Management pertaining to the upcoming work on the roof. He confirmed that he shared those plans with Mr. Brian Baer. Mr. Brian Baer recommended that the wheelchair ramp design be adjusted to reflect a longer ramp. Aside from that Mr. Baer did not notice anything significantly concerning with the design. Mr. Obregon also informed the board that the Spectrum

fiber line was upgraded at the Queen school as it was in Brooklyn. This upgrade will be covered through Erate funding at both schools.

For the Brooklyn school, Mr. Obregon informed the board that he reached out to Mr. Ed Cinni of Benchmark to try to get him to come and address the leak coming through one of the roof top doors. Mr. Cinni said that he would come this coming week and to address the faulty rear ramp door. Mr. Tabano asked if the building has had anymore leaks since the last. Mr. Obregon confirmed that there has not been anymore leaks since then. Mr. Tabano directed Jose to speak with the owner of the construction company if Mr. Ed Cinni did not come to address the outstanding issues.

## **VII. Grants & Reports—Sara Asmussen**

### **Benchmark 1: Student Performance**

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

### **Benchmark 8: Mission & Key Design Elements**

#### **Homeless Grant**

Dr. Asmussen informed the board that she received an email from Paul Le concerning the ARP Homeless Grant. If the State does not award you \$5,000 or more, you cannot apply for the grant. NDCHS Brooklyn received enough that the application was submitted and approved. NDCHS II Queens was only awarded \$900 so was not eligible to apply. Mr. Le asked if NDCHS II would consider being the lead school in a consortium, which we agreed to. Years ago, the school partnered with Paul Le for our Title III grant for years and they have been wonderful PDS for our ELL students. NDCHS II will partner with this group for PD for homeless services.

This money from the Brooklyn grant will be used for a washer and dryer and laundry setup for the next three years. These laundry facilities will be used to support our homeless students or students in unstable housing situations. In summation, all the other grants were accepted. The school is currently in an advantageous position and the homeless grant for NDCHS II is the only grant which is outstanding.

## **VIII. Project Updates— Dr. Lisa DiGaudio, Director of Curriculum and Instruction**

### **Benchmark 1: Student Performance**

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

#### **Resolution: Testing Quotes**

Dr. DiGaudio reported that she was chosen to represent New Dawn with Heidi Hayes Jacobs and two curriculum panels that were nationwide. Dr. DiGaudio stated that they were chosen because they have stellar maps and that are considered exemplars for others. There were excellent turnouts on both webinars. Dr. DiGaudio stated that being on a panel with Heidi Hayes Jacobs, who was the penultimate of curriculum mapping, is a privilege and spectacular opportunity. Dr. DiGaudio also stated that it was great working with Heidi Hayes Jacobs and getting positive feedback from her on the work that they are both doing for both schools.

Dr. DiGaudio informed the board that since Scantron will no longer be used, she is looking at a few other programs to replace it. Dr. DiGaudio stated that she likes “Let’s Go Learn.” The program provides analytics. Teachers get the analytics but also get an intervention plan. It provides a very tailored plan with extremely specific skills that aligns to the next generation standard. All the testing programs are doing the computer adaptive testing. What was most compelling was the IXL baseline testing. It provides diverse ways to answer questions.

Dr. DiGaudio also stated that in addition to IXL, teachers will have access to the data in real time. Therefore, much of the work done can determine if another question is needed if the student made any kind of improvement. Students can take the test on a Chromebook. Teachers can have it right on their desktop and they can project, show, and teach right from it. With IXL, they also offer social studies and science. Additionally, since our ELL students tend to struggle with language, this might be a good intervention for them in those two subject areas in general. The other two programs are NWEA. They are expensive for what they are offering. The last program is Educational VISTA. Dr. DiGaudio stated that she like the program, but it did not offer some of the analytics that Let us Go Learn offers. Dr. DiGaudio also stated that all these companies are vetted by the state, and they are approved vendors. She also stated that the schools can certainly use IXL for the reading and math.

Mr. Tabano asked Dr. DiGaudio if she had a preference. Dr. DiGaudio replied that she prefers IXL. Mr. Tabano then asked the board if there was a resolution to accept, IXL as the new assessment tool for the schools.

**Motion:** Ms. Jane Sun motioned to approve IXL as the new assessment tool for the schools.

**Motion Seconded:** Mr. Brian Baer seconded the motion.

**Vote:** The board unanimously voted to accept and approve IXL as the new assessment tool for the schools.

## **IX. Updates—Sara Asmussen**

### **Queens 3<sup>rd</sup> year visit**

Dr. Asmussen stated that the third-year visit will take place on June 8, 2022. There is also an option to do the visit on Regents week. Dr. Asmussen asked for June 8, 2022, for the visit. Dr. Asmussen reported to the board that she feels that the school is up to date.

### **Legal Issues**

Dr. Asmussen asked if the board wanted to go into executive session to discuss these issues. Mr. Tabano stated that he would, if necessary, but asked the board if there was a motion to accept the arbitration agreement between the Queens school and Barone management.

**Motion:** Mr. Brian Baer motioned to approve and accept the arbitration agreement between the Queens school and Barone management.

**Motion Seconded:** Ms. Jane Sun seconded the motion.

**Vote:** The board unanimously voted to approve and accept the arbitration agreement between the Queens school and Barone management.

Dr. Asmussen updated the Board on the other legal issues facing the school.

### **Board Evaluation**

Dr. Asmussen stated that she will put that on the new board platform. She asked the board members to look for a message from here indicating that her evaluation and the board evaluation are there. She believes that this can be done online. Mr. Tabano asked if this could be done in June 2022 and Dr. Asmussen confirmed that it can be. Mr. Tabano stated that the board can schedule a meeting and do both at the same time. Mr. Tabano recapped what Dr. Asmussen reported to the board concerning legal issues and all agreed on what was stated.

### **ED Evaluation**

Dr. Asmussen will also load the ED Evaluation to the new Portal. The Board will call a separate meeting to conduct both evaluations.

### **X. Public Comment**

No public comment was made.

### **XI. New Business**

Mr. Tabano asked Dr. Asmussen to inform the board about their meeting with the Chancellor yesterday. Dr. Asmussen informed the board that the Chancellor is very motivational and that his focus will be on young men of color. His other focus is on Career College technical education. Mr. Tabano stated that any progress that the chancellor makes will be based on the mayor's influence on schools. Mr. Tabano also stated that he believes that the new Chancellor is making no distinction between charters and district schools and that is refreshing.

### **XII. Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 11:55 AM.

The next board meeting is scheduled for May 31, 2022, at 11:00 A.M.