

New Dawn Charter Schools Board of Trustees

November 19, 2024

11:00 a.m.: Board Meeting 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
347-505-9101**

Location: Zoom Meeting

Date: Tuesday, November 19, 2024

Time: 11:00 AM

Board Members Present: Mr. Ronald Tabano, Chairperson, Ms. Jane Sun, Vice-Chairperson, Ms. Katharine Urbati, Treasurer, Mr. Brian Baer, Board Member, Mr. Jeffrey Casio, board member.

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

Staff Members/ Visitors Present: Dr. Sara Asmussen, Executive Director, NDCS, Mr. Jose Obregon, Director of Operations, NDCS, Mr. Steve Ramkissoon, Director of Finance & HR, NDCS, Ms. Donna Lobato, Principal NDCHS, Mr. Muhammad Bilal, Principal NDCHS II

I. Executive Meeting

II. Call to Order Full Board Meeting

Mr. Tabano called the meeting to order then welcomed everyone to November 2024 board of trustees meeting. He then asked if there was a motion to accept and approve the November 2024 Board of Trustees meeting agenda.

Resolution: November 2024 Agenda—Mr. Ronald Tabano

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

Motion Seconded: Ms. Jane Sun seconded the motion.

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

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

III. Resolution: October 2024 Minutes—Mr. Ronald Tabano

Motion: Ms. Katherine Urbati motioned to accept and approve the October 2024, Board of Trustees meeting minutes.

Motion Seconded: Ms. Jane Sun seconded the motion.

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

IV. Financials—Mr. Steve Ramkissoon

Mr. Ramkissoon reported to the board that the Brooklyn school has one hundred eighty (180) students enrolled and that it is on track financially. Ms. Urbati asked Mr. Ramkissoon if he saw anything that was worrisome, and Mr. Ramkissoon replied that other than student enrollment, there was nothing that worried him.

Mr. Ramkissoon further reported that the Queens school is performing well, with enrollment close to the forecasted number, thanks to efforts in pipeline building and developing partnerships with other schools. Mr. Ramkissoon also reported that last year, the Queens surpassed the charter's student target enrollment numbers by fifteen (15) students leading to increased rent expenses, but a revised contract has addressed this issue. Mr. Ramkissoon explained to the board that since the school had gone over the enrollment limit, the school owed Barone management but has since negotiated with Barone Management a better pay rate. The board acknowledged Mr. Ramkissoon's negotiation in resolving the rent expense gap.

Benchmark 4: Financial Condition

Benchmark 5: Financial Management

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

a. Resolution: October 2024 Financials

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

Motion Seconded: Mr. Brian Baer seconded the motion.

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

Mr. Tabano asked the board members if there was a motion to approve and accept the Incentives according to the budgeted numbers.

b. Resolution: Incentives

Motion: Ms. Jane Sun motioned to accept and approve and accept the incentives according to the budgeted numbers.

Motion Seconded: Ms. Jane Sun seconded the motion.

Vote: The board voted unanimously to accept and approve the incentives according to the budgeted numbers.

V. Contracts/Policies—Sara Asmussen
Benchmark 1: Student Performance
Benchmark 2: Teaching and Learning
Benchmark 5: Financial Management
Benchmark 6: Board Oversight & Governance

Dr. Asmussen informed the board members that Mr. Brian Baer negotiated a much better general contractor agreement for the kitchen renovation in Queens. Dr. Asmussen asked Mr. Baer to further elaborate on the agreement.

Mr. Baer reported that there was a slight change since Dr. Asmussen, and he discussed the agreement with the general contractor for the Queens Kitchen renovation project. Mr. Baer reported that payments will be made in 30%, 30%, 20%, 15%, and 5%, increments, which is a better agreement for the school.

Mr. Tabano then asked the board if there was a motion to accept and approve the General Contractor Agreement for the Queens Kitchen renovation project.

a. Resolution: General Contractor

Motion: Ms. Jane Sun motioned to accept and approve the General Contractor Agreement for the Queens Kitchen renovation project.

Motion Seconded: Mr. Jeffrey Cassio seconded the motion.

Vote: The board voted unanimously to accept and approve the General Contractor Agreement for the Queens Kitchen renovation project.

VII. Staff Recruitment—Mr. Ash Abraham
Benchmark 2: Teaching and Learning

a. Status of Current Hiring

Mr. Ramkissoon, filling in for Mr. Abraham, reported to the board that there is a new Science teacher hired for the Queens school and that teacher has already been onboarded.

1. Queens: SPED (2)

Mr. Ramkissoon also informed the board that there are still ongoing recruiting efforts for Special Education positions in both Brooklyn and Queens.

2. Brooklyn: Counselor

Mr. Ramkissoon also reported that recruiting efforts are continuing to fill a counselor position at the Brooklyn school.

3. NDCS: Grants Manager

Dr. Asmussen informed the board that the school needs a grant manager. Dr. Asmussen also reported that the school was awarded the mental health grant as well as the Stop grant. Dr. Asmussen informed the board that the reporting and tracking of these grants, including expenditure reports, is significant and time consuming. Dr. Asmussen stated that under the mental health grant, there are eight (8) subcontractors which can be cumbersome to monitor. The board members then discussed the need for a Grants Manager to track all grant requirements and manage the increased grant funding for both the mental health grant and a stop grant. These two grants specifically total approximately \$10 million. Board members also agreed that there is a need to hire a grant manager.

VIII. Student Recruitment—Mr. Ash Abraham

Benchmark 6: Board Oversight & Governance

Benchmark 7: Organizational Capacity

In the absence of Mr. Abraham, Mr. Ramkissoon reported that Mr. Abraham is conducting afternoon appointments via zoom and that every effort is being made to increase enrollment in both the Brooklyn and Queens schools.

a. Brooklyn

Mr. Ramkissoon stated that there was a school representative that visited the Brooklyn school recently accompanied by students, parents, and counselors, and along with Mr. Abraham gave them a tour of the Brooklyn school and made sure they saw the facilities and the classrooms.

b. Queens

Mr. Ramkissoon also highlighted the success of student recruitment efforts in Queens. These recruiting efforts include school visits by prospective students, fairs, and Saturday appointments and meetings with parents and potential students at the queens school which are resulting in several enrollments.

IX. School Updates

a. Brooklyn—Ms. Donna Lobato

Ms. Lobato informed the board members that Mr. Jeffrey Casio came to visit students at the Brooklyn school to introduce himself and to speak with them regarding what he does in the banking industry. Ms. Lobato stated that the students were extremely interested and engaged during Mr. Cassio's presentation and that it turned out well. Ms. Lobato also informed the board members that on election day the staff did de-escalation training, which also went very well.

b. Queens—Mr. Muhammad Bilal

Mr. Bilal informed the board members that he will start to focus on Regents exam preparation by administering mock regents exams, after the Thanksgiving break, to those students that will be taking the test. After the mock Regents, Dr. DiGaudio and he will look at the results and determine with teachers where students need the most help. Additionally, Mr. Bilal stated that a new Science teacher will be starting soon. The aspiring teacher that is currently covering the Science class will be re-assigned to work with the ELL students to help assist them better. Mr. Bilal also reported that he will be meeting with the student government. Members of the student government want to have monthly town hall meetings. Finally, Mr. Bilal informed the board that he is still looking at SPED teacher applications. The goal is to hire another SPED teacher before the year is over.

X. Facilities—Mr. Brian Baer, Dr. Sara Asmussen & Mr. Jose Obregon

a. Update on Kitchen work in Queens

Mr. Brian Baer informed the board that there is a fire alarm defect that needs to be resolved so the project can proceed at the Queens school. Mr. Baer also stated that it is Barone management's responsibility to get that fixed. Mr. Obregon also stated that he spoke with JZ from Barone Management and that JZ confirmed that he has an expediter working to get the issue resolved. Dr. Asmussen also stated that the Brooklyn school's expediter, LN, is exceptionally good and is working quickly to get any objections resolved, including the Fire alarm system in Brooklyn.

b. Update on roof in Brooklyn

Mr. Obregon informed the board members that the architect and engineer met with him recently at the Brooklyn school to review the work area on the rooftop. Mr. Obregon stated that there are no further updates on the roof project, but he will keep the administration and board apprised of any latest information.

c. COO

Mr. Brian Baer stated that the school is still collaborating with an electrician to get the required sign offs. Mr. Baer spoke with the electrician and the electrician will be getting the school an updated proposal so the job can get finalized.

XI. New Business

Dr. Asmussen reported to the board that attendance was at 32% and now attendance has improved at both schools. In Brooklyn, the attendance rate is 44.3% and 41.2% at the Queens school. Dr. Asmussen also stated that she plans to further enhance attendance through the PBIS program.

XII. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

XIII. Adjournment

The board agreed to meet again on December 17, 2024, at 11:00. The meeting adjourned at 11:32 A.M.