

Ascend Public Charter Schools  
Meeting of the Schools Board of Trustees  
July 17, 2018 12:00 pm

Location  
SUNY Global Center  
116 East 55<sup>th</sup> Street  
New York, NY

Meeting minutes

**Trustees in attendance**

Kathleen Quirk (vice chair), Amanda Craft (secretary), Kwaku Andoh (trustee), Shelly Cleary (trustee), Nadine Sylvester (trustee), Oral Walcott (trustee)

**Ascend staff in attendance**

Andrew Epstein, Kelly Garnes, Susan Pollock, Dylan Schaffer, Steven Wilson

**Others in attendance**

Barbara Acenowr, Susie Miller-Carello, Maureen Foley, Carrie Gee, Keegan Prue, Jeff Wasbes [via videoconference]

Kathleen called the meeting to order at 12:04 pm.

**I. Public comment**

No members of the public offered comment.

**II. Public comment update**

No members of the public offered comment at the June board meeting.

**III. Approval of minutes**

Kathleen presented the minutes from the June 20 board meeting.

Amanda moved to approve the June 20 board meeting minutes; Shelly seconded, and the motion was carried unanimously.

**IV. Financial report**

a. School financial reports

Andy presented the May 31 financial dashboards and reports for the schools and the consolidated education corporation. He reported that his preliminary projections show the consolidated education corporation ending FY 2018 with approximately 39 days of cash on hand; he projects that Ascend Learning will end the fiscal year with 38 days of cash. Both projections exceed the goal of 37.5 days of cash.

Andy also discussed adding capacity to the network's finance team, including the recent addition of a financial analyst and the planned hiring this fall of a payroll specialist and accounts payable manager.

There followed a discussion of future financial reporting to the board. Kathleen and Shelly both noted the benefits of providing a written finance narrative to trustees, and trustees and Ascend staff agreed that going forward, Ascend would include such a narrative in the board package each month.

## **V. School and network updates**

### **a. Report of the nominating committee**

Amanda briefed the board on Ascend's latest projections of student performance on the 2017 New York State exams based on instructional report data, noting particular areas of strength and opportunities for growth. There followed a discussion of Ascend's efforts to differentiate intervention in SY 2017-18, and their plans to further strengthen early literacy in kindergarten through grade 2.

### **b. Summer updates: Summer Institutes, Talent**

In Betsy's absence, Steven discussed the status of the current hiring campaign and the preliminary results of the talent team's efforts to increase staff retention and improve the quality of new hires.

Steven noted that, following the launch of Ascend's Summer Leader Institute, daily feedback survey scores indicate that the quality of summer professional development sessions continues to improve over previous years.

### **c. Enrollment update**

Kelly briefed the board on Ascend's ambitious student recruitment campaign, discussing in detail the efforts underway to enroll Ascend's newest lower school, Cypress Hills Ascend. Kelly answered questions from trustees regarding the outcomes of specific recruitment strategies, and trustees brainstormed additional ways to engage with the Cypress Hills community through local organizations. Kathleen noted the particular strengths that the school's founding team members bring to the student recruitment and community engagement process.

## **VI. Board matters**

### **a. Proposed SY 2018-19 board meeting schedule**

Dylan presented the proposed board meeting schedule for school year 2018-19. Hearing no objection to the schedule, he encouraged trustees to submit via email any feedback on planned meeting dates and times.

### **b. Election of officers**

Kathleen presented the proposed slate of officers for school year 2018-19, the product of numerous discussion among the trustees. She noted that Stephanie had submitted via email her resignation from the position of treasurer, in accordance with the board by-laws and the board's intention to elect a new treasurer to serve for the remainder of the school year. There followed a brief discussion of the importance of preserving institutional knowledge of long-serving officers while preparing other trustees to take on leadership of the board.

Kwaku moved a Resolution to elect Stephanie Mauterstock as Chairperson, Kathleen Quirk as Vice Chairperson, Amanda Craft as Secretary, and Shelly Cleary as Treasurer for school year 2018-19; Oral seconded, and the motion was carried unanimously.

c. Committee appointments

Kathleen presented the proposed slate of trustee committee appointments for school year 2018-19. Following a brief discussion, the trustees agreed to the following assignments:

Executive committee: Stephanie, Kathleen, Amanda, Shelly, Oral  
Education (academic) committee: Kathleen, Amanda, Kwaku, Nadine  
Finance committee: Stephanie, Kathleen, Shelly, Kwaku, Christine  
Hiring committee: Kathleen, Amanda, Oral  
Nominating committee: Stephanie, Nadine, Oral  
Ad hoc committee on strategy and growth: Kathleen, Shelly, Nadine

**VII. Executive session**

At 1:02 pm Amanda moved to enter into executive session to discuss contract matters; Shelly seconded, and the motion was carried unanimously.

Executive session minutes are recorded separately.

**VIII. Exit executive session; resumption of open meeting**

At 1:28 pm Shelly moved to exit executive session and resume the open meeting; Kwaku seconded, and the motion was carried unanimously.

**IX. Adjournment**

Amanda moved to adjourn the meeting at 1:29 pm; Kwaku seconded, and the motion was carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted by:

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Name:

Date