

Board of Trustees Meeting

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

Zoom Meeting

Date: May 25, 2021

Time: 1:00 P.M.

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

Board Members Absent: All present.

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

Mr. Tabano, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 1:00 P.M.

I. Discussion about Board membership

Dr. Asmussen explained that the State never processed Mr. Jonathan Carrington's paperwork to approve him as a board member. An agreement was reached that the board would declare that the board understands what the issue is and that the board agrees to reconciling everything Mr. Jonathan Carrington voted on in the past. The State also alleged that Mr. Jonathan Carrington was never fingerprinted even though he is Principal of a charter school in NYC and has been in charter schools since the early 2000's.

a. Resolution: The Board approves all previous actions that were voted on while Mr. Carrington was in attendance.

Motion: Ms. Katharine Urbati motioned that the Board approve all previous actions that were voted on while Mr. Carrington was in attendance.

Motion Seconded: Ms. Jane Sun seconded the motion.

Vote: The board unanimously voted to approve the resolution to approve all previous actions that were voted on while Mr. Carrington was in attendance.

II. Resolution: April 27. 2021 board minutes

Mr. Ron Tabano asked the board members if there is a resolution to approve and accept the April 27, 2021, minutes.



Motion: Ms. Katharine Urbati motioned to approve and accept the April 27, 2021 minutes.

Motion Seconded: Ms. Jane Sun seconded the motion.

Vote: The board unanimously voted to accept and approve the April 27, 2021, minutes.

Resolution: April 27, 2021, Executive Committee minutes

Mr. Ron Tabano asked the board members if there is a resolution to approve and accept the Executive Committee April 27, 2021, minutes.

Motion: Ms. Katharine Urbati motioned to approve and accept the April 27, 2021, executive committee minutes.

Motion Seconded: Ms. Jane Sun seconded the motion.

Vote: The board unanimously voted to accept and approve the executive committee April 27, 2021, minutes.

III. Introduction of New Staff Assignment—Dr. Sara Asmussen

Dr. Asmussen informed the board that Ms. Lobato was the former Director of Student Services who oversaw the Counselors, The Internship Program, and the SPED program. Since she is now the Brooklyn school Principal, she cannot continue to do so. Therefore, Dr. Asmussen has asked Mr. Jose Obregon to take on a dual role of DSS and DO. This is also being done to allow someone who is onboard now to become prepared and assume the DSS role in 2-3 years so that New Dawn can promote internally. Subsequently, Mr. Jose Obregon will fill that role until further notice. Mr. Tabano thanked Mr. Jose Obregon and wished him well in his new assignment.

IV. Financials— Mr. Steve Ramkissoon - Director of Finance and HR

Benchmark 4: Financial Condition

Benchmark 5: Financial Management

a. Resolution: Financials

b. Resolution: Financials for 2021-2022 school year

Mr. Steve Ramkissoon informed the board that the Brooklyn School has a net income of \$6,082,692. to date, which is 86% of the forecasted budget. The school has only expended 77% of its budget as of this report date. PPE monies also were a big plus for the school. Calculating current and future expenses and Bond loan repayment of approximately 1.4M, the school is still on track to have a positive net income by the end

of the year of at least \$206,018. Mr. Ramkissoon expects that this positive income maybe even greater at the end of the fiscal year.

For the Queens school, Mr. Steve Ramkissoon reported that the school has a net income of \$3,525,313. This reflects 64% of the projected budget. Expenses are only at 56% of the projected amount. After reviewing current and projected expenses, the school is projected to have a healthy \$1.3M positive net income.

Mr. Steve Ramkissoon briefed the board on the 2021-2022 budget and how he used historical data and any new projected expenses to formulate the budget. He also stated that he met with Mr. Jose Obregon to identify and determine what facility costs needed to be addressed in the budget for both schools. Brooklyn has more facility expenses than the Queens school. Mr. Ramkissoon further briefed the board on budget expenses line by line. The budget revenue was calculated with a projected FTE of 335.

Mr. Tabano asked Mr. Ramkissoon if he has started to work on the ESSR grant and if the grant money has been already allocated. Mr. Tabano also asked if the new teachers that the school is hiring can be funded with this grant. Mr. Ramkissoon deferred to Dr. Asmussen as to where funds will be allocated. Dr. Asmussen indicated that she has an appointment with Mr. Art Pritchard, the school grant consultant. Some monies must be spent on an evidenced approved program from the Federal government. Dr. Asmussen also indicated that she will ensure that the spending plan will avoid double dipping. She also indicated that she was not aware that staff would be allowed to be hired and funded by this grant. Mr. Tabano offered his assistance to help plan for the use of ESSR grant funds. Dr. Asmussen also mentioned that Mr. Obregon's new position might be funded through this grant. Mr. Tabano agreed and indicated that the grant allowed great flexibility. Dr. Asmussen informed the board that she will have that budget ready by the next two (2) weeks. The smaller budget is due June 15, 2021. Mr. Tabano also informed the board that the grant monies can be spent over three years, so the budget can be spread out accordingly.

Mr. Tabano asked the board members if there was a resolution to accept the financials as Mr. Ramkissoon presented them.

Motion: Ms. Katharine Urbati motioned to accept and approve the financials for May 2021

Motion Seconded: Ms. Jane Sun seconded the motion.

Vote: The board unanimously voted to accept and approve the financials for May 2021.



Dr. Asmussen informed the board that during the last oversight visit from the State, the State representatives indicated that the school had conflicting enrollment numbers. Dr. Asmussen confirmed that numbers are different, but they are not conflicting. The State does not understand how backfilling actually works which means that the school has an open enrollment policy throughout the entire year so enrollment number fluctuate weekly. Dr. Asmussen asked the board to be aware of this, so that when the time comes, they can explain this and stand by the school enrollment numbers. Mr. Tabano also remarked that the State also does not take into consideration that the school has January graduates. Mr. Tabano further informed the board that on BEDS Day, when official enrollment for schools is calculated, public schools would pack their numbers so they can receive the maximum funding by BEDS day. However, charter transfer schools always service many more students than reflected on BEDS day.

V. HR (Hiring)— Ms. Nazli Askin, Data Specialist

Benchmark 7: Organizational Capacity

Ms. Askin reported to the board that the hiring process is under way and that there are three (3) positions in Brooklyn that need to be filled and nine (9) positions in Brooklyn. Vacancies are being posted on the school website, on Indeed, and in Idealist. Vacancies were also posted on Brooklyn and Teacher College boards. The school is also attempting to post the job announcements on Touro College and LIU platforms. There will be a recruitment fair on June 2, 2021, at the Brooklyn location for both schools. Candidates will be greeted, given a tour of the facilities, and interviewed by selected staff. Mr. Tabano indicated that it is going to be tough to get new recruits since public schools are being authorized to hire additional teachers as well. Obviously, this will increase competition.

VI. Policies and Procedures— Dr. Sara Asmussen, Executive Director

Benchmark 6: Board Oversight & Governance

Benchmark 8: Mission & Key Design Element

Benchmark 10: Legal Compliance

Dr. Asmussen informed the board that these items are due for charter renewal. However, there were not many changes. Dr. Asmussen also informed the board that the 2021 Student handbook and the bylaws have not been approved yet from last December.

a. Resolution: Student Handbook



Mr. Tabano asked the board members if there was a resolution to approve and accept the 2021-2022 student handbook.

Motion: Ms. Katharine Urbati motioned to accept and approve the student handbook.

Motion Seconded: Ms. Jane Sun seconded the motion.

Vote: The board unanimously voted to accept and approve the student handbook.

Mr. Tabano asked Dr. Assmussen if there are any changes to the enrollment and admissions policy. Dr. Assmussen responded that there was one minor change. Mr. Tabano then asked if there was a motion to approve and accept enrollment and admissions policy.

b. Resolution: Enrollment and Admissions Policy

Motion: Ms. Katharine Urbati motioned to approve and accept enrollment and admissions policy.

Motion Seconded: Ms. Jane Sun seconded the motion.

Vote: The board unanimously voted to accept and approve the approve and accept enrollment and admissions policy.

VII. Contracts— Dr. Sara Assmussen, Mr. Brian Baer

Benchmark 6: Board Oversight & Governance

a. Resolution: ASNY for both Brooklyn and Queens

Dr. Assmussen informed the board that the first contract is for Accounting Solutions of New York. There is one each of this contract for the Brooklyn and Queens school. The contracts are the same as last year. Mr. Tabano then asked if there was a motion to approve and accept the ASNY contracts for both the Brooklyn and Queens school.

Motion: Ms. Jane Sun motioned to approve and accept the ASNY contracts for both the Brooklyn and Queens school.

Motion Seconded: Ms. Katharine Urbati seconded the motion.

Vote: The board unanimously voted to accept and approve the approve the ASNY contracts for both the Brooklyn and Queens school.

b. Resolution: Chalk contract

Dr. Assmussen stated that staff is happy with Chalk and that eight thousand dollars was a reasonable price for both schools for a total of three years. Ms. Katharine Urbati asked if



this was the curriculum program and Mr. Tabano confirmed that yes it was. Mr. Tabano then asked if there was a motion to approve and accept the Chalk contract for both schools.

Motion: Mr. Amit Bahl motioned to approve and accept the Chalk contract for both the Brooklyn and Queens school.

Motion Seconded: Ms. Jane Sun seconded the motion.

Vote: The board unanimously voted to accept and approve the Chalk contract for both the Brooklyn and Queens school.

c. Resolution: GKV

Mr. Brian Baer briefed the board that the construction project generated approximately 1.5M in change orders. 260K is directly attributed to the design team. There are ongoing talks with GKV Architects to try to come to a resolution without getting into a lengthy legal struggle. However, GKV has responded with a stop work. Mr. Baer informed the board that he is still looking to achieve a collective solution to close out the project. Mr. Brian Baer indicated that we need GKV's signatures to obtain a certificate of occupancy. There is an outstanding balance of approximately 58-59K owed to GKV to close out the work. There is also an outstanding balance of 18K that is outstanding to pay for GKV and subcontractor expenses. The debate continues as to who is responsible for the change orders. GKV does not accept responsibility for those change orders and neither does the school. Mr. Brian Baer reminded the board that without paying GKV the balances owed, the school will not be able to get the needed certificate of occupancy. The decision is whether to pay balance due and close out the project or not to pay the balance and fight it out. Mr. Tabano stated that he believes that at this juncture, the best course of action is to pay the balance and get the Certificate of Occupancy. The school can then try to negotiate another solution. Mr. Carrington asked if it is worth to try to fight GKV on this issue. Mr. Tabano replied that fighting it out would take too much time and money. Mr. Tabano recommended to the board that this matter should be resolved as quickly as possible. Dr. Asmussen also stated that hiring a new architect to complete the project would be costly and take months to resolve. Mr. Tabano asked the board if there was a motion to approve and pay the balance due to GKV. Mr. Brian Baer reminded the board members that an additional 18K is needed to close out the certificate of occupancy process.

Motion: Ms. Katharine Urbati motioned to approve and pay the balance due to GKV.

Motion Seconded: Ms. Jane Sun seconded the motion.

Vote: The board unanimously voted to approve and pay the balance due to GKV. Mr. Baer recused himself from the vote.

VIII. Calendars & Strategic Plan Modifications



Benchmark 10: Legal Compliance

Dr. Asmussen informed the board that it is likely that the 2022-2023 school calendar may change once the NYC DOE posts their school calendar. Notwithstanding any possible changes, Mr. Tabano asked if there was a motion to approve and accept the 2021-2022 school calendar.

a. Resolution: 2021-2022 School Year

Motion: Mr. Amit Bahl motioned to approve and accept the 2021-2022 school calendar.

Motion Seconded: Ms. Jane Sun seconded the motion.

Vote: The board unanimously voted to accept and approve the 2021-2022 school calendar.

b. Resolution: 2022-2023 School Year

Mr. Tabano then asked if there was a motion to approve and accept the 2022-2023 school calendar.

Motion: Mr. Amit Bahl motioned to approve and accept the 2022-2023 school calendar.

Motion Seconded: Ms. Jane Sun seconded the motion.

Vote: The board unanimously voted to accept and approve the 2022-2023 school calendar.

c. Resolution: Board Calendar for 2021-2022

Mr. Tabano asked if there was a motion to approve and accept the 2021-2022 board calendar.

Motion: Ms. Katharine Urbati motioned to approve and accept the 2021-2022 Board Calendar.

Motion Seconded: Ms. Jane Sun seconded the motion.

Vote: The board unanimously voted to accept and approve the 2021-2022 Board Calendar.

d. Resolution: Strategic Plan

The strategic plan has been updated and will need to be submitted this year. Mr. Tabano asked if there was a motion to accept and approve the updates to the strategic plan.

Motion: Ms. Katharine Urbati motioned to approve and accept the strategic plan.

Motion Seconded: Ms. Jane Sun seconded the motion.

Vote: The board unanimously voted to accept and approve the strategic plan.

IX. Facilities— Mr. Jose Obregon, Director of Operations

Benchmark 6: Board Oversight & Governance

Mr. Obregon reported that there are only a couple of small items that need to be wrapped up including some lock issues at the Brooklyn school. Additionally, over the course of the last two weeks in Brooklyn, four fire control system inspections were completed including the fire alarm inspection, the sprinkler system inspection, the ANSUL system inspection in the kitchen, and the fire extinguisher inspection. In Queens, Zach Flory, Jose Obregon, and reps from Barone toured the building to look at some items that need to be addressed. These items include removal of bathroom doors, fixing of door hinges on the 2nd floor, contractor debris removal, installation of emergency eye wash station, installation of guard fence to roof top areas on stairwells A&B, and installation of dividing gate in backyard area belonging to the New Dawn school. Aside from these items there is nothing else significant to report.

X. Grants

Benchmark 1: Student Performance

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

Benchmark 8: Mission & Key Design Elements

a. ESSER and CRRSA grants—Dr. Sara Asmussen

Dr. Asmussen reported to the board that she will be meeting with Art Pritchard to finalize the details for these two grants and how they will be used in conjunction with Title funds. Grant application is due by June 15, 2021. The CRR grant will allocate \$398,176 to the Brooklyn school over a two-year period and \$169,948 to the Queens school. Dr. Asmussen also reported that assurances for the ESSER grant were already filed. The grant will allocate the Brooklyn school \$894,246, and the Queens school will receive \$381,680. Both grants will be coming out in the next 2-3 weeks. Dr. Asmussen stated that she will get the board a breakdown of how that money will be spent. Mr. Tabano indicated that these grant monies will have a positive effect on the bottom line for both schools all the way through 2024. Mr. Tabano also anticipates an increase in SPED per pupil funding which will benefit both schools as well. Dr. Asmussen also informed the board that the State will allow the school to use the same re-opening plan without modifications. This re-opening plan should be re-loaded to a different portal.

b. All other grants—Dr. Sara Asmussen

No other grant program was discussed because there were no changes or updates.

XI. School Reports

Benchmark 6: Board Oversight & Governance

Benchmark 9: Enrollment, Recruitment, & Retention

a. Brooklyn—Ms. Donna Lobato, Principal NDCHS Brooklyn

Ms. Lobato reported that home visits were conducted and 34 students will return as a result. There are 14 new students enrolled. Contact was made by the school's internship coordinators with two (2) detention centers to reach out to students who do not have a school placement yet. Finals have started last week and will continue to the end of the semester. The numbers of students participating in finals is good. Currently, there are 30 students ready to graduate. On June 24, 2021 will be the senior brunch.

b. Queens—Zach Flory, Principal NDCHS II

Mr. Flory reported that recruitment is still ongoing. Currently, there are 223 students enrolled in ATS. Efforts are being made to re-engage students with the internship program which was interrupted by COVID. Recruiting efforts will continue over the summer. More students are now present in the building. Miniature Career Fair took place last week in the school. There were 15 students who participated. The garden program is continuing and more supplies will become available to continue that program in the school back yard. The building is being prepped to accommodate additional staff in September and the 4th floor is being set up in anticipation. Additional furniture including teacher desks, bulletin boards, and white boards will be set up as needed. Plans are in place to start building internship partnerships for students to do in person internship. Mr. Tabano remarked that he believes that recruitment will pick up over the summer as public schools start discharging students.

XII. Student Outcomes & Dashboard—Ms. Nazli Askin, Data Specialist

Benchmark 1: Student Performance

a. Dashboard— Ms. Nazli Askin Data Specialist

Ms. Askin reviewed the dashboard and reported that the Brooklyn school has 301 students enrolled, SPED percentages are at 42%, ELL is 12%, economically-disadvantaged is at 84%, and immunization is at 94%. For the Queens school, there are 223 students enrolled, SPED percentages are at 35%, ELL is 16%, economically-disadvantaged is at 91%, and immunization is at 97%. There are no other significant changes.

b. Review of Regents Pass Rates compared to District 15 and NYS compared Over the Years—Dr. Sara Asmussen

Dr. Asmussen reported to the board that she was looking at a different set up data, that from the data.nysed.gov website, again from the 2018-2019 school year which is the most current information available from NYSED, they are always at least two years behind. These are actual Regent exam results that show how New Dawn compares against the district and the State. Dr. Asmussen discussed the difference between Regents results for the 9th-grade cohort and the annual Regents results. The annual results are those students who passed the test divided by the number of students who took the test—this is NOT the analysis used for renewal. This is an assessment of how the New Dawn curriculum is working and how teachers are instructing. The 9th-grade cohort results—which is used for renewal—are all students who started 9th grade in the same year. So, if we enroll an 18-year-old who is in their 4th year of high school but only has 2 ELA credits, this student would NOT even be eligible to take the ELA Regents based on the fact they did not have the required course work. They are a freshmen based on credit accumulation, while their “cohort” group are all seniors. The assumption taken by the State is that this student should take the Regents regardless of grade level and thus this student, who did not take the Regents is counted as a fail against New Dawn and is included in the denominator of the calculation. This in no way is a reflection of what is really going on at New Dawn around curriculum and instruction.

The 2018-2019 Annual Regents Proficiency Results compared to the State and district show that when students are grade level ready and take the test, the school scores very well. The data reflects students who took the Regents exam in NYS without looking at cohorts. The State does report this data for all schools, districts, and the State, so it is possible to compare them. The data clearly reflects that New Dawn Charter High School outperformed the State in almost all the General Education and Special Education proficiency categories for each exam. In comparison to the district, except for the Algebra Regents, New Dawn outperformed the district in all categories including SPED and Gen Ed. Dr. Asmussen further emphasized that this data must be emphasized when the State conducts their oversight during the renewal visit. Conversely, the data presented here reflects success and that the school is doing very well. Ms. Jane Sun remarked that this data is clear. She also asked if there is a website that transfer schools can post their

results so they are visible. She also remarked that what the state is posting is not very fair or accurate. Dr. Sara Asmussen stated that she can post these results on the school website. Dr. Asmussen also informed Ms. Jane Sun that the school is still struggling to compare attendance. Ms. Jane Sun also commented that she did notice that the school website is updated.

c. CAP Review—Nazli Askin

Ms. Askin reported that in the 2018-2019 ELA Regents results taken from Level 0 on the BOCES system, the 2015 Cohort was reported. However, in the State report, the State did not credit SPED students who scored a 55% on their regents as passing. This omission adversely affects New Dawn's numbers since our students are always 40% or more IEP compared to schools that only have 5% IEP students. It is a violation of IDEA to keep IEP students with a score of at least 55 from graduating to meet State requirements. Ms. Askin reported that approximately half of the students that were supposed to take the exam did not because they did not have the credits to prepare them for the test. Some students passed the exam later in 2019-2020 or they transferred to another school. However, if you take the percentages of both General Ed and Special Ed. students who did take the Regents and passed, New Dawn percentages reflect that New Dawn outperformed both the district and the State. Ms. Askin also reviewed the outcome of the Regent exam results including Levels scored and the number of students who graduated after taking the Regents. Ms. Askin also reviewed the same data for the Math Regents results.

XIII. Charter School Performance Framework Discussion

All Benchmarks

No topics of discussion was presented.

XIV. New Business

No new business was discussed.

XV. Adjournment

Mr. Ron Tabano thanked all for their participation. The board adjourned at 2:53 PM

XVI. Executive Committee Meeting

Evaluations—Ron Tabano



- a. **Board Evaluation**
- b. **Consultant Evaluation**
- c. **Executive Director Evaluation**

Due to lack of time, it was decided to move the Executive Meeting to 6/8/2021 at 1:30 p.m.