

Ascend Public Charter Schools
Meeting of the Schools Board of Trustees
August 21, 2018 6:30 pm

Location
Ascend Learning
205 Rockaway Parkway
Brooklyn, NY

Meeting minutes

Trustees in attendance

Stephanie Mauterstock (chair), Kathleen Quirk (vice chair; via videoconference), Shelly Cleary (treasurer; via videoconference), Christine Schlendorf (trustee; via videoconference), Nadine Sylvester (trustee; via videoconference)

Ascend staff in attendance

Dellianna Burrows, Andrew Epstein, Michelle Flowers, Kelly Garnes (via videoconference), Betsy Goldfarb, Erica Murphy, Susan Pollock, Dylan Schaffer, Brandon Sorlie (via videoconference), Michelle White, Steven Wilson

Stephanie called the meeting to order at 6:36 pm.

I. Public comment

No members of the public offered comment.

II. Public comment update

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

III. Approval of minutes

Stephanie presented the minutes from the July 17 board meeting and the minutes from the July 17 executive session.

Kathleen moved to approve the July 17 board meeting minutes and July 17 executive session minutes; Shelly seconded, and the motion was carried unanimously.

IV. Financial report

a. School financial reports

Andy presented the June 30 financial dashboards and accompanying narrative for the schools and the consolidated education corporation. He reported that the unaudited financials show the consolidated education corporation ending FY 2018 with approximately 42 days of cash on hand, exceeding the goal of 37.5 days of cash.

Andy reviewed key financial metrics for each school, and noted that Ascend's revised financial dashboards now include all covenants required of Ascend Charter Schools under both new loans.

Shelly expressed the finance committee's satisfaction with Ascend's financial reporting and narrative, noting that the committee will continue to work with Ascend's finance team to refine the format of its narrative to meet the oversight needs of the committee.

V. School and network updates

a. Enrollment update

Kelly briefed the board on enrollment progress for school year 2018-19, noting that network-wide, the enrollment team had surpassed its enrollment target by approximately 200 students. Kelly updated the trustees on the enrollment efforts at Cypress Hills Ascend and continued efforts to meet enrollment targets there. There followed a brief discussion about previous enrollment challenges at Bushwick Ascend and recruitment efforts undertaken to prevent future challenges there.

b. School year 2018-19 Ascend staff handbook

Kelly informed the board of revisions being made to the Ascend staff handbook for school year 2018-19, and offered to present a complete written summary of changes at the September meeting of the board.

c. Talent update

Betsy 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.

d. School director presentation: Central Brooklyn Ascend Lower School

Michelle Flowers presented an overview of Central Brooklyn Ascend Lower School to the board, detailing year-by-year strengths and challenges faced since the school's inception. She then discussed the schools' goals for school year 2018-19, as well as plans to address weak areas and to implement Ascend's network-wide initiatives at the school.

e. School year 2018-19 overview

Brandon and Erica gave a summary of school year 2017-18 academic performance in grades K-8 and 9-11, as well as a summary of summer activities underway across the network. They then provided an overview of the coming school year's planned curricular adjustments, staffing changes, changes to the schools' line management structure, and network-wide strategic initiatives being implemented throughout the schools.

VI. Board matters

a. Ad hoc committee update

Dylan and Shelly updated the board on the ad hoc committee's progress in choosing topics for this year's board strategy and training discussions. In the interest of allowing trustees and Ascend staff adequate time to prepare for these discussions, Shelly proposed that the board schedule four strategic discussions in SY 2018-19, to occur once per quarter. The trustees agreed with this suggestion, and the committee plans to meet and distribute a proposed list of dates and topics for consideration at the September board meeting.

VII. Adjournment

Shelly moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:52 pm; Christine seconded, and the motion was carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted by:

DocuSigned by:
Amanda Craft

12/10/2018

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Name: Amanda Craft

Date