

## **Academy of the City Charter School Board Minutes**

A meeting of the Board of Trustees (the “Board”) of The Academy of the City Charter School (“the School”) was held on February 25, 2014 at 5:00 P.M. at The School (31-29 60<sup>th</sup> Street Woodside, N.Y. 11377)

Notice of the meeting was given by submitting a notice electronically to the Queens Courier newspaper, posting the meeting’s notice on the school website, and posting a paper notice on the bulletin board at Academy of the City Charter School, 31-29 60<sup>th</sup> Street Woodside, N.Y. 11377

The following members of the Board were present:

Dr. Richard Welles, Angela Howard, Steven Zimmerman, Harold Elish,  
Jessica James

The following staff members and visitors were present:

Richard Lee (Principal), Desiree Galashaw (Assistant Principal)  
June Schwartz (OSP), Dorothy Bukantz (Teacher), Smallberg (Teacher), Katie-Lyn Talbot (Teacher), Sara Helton (Teacher), Emily Kotsaftis (PCO)

The meeting began at 5:10 p.m.

### **Teachers’ Report**

Kate S. informed the board of the remarkable gains the children have been making on the unit test assessments. The children have even commented on recognizing their own personal growth. This is exactly what the school philosophy

is all about. Grades should not be compared against fellow students. Education and testing is about competing with yourself. Katie-Lyn T. distributed (Exhibit A) the newsletter entitled, "108's Ask me about." Richard L. was pleased with the newsletter and its content. It fulfills the purpose of keeping the parents informed and helps to start a conversation on what their children are learning at AOC. Due to the weather, the school trip to the Brooklyn Academy of Music was cancelled. There will be no education committee meeting taking place in the month of March.

### **PCO - Parent Community Organization's Report**

Emily K. reported to the board her disappointment in the low turnout at the Jan/Feb PCO meeting. Much effort was put forth to develop the Spanish/English format. Suggestions were made to fluctuate the times that the meetings were held. Rick W. suggested an early meeting right before school so parents can stop in before they report to work.

Desiree G. said parents are seeing more homework and newsletters and feel they are being kept abreast of their children's' progress. March 14<sup>th</sup> is movie night. "Despicable Me 2" will be the movie of choice with hot dogs for sale and free popcorn for all attendees. Envelopes were sent out to obtain PCO dues and this has worked fairly well. It has been difficult to collect the dues. We are currently inquiring about a 501c3 status for the PCO with the New York Lawyers Alliance.

A conference call is being arranged for the class parents. The purpose of the call is to find out how they can become more engaged. Open houses are coming up

March 5<sup>th</sup> and March 19<sup>th</sup>. We would like three parents to volunteer as tour guides during the open houses.

### **Finance Report**

Harry E. distributed the financial report (Exhibit B). He mentioned that the most important item we need to show SUNY for the charter renewal is the surplus. Fundamentally, Room 101 will eventually become a classroom. We are in the process of developing three kindergarten classes for next year. Moving music classes to the auditorium depends on negotiations with Father West. There is currently a discussion regarding space for 2015-2016.

### **Board Development**

Current board members are networking and attending events such as the United Way to recruit more board members.

### **School Report**

We currently have 278 children enrolled at AOC. To date, 705 applications were received for next year. The lottery will be held on April 7, 2014. Fifteen families attended the previous open house on February 13<sup>th</sup> in the snowstorm. Teacher evaluations are going well with all comprehensive evaluations in the next several weeks scheduled to be completed by the end of February. Initial polling of teachers and staff indicate that all staff except one person is intending to return. 3<sup>rd</sup> grade teacher will require a maternity replacement and it will be decided upon within the next two weeks. Letters of offer for next year will be sent out mid-

March including change of positions/grades, as requested by staff. Hiring will begin for music and Spanish teachers.

A new PA system was installed and will begin lockdown and shelter drills in the upcoming weeks. Locks have been installed. Rubber materials have arrived and will be used to create a new surface in the playground.

Desiree G. reported positive outcomes as a result of the Fountas & Pinnell benchmark assessments. In September 72% of the 1<sup>st</sup> grade students were reading above grade level. By February, 82% of 1<sup>st</sup> grade students were reading above grade level. Desiree G. is preparing the summer work packets and a list of educational activities families can do together to practice their skills for next school year and reduce summer slippage. Math scores have not yet been tabulated.

### **Open School Project Report**

It was suggested to Steve Z. to formulate future reporting activities in such a way that only impacts charter renewal and future goals. What are the action steps we need to do as a board to influence the necessary government officials to help us achieve our goals and fulfill our mission? Let's create more synergy and get our political agenda together. Help us get the word out to those who influence policy in Albany. Steve Z. will be creating a list of people we need to know and a strategy that will help get AOC to the next level.

### ***What we need to communicate to SUNY:***

- 1) We are solvent.***

**2) *Our kids can read.***

***A conference call will be arranged before May 7<sup>th</sup> in preparation of SUNY officials interviewing the AOC board.***

Other/Misc.

Suzie Miller Barker from SUNY will visit AOC on February 27<sup>th</sup>.

The meeting was adjourned at 7pm