

Academy of the City Charter School
Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Trustees
On Monday, February 27, 2012 at 5:00 p.m.
At Academy of the City Charter School, 36-14 12th Street, Long Island City, NY 11106

Present

Richard Welles, Chairperson
Nancy Sills, Secretary
Steven Zimmerman, Treasurer
Angela Howard, Trustee
Silvana Vasconcelos, Trustee (joined meeting)

In attendance
Richard Lee, Principal
Dorothy Bukantz, Conductor of Curriculum & Instruction
Adam Hunt, Director of Operations
Sarah Hill, parent
Diane Biondo, teacher
June Schwartz, volunteer]

Notice was given of the meeting by submitting a notice electronically to the Queens Courier newspaper, posting the meeting notice on the school's website, and posting a paper notice on the bulletin board at Academy of the City Charter School, 36-14 12th Street, Long Island City, New York 11106.

RW called the meeting to order with the following quote from Desmond Tutu: "We must not allow ourselves to become like the system we oppose."

NS moved to waive the reading of the minutes of the December meeting. AH seconded the motion and it was passed by unanimous consent.

There was discussion concerning the functioning of various committees. At the next education committee meeting there will be a report from the administration on special education. The report of the finance committee was delivered in conjunction with the finance report given by the CFO.

D. Biondo gave the report of the teachers' organization. The Teacher' Organization ("TO") has met a couple of times since the last board meeting with a focus on curriculum development. They are organized into groups in what is being called Phase I during which an understanding of each discipline will be obtained. The long-term goal (Phase II) will be to have integrated project-based maps of the disciplines. During Phase I the teachers are now coming together for an

explanation of the curriculum, to extract topics, develop a pacing guide so that it can be established where you start and end in each grade. Examples are that they have migrated from plants to animals in the classrooms as a topic; the Kindergarten is studying transportation – how do we get around the city.

SZ inquired why the TO had chosen to start with curriculum as its focus rather than working to form a formal organization. His concern is that the Teachers' Organization have a structure with which to participate in the development of the school. A discussion ensued concerning the benefits of teachers beginning to work on a tangible project such as curriculum development as a means of getting to know and trust each other as the parameters of the organization evolves.

Behavior issues have been discussed at the TO meetings, and appear to be of great concern for the teachers. To date, DBukantz and RL have taken the lead with regard to behavioral issues. The last teachers' report was shared with the parents, many of whom were excited about the teachers' curriculum committees and were interested in having more "family sharing" events worked into the educational process.

SHill gave the report of the Parent Community Organization ("PCO"). The PCO held a pot luck dinner at which the by-laws of the organization were passed. There is a nominating committee. Nominations and an election process for the organization are to be formalized. Based upon the PCO by-laws, one of the trustees from the school will be on the PCO nominating committee; SZ is on the PCO nominating committee. A parent coordinator has been hired by the school, and has started. The PCO is continuing to assist in outreach for next year. Representatives will be attending an event hosted by the Astoria Moms. They have also posted information about the school in the Jackson Height's local newspapers.

SZ gave the report of the OWN Foundation:

The Boys' and Girls' Club President Walter Sanchez has indicated that there is an Engineering report in process. The Zoning Analysis is complete, and the Conditions Assessment is underway. Currently the plan is to build on the parking lot instead of atop the present structure. Dr. Welles and S. Zimmerman are to be placed on the Boys and Girls' Club Program Committee and the Development committee of the B&G club in order to make co-mingle the groups.

Corpus Christi in Woodside may no longer be available, because the DOE has the first right of refusal and has expressed some interest in taking over the building. There is some confidence that the Diocese will work with AoC to obtain space by the time we need it, for example in the space now occupied by Joseph DeMarco Day Care. St. Mary's in LIC is not, however, available. The church is anticipated to be asking approximately \$20.00 per square foot.

The developer AoC is still looking for spaces, however it seems as if \$25 per sf would be the rate.

OWNF is working on an application for a \$250,000 Walton Grant, which is one of the only sources of unrestricted funds for charter schools. A meeting with the NYC Charter School center to prep the group will be held; AoC was invited to apply for the grant. NYCSA will review the application in mid-late March. A teacher survey is being put together by SZ and RW and JSchwartz.

RL gave the school report. A 100th day of school celebration was held. Many parents attended the celebration. The program included an assembly, displays, a song written by the students, poems, and “museum tours” stressing how children count (by 1s, 5s, 10s, etc)

- e-portfolios are being developed by Dorothy, Chris and Santi.
- Curriculum maps are being developed
- Teacher observations are completed except one. They have gone well and speak to the staffing needs for next year. Oral commitments are being asked of the teachers, and will be formalized next week with informal offer letters (a formal offer letter requires Board adoption of the budget). Richard Lee will poll the teachers about their intent to stay in the meeting to be held with teachers next week.

- A SpEd teacher is being hired at 50% time – there are 4 candidates being considered, and interviews will be held tomorrow, with the idea to hire some time within the next 2 weeks. Jessica will then be freed up to do more “at-risk” services for kids who are struggling but not identified with an IEP.

- An “Internal Movement” document is being drafted for teachers to outline the protocols for changing jobs internally, to move from associate to lead teacher or move from one grade to another.

- LOTTERY – 272 applications have been received to date (compared to 270 total last year). Three more open-houses are to be held, two in March and one in April for 55 – 60 seats.

Whether to send out reenrollment forms was discussed. An “are you returning” communication will be sent to the parent body, and questions regarding siblings. It may be used as a tool to track attrition, but further discussion to be held.

Current Enrollment is 103 and stable.

DBahl presented the school’s monthly financial report, and summarized the document and the budget outline. (Exhibit A). RW moved to approve the presented budget outline; NS seconded the motion, and the motion was passed unanimously by all present.

The meeting was adjourned for an informal presentation by CSI regarding the accountability plan.

The next meeting of the Board of Trustees is scheduled for Tuesday, _____, 2012 at 5:00 p.m. at Academy of the City Charter School, 26-14 12th Street, Long Island City, NY, 11106.

Nancy Sills, Secretary
Dated March 14, 2012