

ANNUAL MEETING

New Dawn Charter Schools Board of Trustees

May 28, 2024, Board Minutes

**New Dawn Charter High School
242 Hoyt Street
Brooklyn, NY 11217**

**New Dawn Charter High School II
89-25 161st Street
Jamaica, NY 11432
547-505-9101**

Board Members present: Mr. Ronald Tabano, Chairperson, Ms. Jane Sun, Vice Chairperson, Mr. Brian Baer, Secretary, Ms. Katharine Urbati, Treasurer

Board Members Absent: Mr. Daniel Lewis, board member.

Staff Members/ Visitors Present: NDCS: Dr. Sara Asmussen, Executive Director; Mr. Steve Ramkissoon, Director of Finance and HR, Mr. Jose Obregon Director of Operations, Dr. Lisa DiGaudio, Director of Curriculum & Instruction, Mr. Ashish Abraham, NDCHS: Donna Lobato, NDCHS II: Muhammad Bilal

Mr. Tabano asked the board members if there was a motion to accept and approve the May 2024 Board of Trustees Meeting Agenda

I. Resolution: May 2024 Agenda—Mr. Ronald Tabano

Motion: Ms. Katharine Urbati motioned to accept and approve the May 2024, Board of Trustees meeting agenda.

Motion Seconded: Mr. Brian Baer seconded the motion.

Vote: The board voted unanimously to accept and approve the May 2024 Board of Trustees meeting agenda.

Mr. Tabano asked the board members if there was a motion to accept and approve the April 2024 Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes.

II. Resolution: April 2024 Minutes—Mr. Ronald Tabano

Motion: Mr. Brian Baer motioned to accept and approve the April 2024, Board of Trustees meeting minutes.

Motion Seconded: Ms. Jane Sun seconded the motion.

Vote: The board voted unanimously to accept and approve the April 2024 Board of Trustees meeting minutes.

III. Board Elections

Mr. Tabano asked the board members if they all agree to serve another term as board members on the New Dawn Charter School Board of trustees. All board members responded that they would all like to serve another term. Mr. Tabano then asked the board members if there was a nomination that included all the board members currently serving to serve for another term.

a. Nominations

Motion: Mr. Brian Baer nominated all the current board members to serve another term on the New Dawn Charter School Board of trustees.

Motion Seconded: Ms. Katharine Urbati seconded the nomination.

Vote: The board voted unanimously to nominate the current Board members.

b. Elections

The board members then voted unanimously to elect all the current New Dawn Charter School Board members to another term.

Motion: Ms. Katharine Urbati motioned to elect the slate of nominees to another term.

Motion Seconded: Mr. Brian Baer seconded the motion.

Vote: The board voted unanimously to elect and approve the slate to the Board of Trustees for another term.

IV. Financials—Mr. Steve Ramkissoon

Benchmark 4: Financial Condition

Benchmark 5: Financial Management

Mr. Ramkissoon reported to the board members that the financial posture of both schools is good. He also stated that although there is a deficit of 110K in the Brooklyn school monthly financial report, the deficit is offset by depreciation and amortization allowances which brings the Brooklyn school to an approximate positive net income of 460K-470K. Mr. Ramkissoon also stated that currently there are two hundred fifty-three (253) students enrolled at the Brooklyn school out of the targeted three hundred fifty (350) student enrollment goal.

For the Queens school, Mr. Ramkissoon stated that the school is doing well financially. He also stated that student enrollment has increased to three hundred forty-seven students (347) enrolled, which is just three (3) students short of the three hundred fifty (350) student enrollment goal. Mr. Ramkissoon also reported to the board that the school is short staff. Mr. Ramkissoon asked the

board members if there were any questions regarding the April 2024 financial report. There were no questions from the board members.

Mr. Tabano asked the board members if there was a motion to accept and approve the April 2024 financials.

a. Resolution: April 2024 Financials

Motion: Ms. Katharine Urbati motioned to accept and approve the April 2024 financials.

Motion Seconded: Ms. Jane Sun seconded the motion.

Vote: The board voted unanimously to accept and approve the April 2024 financials.

Ms. Katharine Urbati explained to the board members that some of the highlights included in the 2024-2025 budget is a salary increase for employees, the inclusion of amortization and depreciation numbers, a decrease in projected student enrollment numbers, a 15% increase in general insurance costs, and a change in the schools 403B plan which will save the school money and will give staff members more options in terms of how they can invest their retirement funds. Ms. Urbati further stated that also discussed for the 2024-2025 budget is the possibility of some new or expanded incentive plan for staff members.

Mr. Ramkissoon then confirmed that the 2024-2025 budget does allow for a salary increase that will bring some staff members up to market salary levels. The budget also includes incentives for teachers that produce good Regents exam outcomes. Finally, Mr. Ramkissoon re-emphasized that the overall financial posture in both schools is good.

Mr. Tabano then asked the board members if there was a motion to accept and approve the 2024-2025 budget.

b. Resolution: 2024-2025 Budget

Motion: Ms. Katharine Urbati motioned to accept and approve the 2024-2025 Budget.

Motion Seconded: Mr. Brian Baer seconded the motion.

Vote: The board voted unanimously to accept and approve the 2024-2025 Budget.

After the resolution regarding the 2024-2025 budget, Mr. Ramkissoon explained to the board members that he went to the market to obtain the best possible deal for a new 403B plan for the school. Mr. Ramkissoon was able to get four (4) proposals. Mr. Ramkissoon informed the board that other companies are offering more investment fund options than Mutual of America, which is the current investment company that the school uses for its 403B plan. Mr. Ramkissoon further stated that with a 403B plan that offers more investment fund options, employees will be given better investment options. Additionally, the new 403B plan will offer lesser liability for the school since insurance will be built into the new plan that will protect the school from any legal

liability in case of loss of funds by any employee. Instead of the school being held liable for any loss of funds or revenue, it will be the broker or investment company that will assume responsibility for any capital loss. Mr. Ramkissoo then stated to the board that the finance committee recommends moving to Nationwide.

Mr. Tabano and Dr. Asmussen agreed that next month the board will vote on switching from Mutual of America to Nationwide. Mr. Tabano also mentioned that the Nationwide plan is less expensive than the Mutual of America plan.

V. Contracts— Mr. Jose Obregon
Benchmark 1: Student Performance
Benchmark 2: Teaching and Learning
Benchmark 5: Financial Management
Benchmark 6: Board Oversight & Governance

a. Update on Copier for Queens

Mr. Obregon informed the board members that he reached out to TGI Office Automation, a local company that bid for the copy machine contract at the Queens school, and asked if they could do better with their pricing. Mr. Obregon then stated that TGI responded that they could not lower their pricing. Mr. Obregon then recommended to the board that it stay with the decision to accept the better bid from Toshiba which is approximately \$200. less per month for two (2) superior copiers and with no copy limits.

VI. Staff/Student Recruitment— Mr. Ashish Abraham
Benchmark 2: Teaching and Learning
Benchmark 5: Financial Management

a. Status of Current Hiring

Mr. Abraham informed the board members that since the last board meeting, there have been three (3) new staff hires. There is a new internship coordinator at the Queens school, a new ELA teacher at the Queens school, and a new SPED teacher at the Brooklyn Queens. Mr. Abraham also informed the board that there are several career hiring events coming up including one at the Queens school on June 5, 2024, June 10, 2024, and on June 13, 2024, at the Brooklyn school. Vacancy positions are advertised on employment recruiting websites including Indeed and Zip Recruiter.

b. Status of Student Recruitment

Mr. Abraham informed the board that, today, there is an open house for both parents and students at the Brooklyn school followed by open houses on May 29, May 30, and June 11, 2024, all from 3PM to 6PM at the Brooklyn school. Open houses will take place at the Queens school on June 3, June 4, and June 12, 2024.

Mr. Tabano asked Mr. Abraham what has been the turn out for the student recruitment open houses. Mr. Abraham replied that he would have more information on this at the next board meeting. Mr. Tabano then stated that staff recruiting is going well, and Mr. Abraham confirmed that staff recruiting is indeed going well.

VII. School Updates

a. Brooklyn— Ms. Donna Lobato

Ms. Lobato informed the board that teachers are focusing on Regents exam preparation for the students and that the Algebra Regents is scheduled for Tuesday of next week. Ms. Lobato also confirmed that the school is enrolling new students, and that the student recruitment effort is having a positive effect on student enrollment numbers. Ms. Lobato also stated that CSE is having meetings both at the Queens and Brooklyn schools. She also confirmed that she is conducting year-end teacher evaluations. Ms. Lobato also informed the board that senior activities are being conducted, such as the senior trip to Dorney Park and the upcoming senior block party that will be happening in two (2) weeks.

b. Queens— Mr. Muhammad Bilal

Mr. Bilal reported to the board that he and Mr. Ramkissoon had contract renewal meetings with various staff members at the Queens school. He also confirmed that most of the staff are returning next school year. Mr. Bilal also stated that the job fairs have been successful. He confirmed that a new ELA teacher was hired, who has training in PBIS and who is in the process of getting certified. Mr. Bilal confirmed that he has interviews scheduled for a science teacher position. There is a PE teacher demo scheduled for tomorrow and there are two (2) strong candidates for the parent coordinator position. Practice Regents exams for all the classes including ELA, Algebra, Living Environment, US History, and Global are being conducted. Mr. Bilal stated that the shortfalls that were exhibited in the past are the same shortfalls identified now. Students still struggle with time management and writing, Mr. Bilal stated that few students completed the entire test. However, there was some improvement in the U.S. and Living Environment practice exams. Mr. Bilal stated that he expects that over the next few weeks teachers will be able to continue to prep students for the upcoming Regents exams. Mr. Bilal stated that he will continue to visit the classrooms more to give teachers feedback and to support them and give them feedback on exactly how they are prepping and engaging students to best prepare them for the upcoming Regents exams. Mr. Bilal also stated that he will be conducting year-end teacher evaluations this week.

c. Curriculum & Instruction: Dr. Lisa DiGaudio

Dr. DiGaudio reported that currently she is mostly involved in NYSESLAT testing at both schools. There are approximately eighty (80) students that need to be tested. This number exceeds the numbers needing testing in previous years. Dr. DiGaudio also mentioned that she will be conducting final teacher observations as well. Dr. DiGaudio further stated that she will be making some course adjustment recommendations regarding the new Regents exams which

include Living Environment and Earth Science. Finally, Dr. DiGaudio stated she is looking forward to December for curriculum development.

Mr. Tabano asked Dr. DiGaudio to explain to the board members what the NYSESLAT test is. Dr. DiGaudio explained that it is the New York State Language Assessment Test. The test is given to all English language learners and measures the language proficiency level of the student. The test is timed and starts with a speaking section. There is also a reading, writing, and listening portion. It is administered in three (3) separate booklets. Dr. DiGaudio also stated that since she has been administering the test, she has seen some good improvements in the proficiency level of students at New Dawn Charter School Brooklyn. Dr. DiGaudio also stated that at the Queens school there are many new ELL students, and their English language proficiency is extremely low. However, based on experience, Dr. DiGaudio anticipates that these students will gradually increase their English language proficiency.

Mr. Tabano stated that these ELL students are identified before they come to our schools. Therefore, we are responsible to continue testing them while they are enrolled.

Mr. Tabano asked Dr. Asmussen if she made any adjustments to the 2024-2025 School Calendar. Dr. Asmussen confirmed that she did making December 23, 2024, a day off since she does not expect many if any students to show up that day. Dr. Asmussen also stated the school will still be within the one hundred eighty (180) school day requirement. Dr. Asmussen further stated that she expects that the DOE will make the same adjustment to its calendar.

Mr. Tabano then asked the board members if there was a motion to accept and approve the 2024-2025 School Calendar.

d. Resolution: 2024-2025 School Calendar

Motion: Ms. Katharine Urbati motioned to accept and approve the 2024-2025 School Calendar.

Motion Seconded: Ms. Jane Sun seconded the motion.

Vote: The board voted unanimously to accept and approve the 2024-2025 School Calendar.

VIII. Facilities—Mr. Jose Obregon

a. COO Update

Mr. Obregon reported to the board that Kayla Liebman from Metropolis Group contacted him and verified that the plumbing amendment, which is of the requirements need to obtain the permanent COO for the Brooklyn school, has been filed. Mr. Obregon further verified that all filing fees were paid as well. Mr. Obregon also stated that he believes that there is a fire alarm system amendment that must be filed as well. Mr. Obregon stated that he will contact Kayla Leibman regarding this amendment.

b. Kitchen

Mr. Obregon reported to the board that the structural engineer came to the Queens school on Wednesday of last week. The engineer was able to walk through the space one more time and inspect the project area including the basement. The engineer asked if we could provide him with a drawing of the basement area and Barone management verified that they are going to get him a drawing.

Dr. Asmussen confirmed that all the requests for demolition permits have been filed and asked Mr. Bilal that all furniture in the cafeteria area be cleared before construction begins. Dr. Asmussen also asked Mr. Bilal to ensure that the kitchen area be cleared sooner than later since construction can begin anytime soon.

Mr. Baer also stated that he, the architect, the structural engineer, and the expeditor are meeting at 1:30 P.M. today to talk about the demolition permit and the structural support needed for the floors above. Mr. Brian stated that he expects those items to be resolved today and to decide who is going to do the filing and the timing of the filing. Mr. Baer also stated that the project is on track to happen sooner rather than later.

c. Roof

Dr. Asmussen stated that she will discuss with the board members the land use attorney requirements with the board members during the executive session.

IX. New Business

There was no new business discussed.

X. Public Comment

There was no public comment made.

XI. Adjournment

The board decided to meet again on June 18, 2024, at 10:30 A.M. The board adjourned the meeting at 11:05 A.M.

XII. Executive Meeting—Ronald Tabano

a. Evaluation of Board

b. Evaluation of Executive Director

