

Ascend Public Charter Schools
Meeting of the Schools Board of Trustees
September 18, 2018 6:30 pm

Location
Ascend Learning
205 Rockaway Parkway
Brooklyn, NY

Meeting minutes

Trustees in attendance

Stephanie Mauterstock (chair), Kathleen Quirk (vice chair), Amanda Craft (secretary), Shelly Cleary (treasurer), Kwaku Andoh (trustee), Christine Schlendorf (trustee), Nadine Sylvester (trustee), Oral Walcott (trustee) [all via videoconference]

Ascend staff in attendance

Kelly Garnes, Betsy Goldfarb, Erica Murphy, Brandon Sorlie [all via videoconference], Dylan Schaffer, Steven F. Wilson

Stephanie called the meeting to order at 6:34 pm.

I. Public comment

No members of the public offered comment.

II. Public comment update

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

III. Approval of minutes

Stephanie presented the minutes from the August 21 board meeting and the minutes.

Amanda moved to approve the August 21 board meeting minutes; Kathleen seconded, and the motion was carried unanimously.

IV. Financial report

a. School financial reports

Shelly presented the July 31 financial dashboards and accompanying narrative for the schools and the consolidated education corporation. She reported that the finance committee had reviewed the reports with Andy; with the committee, Andy discussed in detail the current status of enrollment Cypress Hills Ascend and federal Title II funding.

Shelly then reviewed key financial metrics for each school.

V. School and network updates

a. Report of the academic committee

Brandon and members of the committee reported the committee's schedule for the remainder of school year 2018-19, noting that meeting dates align with key academic milestones and data

releases throughout the year. Brandon then presented several views of data from the 2018 New York State Common Core exams, highlighting that the network exceeded its goal of increasing proficiency by 10 percentage points in both subjects. He then discussed grade- and school-level results, noting areas of strength and weakness. Finally, he presented 2017-18 high school Regents exam results and discussed investments being made to strengthen the high school for the 2018-19 school year.

b. School launch update

Brandon reported on the launches of the network’s schools, detailing the areas of focus and actions undertaken during the period of “alignment” at the beginning of the school year.

c. Enrollment and attendance update

Kelly provided an update on enrollment at the schools, as well as the status of waitlists for each school. She reported that Cypress Hills Ascend is still struggling to fully enroll, and detailed continued student recruitment efforts there.

d. SY 2018-19 Ascend staff handbook

Kelly presented the school year 2018-19 Ascend staff handbook and described the most significant changes to the handbook, made during the operations team’s most recent revision, undertaken in summer 2018.

Amanda moved to approve the school year 2018-19 Ascend staff handbook; Kathleen seconded, and the motion was carried unanimously.

VI. Board matters

a. Report of the ad hoc committee

Kathleen reported that the ad hoc committee, after meeting with Susan and Dylan to discuss strategic topics for consideration in school year 2018-19, has decided to cover three strategic topics this year, including (a) board development and capacity-building, in consultation with Jim Ford, (b) college programming at Brooklyn Ascend High School and plans for future alumni supports, and (c) a deep dive into Ascend’s improvements to its early literacy program.

b. Report of the nominating committee

Stephanie provided an update on the status of board recruitment, noting that the nominating committee will meet prior to the October meeting to discuss next steps for candidates currently listed on the recruitment tracker. She reminded trustees to consider leveraging their networks in order to seek out high-quality board candidates.

VII. Adjournment

Shelly moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:45 pm; Amanda seconded, and the motion was carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted by:

DocuSigned by:
Amanda Craft
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Name: Amanda Craft

12/10/2018

Date