

Minutes of the Academy of the City Board of Trustees Meeting of April 20, 2017

A meeting of the Board of Trustees (the “Board”) of the Academy of the City Charter School (the “School”) was held on April, 2017 at 5:00 pm at the School (31-29 60th Street, Woodside, NY 11377).

Notice of the meeting was given by submitting a notice electronically to the Queens Courier newspaper, posting the meeting notice on the school’s website and posting a paper notice outside the school building at Academy of the City Charter School, 31-29 60th Street, Woodside, NY 11377.

The following members of the Board were present: Nancy Sills (Chair), Rick Welles, Steven Zimmerman, Sarah DeBlois, Harry Elish, James Traub (via Skype), and Angela Howard

The following staff members and visitors were present: Richard Lee and Juliette Diamand.

NS called the meeting to order.

Finance Report: The Finance Report (Exhibit A) was distributed to the Board prior to the meeting.

Ratification of the Minutes:

NS asked for a motion to ratify the minutes of the March 21, 2017 board meeting (previously distributed to the board and attached as Exhibit B). AH so moved, HE seconded and all were in favor.

Project Based Learning

A presentation by Juliette Diamand teacher was given that described the project based learning program. Overall, it was indicated that the approach was going well and the teachers are now gearing up for a share in May/June. Grade projects (including integration into all subject areas) as follows:

Kindergarten: Fairytale breakfast with skits. There was a feedback share by the second grade (who performed this as a community service) and a walk in costume that includes different perspectives and cultures and the work was passed around. The Music department is working on a singing and dramatic portion.

First Grade – Emphasis on community (urban, suburban, rural). A flatbook with writing about the features of a community developed; a 3-D model built with contributions from each group of children (4-5 per group). Individual writing that discusses opinions about each place viz. living there.

Second Grade – Silk Road – how human needs are satisfied and changes to this over time. Includes “how to” writing and will also include a social justice component.

Ultimately, the planning team will consider how to improve on the prior projects, and understand the differences in the fall and spring projects. The opinion seems to be that the PBL focus has enriched and unified the school. Fourth and fifth grades working on such questions as “Who owns the land?” which considers issues related to the Dakota pipeline, and research into the refugee crisis.

As the program expands, there will be more heady topics such as how you make changes in the world. Choice in the older grades will deal with which perspective is taken or which piece is addressed.

Executive Session

NS asked for a motion to move to executive session that dealt with the principal’s review, metrics and staff surveys. RW so moved, HE seconded the motion and all were in favor. No votes were taken in the executive session. RL joined the board during the executive session.

The business of the executive session being concluded, AH moved to return to public session. HE seconded the motion and all were in favor.

There was no further business discussed during the public session. The business of the public session being concluded, HE moved to adjourn, AH seconded the motion and all were in favor. The next board meeting will be on May 30, 2017 at 5:00 p.m.

Summer Camp Program

NS then asked for a motion to authorize the school to fund afterschool for up to \$20,000. HE so moved, AH seconded and all were in favor.

School Report

The School Report was previously distributed as Exhibit B. The census is budgeted at 405 with a potential projected increase to 412, but this need not be addressed now. 30% of the per-pupil revenue is anticipated to be used for facilities; questions of the ability to hold to smaller class size were entertained, but the budget may not support this as projected. Full time math learning specialist and Spanish have been held in abeyance for the time being.

Board Retreat

A Board retreat is being organized by Jim Traub, planned for June 9 and 10. Teachers and administration will be invited to join in the Friday discussion focusing on Core Knowledge. A reading list will be distributed and a visit to a school utilizing this approach will be organized.

C3S

C3S distributed information regarding charter school replication models vs. private charter school. Emphasis on a culture that makes education happen in a local way is the goal.

Adjournment

RW moved to adjourn; HE second.