

Ascend Public Charter Schools
Meeting of the Schools Board of Trustees
October 24, 2018 8:30 pm

Location
Ascend Learning
205 Rockaway Parkway and via videoconference
Brooklyn, NY

Meeting minutes

Trustees in attendance

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

Ascend staff in attendance

Andy Epstein, Kelly Garnes, Erica Murphy, Susan Pollock, Brandon Sorlie [all via videoconference]

Amanda called the meeting to order at 8:35 pm.

I. Public comment

No members of the public offered comment.

II. Public comment update

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

III. Approval of minutes

Amanda presented the minutes from the September 18 board meeting.

Kathleen moved to approve the September 18 board meeting minutes; Christine seconded, and the motion was carried unanimously.

IV. Financial report

a. School financial reports

Andy presented the August 31 financial dashboards and accompanying narrative for the schools and the consolidated education corporation, and reported that the finance committee had reviewed the reports in detail. In the report Andy reviewed the status of enrollment at the various schools including Cypress Hills Ascend Lower School, Bushwick Middle School, and Brooklyn Ascend High School. Trustees and Andy then discussed budgeting for professional development across the schools and at Ascend Learning. A request was made to more specifically detail which budget items are generally front-loaded in the school year, to accurately reflect month-to-month spend.

Andy reported that the schools audit was complete and that a draft for internal review would be available shortly and would be shared with the audit subcommittee of the finance committee.

V. School and network updates

a. Report of the academic committee

Brandon reported on the network-wide implementation visits underway, focusing on Guided Reading, Shared Text, math, and culture. Culture visits have been conducted at nine out of 12 schools, and will be completed in the next few weeks. The visits indicated that generally routines are going well, and there has been major improvement in teacher language—a key component of Responsive Classroom. Schools team and school leadership team members will focus on areas needing improvement as highlighted by the visits.

Erica reported on math implementation visits, conducted over the past two weeks. There were implementation nuances at each school, but generally the newly instituted Launch, Explore, Discuss (LED) framework of math lessons has been rolled out well.

b. Enrollment and recruitment

Kelly provided an update on enrollment at the schools, noting that the additional follow-up canvassing for Cypress Hills is engendering a number of applications for this school year, as well as enthusiasm for next year's enrollment campaign. The school has now enrolled two sections of first grade and three sections of kindergarten. The recruitment team is already actively recruiting for the school year 2019-20, attending school fairs and actively canvassing in Ascend neighborhoods.

VI. Real estate

Susan introduced Trustees to the proposed location for Central Brooklyn Ascend 3—one of three new lower schools slated to open in school year 2019-20. The facility is a former diocese parochial school, located in CSD 19, approximately one mile from Cypress Hills and Bushwick Ascend Middle School. She noted that the planning team has been working with the recruitment team to target recruitment efforts based on a demographic analysis of the area from which the school is likely to draw applicants.

A full package on the property and lease terms was submitted to the real estate subcommittee of the finance committee for its review and approval, and a Resolution was offered granting Shelly Cleary and Christine Schlendorf authority to authorize Andrew Epstein or Susan Pollock to execute a lease on terms substantially similar to those presented. Christine moved the Resolution, Kwaku seconded, and the Resolution was passed unanimously. *[NB. Kathleen had left the meeting just prior to the real estate presentation.]*

VII. Executive session

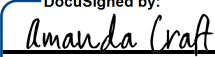
At 9:17 pm Amanda moved to enter executive session to discuss a personnel matter; Christine seconded, and the motion was carried unanimously.

At 9:30 pm Oral moved to exit executive session, Christine seconded, and the motion was carried unanimously.

VIII. Adjournment

At 9:30 pm Kwaku moved to adjourn the meeting, Christine seconded, and the motion was carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted by:

DocuSigned by:


12/10/2018

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Name: Amanda Craft

Date