

**Hyde Leadership Charter School  
Trustees Meeting  
October 28, 2013  
Minutes**

Trustees Present: Wilder Baker  
Dennis Mehiel  
Deborah Dumont  
Herb Kaplan  
David Steadly

Trustees Absent: Herb Fixler  
Jeanette Melendez

Also present: Betsy Olney, Head of School  
Mike McNamara, Chief Operating Officer  
Staci Seeley, Development Director  
David Sachs, Board of Trustee Nominee  
Jennifer Burns, Hyde Foundation  
Adam Cole, BDO  
Don Alcuino, BDO

With a quorum present the meeting began at 6:02 PM. In the absence of Board Chair Mr. Fixler, Mr. Baker presiding.

**1. September 23, 2013 meeting minutes**

A motion was made and the Board unanimously approved the minutes from the September 23, 2013 meeting.

**2. David Sachs Board Nomination**

Mr. Baker requested that Mr. Sachs leave the room so that the Trustees could consider his nomination to the Board. Mr. Baker summarized Mr. Sachs qualifications and interest in joining Hyde's Board and asked the Trustees present if they had any comments to share regarding the nomination. Comments were offered in support of Mr. Sachs joining the Board. Mr. Baker requested a motion on Mr. Sachs nomination. A motion was made, seconded and passed unanimously to approve David Sachs as a new Board Trustee.

**3. Report of Independent Auditors**

Mr. Baker introduced Mr. Cole and Mr. Alcuino who presented the results of the financial audit for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2013. Mr. Cole summarized the requirements of the independent audit, described the audit process and findings. Questions were asked by the Trustees on the various aspects of the audit findings including the cash and investment accounts,

accounts receivable and deferred rent payable. Mr. Cole and Mr. Alcuino answered these and other questions. Mr. Cole also described the audit findings for Federal grants reporting and concluded by discussing the management letter. A motion was made, seconded and unanimously approved by the Trustees present to accept the financial statements as presented. Mr. Baker thanked the BDO representatives who then left the meeting.

#### **4. Head of School Report**

Mr. Baker then introduced Ms. Olney who briefed the Board on progress on the School's Strategic Goals for the year. She referred to the presentation from last month's meeting and said that the School was focused on four key goals: alignment of curriculum with the Common Core standards, expanded teacher observations and feedback, emphasis on data-driven instruction and school culture.

Olney reported that in roughly 7 weeks so far this year, 321 teacher observations have been conducted which consist of 15 minute observations and 15 minutes of face-to-face feedback. It is challenging to schedule the observations but the feedback from teachers and administrators is very positive. Trustees asked numerous questions and endorsed the activity.

Ms. Olney recapped progress to date on implementing curriculum aligned to the Common Core. She said the curriculum was very challenging and students were having difficulty assimilating the lessons. She said that other schools were struggling with the same issues. Leadership was discussing whether to shift from the regular material to intervention versions to improve student understanding. She presented the challenges of making that shift and questioned whether it was the right course with the regular material being so newly available. She said no decision has been made on whether to shift the curriculum but some change might be coming in the second quarter.

School culture activities are proceeding well. The Middle School Fall Family Day took place on Saturday October 26 and a great program was offered. A successful High School Family Retreat also took place last weekend.

Olney asked Trustees to reserve Friday January 10 on their calendars for an Alumni event. The Manager of Alumni Affairs is organizing an event for graduates to start planning for summer internships. The details are not final but the event would hopefully involve the Board, volunteers, area businesses and others in a networking effort for summer 2014 internships.

#### **5. Nominating Committee**

Mr. Kaplan reported on a project to use the Harvard Business School's Community Partners initiative to develop new ideas for Board development. Community Partners provides pro bono consulting to non-profits on either a one-time brainstorming basis or a project basis. Mr. Kaplan prepared an application and after a conference call with Ms. Olney and representatives of Community Partners, the parties agreed that a one-time brainstorming session would be appropriate. Community Partners will request participation from among its 11,000 area alumni for a 3-hour session with representatives of Hyde's Board and school leadership. The session is to take place November 19.

## **6. Facilities Committee**

Mr. Baker reported on a meeting with Joe Simone of Simone Development Companies, a Bronx real estate developer. Mr. Steve Gorley, a Hyde Woodstock parent, and Mike McNamara attended also. Hyde is soliciting ideas for alternative space for its K-8 school. Mr. Baker reported that Simone was not receptive to engaging in a project but referred Hyde to two Bronx area real estate brokers who could be of more assistance. Mr. Baker acknowledged the financial challenges of moving from the co-located space and that a relocation would not happen for several years at the earliest. He said Mr. Gorley might attend the November board meeting with an update.

## **7. Hyde Foundation Report**

Ms. Burns reported her efforts have been on the family education component of Hyde's culture and said the curriculum was in good shape but the School needs to work on family participation. Burns is committed to improving the relationship between the School and the Foundation. Ms. Dumont updated the Trustees on the status of the contract renewal. Other Trustees asked about the timeline for finalizing the new agreement. Ms. Dumont says there is still a substantive open item regarding one portion of the Agreement—what is to be included in “Other Services”. Ms. Burns said new language from the Foundation would be forwarded to Ms. Dumont on that.

## **8. Development**

Ms. Seeley reported that private fundraising is off to a slow start with approximately \$25,000 raised year-to-date. She described a number of activities—increased mailings, more targeted communications, Visitor's Day and then presented ideas for follow up calls and emails for the Annual Appeal. Mr. Baker reported he has an art gallery location in the East Village if Hyde wants to do a fundraiser next spring. Mr. Kaplan detailed the Hunts Point Business Lunch set for Wednesday November 11 from 12:30 to 2:00 in the Hyde high school building.

Seeley described the environment for corporate and Foundation funding as difficult due to a focus on test results by most Hyde has contacted. The School is hoping to use the upcoming High School Progress Report to target funding to its high school and alumni programs.

## **9. Executive Session**

The Board adjourned the public portion of the meeting at 8:02 pm to consider a personnel matter. The Board returned from Executive Session at 8:46 pm and voted to adjourn the meeting at 8:47 pm.

Minutes prepared by Michael McNamara