

Hyde Leadership Charter School
Trustees Meeting: Minutes
April 25, 2022
830 Hunts Point Avenue, Bronx, NY 10474
(meeting held by video conference)

Trustees Present Via Video conference:

Herb Fixler	Susan Engel
Ruth Jarmul	Tony Stoupas
Herb Kaplan	Susan Fine
John Espinosa	Nick Ober
David Schatsky	Deborah Dumont

Also Present Via Video conference:

Celia Sosa, Executive Director
Stephen Trowbridge, Chief Financial & Operating Officer
Maya Severns, Director of Development & Marketing

The meeting began at 6:04 PM, and Mr. Fixler presided. A quorum was present.

1. Approve minutes for March 28th, 2022

A motion was made, seconded, and unanimously approved by the Trustees present to approve the minutes from the March 28th, 2022 meeting.

2. Executive Director's Report

Ms. Sosa reported an increase in positive COVID cases in the last week. James Merriman confirmed a 60 day extension to the open meeting law, and that extension may be extended further. 80% of high school students are vaccinated, as opposed to 10% for elementary students.

Ms. Sosa reported that our lottery was a success, despite issues across the state. She highlighted a modified admissions and enrollment process to help confirm offers of admission faster than in previous years. There are 136 available seats anticipated, including additional seats in 1st grade (26), which is different from previous years, due to two sections of Kindergarten this year. 68% of families have accepted offers of admission. 100% have accepted offers of admission in the middle and high school divisions. The school anticipates retaining more 8th graders than ever before this year.

Ms. Fine and Mr. Espinosa inquired about the admissions process for students with disabilities. Ms. Sosa indicated that it is the same lottery process for all students and that the school has enrolled and graduated students with mild to severe disabilities. Families indicate whether their student has an IEP or 504 and the school confirms through ATS. Ms. Sosa stated that the school believes in its inclusion model and that what is good for students with disabilities is good for all students. The school has hired some of its own service providers and is therefore able to do more quality control. Additionally, some of the current responsibilities of Ms. Martin's role as K-12 Special Education Director are being disaggregated and incorporated into roles in each division so that Ms. Martin can better support the development of a stronger co-teaching model across divisions. In their recent visit, SUNY noted that the school has not yet realized a model where co-teachers are sharing responsibilities and using a wider range of co-teaching models. Mr. Fixler inquired whether Ms. Martin would continue to oversee special education in all divisions, which Ms. Sosa confirmed.

Ms. Sosa reported that anticipated staff retention is excellent. 92% of staff have returned offer letters, which indicate 83% retention. Ms. Sosa noted that the school has been able to promote from within for many roles, indicating the strong leadership potential of staff. Ms. Sosa indicated that additional leadership roles have been added for next year, including instructional coaches, an academic dean, and a Director of School Culture. Ms. Sosa anticipates that 95% of elementary staff will stay next year and over 90% of middle and high school staff. Ms. Sosa shared that the leadership team wants to ensure that teachers feel loved during Teacher Appreciation Week. Ms. Engel inquired whether there was anything the Board of Trustees could do. Ms. Sosa suggested that the staff would appreciate a letter signed by trustees.

Ms. Sosa provided a branding update, including meetings with consultants, outreach to contractual partners and vendors, and plans for the name change announcement. Mr. Fixler inquired as to the status of identifying new words and principles. Ms. Sosa stated that the Core Values and Signature Practices Committee would meet over the following month and that she anticipated being able to present a new set of values at the Board of Trustees meeting in May. Additionally, Ms. Sosa reported that a scrubbed version of the website would be ready to launch June 27th with further revisions anticipated in the future. Mr. Stoupas recommended a key deliverable update in May either in the Board of Trustees meeting or in the Executive Committee meeting, which Mr. Fixler seconded. Mr. Kaplan inquired whether the school would post an announcement before launching the new website. Ms. Sosa reported that the school planned to announce the name change with communications already drafted and then redirect users from the current website to the new website. Mr. Fixler suggested having "formerly known as" appear in documentation, which Ms. Jarmal seconded for continuity. Ms. Sosa reported that the school has engaged a consultant who will continue to work with us on our communication strategy. Mr. Kaplan stated that those who know the Hyde name will need a little more communication to

redirect and ensure they know we are still the same school. Mr. Schatsky suggested that “formerly known as” with a link to a public-facing letter would cover the school.

Ms. Sosa provided a charter renewal update. Ms. Sosa reviewed areas of growth for the school, including 3-8 test scores, college readiness indicators, and supporting students who do not graduate in four years to ensure that they do graduate. Ms. Sosa stated that the school has more work to do in disaggregating the data. Ms. Sosa reported that the school is applying for the Bloomberg funded Summer Boost grant and looking to create a robust summer program, including math, literacy, electives, and possibly connections to other nonprofits. Ms. Sosa stated that this grant will provide the school with more funding than ever before to do this work and that directors are working with their teams to create comprehensive summer school plans. Mr. Schatsky inquired whether summer plans were currently fully funded. Ms. Sosa stated that, as a result of ESSR and ARP dollars, the school has the means to implement a robust summer program regardless of Bloomberg funds. Mr. Ober inquired whether the Bloomberg funding announcement with Mayor Adams is indicative of a change in relationship between charter schools and the DOE. Ms. Sosa stated that it is understood that there is need everywhere, including charter schools. The benefit of being a charter school is that the school has the autonomy to do more. However, charter schools do not get additional per pupil funding for summer school. Consequently, charter school students are supposed to have access to DOE summer school. However, the reality is that charter school students are told they have to wait until DOE students claim seats. Mr. Trowbridge stated that there is a perception that charter schools have more funds. Mr. Fixler stated that charter schools have more control of their funding.

Lastly, Ms. Sosa shared highlights across divisions, including science every day in the elementary school, engaging designers to redesign classroom spaces, J-term planning in the middle school, and AP Capstone research presentations in the high school, which demonstrate students’ ability to take a position and defend their ideas. Ms. Sosa shared that many students researched social justice issues that matter to them for their presentations.

3. Finance Report - CFO

Mr. Trowbridge provided a year-to-date (YTD) financial review through March and noted that the school’s YTD revenue was favorable by \$3 million, which reflects the amount of the PPP loan, and that the expenses were unfavorable by approximately \$562,000. Mr. Trowbridge also reported that the YTD net surplus was favorable by \$2.4 million and that all SUNY fiscal benchmarks were either good or excellent.

4. Development & Marketing Report - Director of Development & Marketing

Ms. Severns highlighted recent events across divisions, including the elementary hip hop battle, middle school students presenting in school meeting for Autism Awareness month, and high school students in the Agents of Change group presenting at a round table at The POINT with Congressman Ritchie Torres and Richard Spinrad, Executive Administrator of NOAA. Ms. Severns provided an update on our fundraising efforts, noting that we have raised 65% of our goal to date. Ms. Severns reviewed next steps through June to reach our fundraising goal of \$380,000. Ms. Severns highlighted the details of the Spring Social and fundraising objectives. Ms. Severns encouraged Board Trustees to purchase their tickets and invite their networks. Ms. Severns reviewed upcoming Development and Marketing activities.

5. Board Committee Reports

Mr. Stoupas shared the major issues the Facilities Committee identified, namely the condition of the bathrooms at 730 Bryant Avenue and the reconfiguration of science and meeting rooms. Ms. Fine also stated that electrical issues were a major concern. Mr. Stoupas stated that he would investigate cost and possible funding opportunities for renovations. Ms. Fine recommended that we move forward with the strategic plan and volunteered to brainstorm ideas for expanding to Pre-K. Ms. Sosa reported that SUNY has not given us approval yet to expand to Pre-K and that the school would need to investigate how a possible expansion would impact space.

No other committees provided updates.

6. Any other business

Mr. Schatsky provided an update on strategic planning and suggested engaging a professional who has done strategic planning work in an educational context. Mr. Schatsky proposed that a professional he has identified present at the May or June Board meeting. Ms. Engel seconded Mr. Schatsky's recommendation. Ms. Jarmal and Mr. Ober seconded Ms. Engel's support. Ms. Sosa proposed that the Executive Committee meet to discuss Core Values and then bring their recommendation to the full Board. Ms. Dumont seconded Ms. Sosa's proposal.

7. Public Comments

No comment

8. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:04 pm.

Minutes prepared by Stephen Trowbridge and Maya Severns.