

Neighborhood Charter Schools
Minutes of the Meeting of the Board Trustees
December 17, 2021

A regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Trustees (the “Board”) of Neighborhood Charter Schools (the “Education Corporation” or “NCS”) was held on December 17, 2021 at 691 St. Nicholas Avenue, Harlem, New York. The meeting was called to order at 6:02PM.

Trustees Present:

Patricia Soussloff
Gail Brousal
Samantha Ramos
Heidi Baker
Walter Rendon
Wylie Fennell
Stephanie Hubbell
Tena Kavanagh
Jefferson Hughes
Brian Hamilton

Trustees Absent:

Cliff Schneider

Others in Attendance:

Lindsay Malanga
Nick Carton
Ariel Ortiz
Michael Renda
Derrica Newman

Five of the eleven seated Trustees were in attendance in person, five via zoom, and all were present throughout the meeting, which constituted a quorum for the transaction of business at the meeting.

1. Welcome and Public Comment.

Ms. Soussloff invited public comments and none were received.

2. Approval of November 2021 Minutes.

Mr. Rendon made a motion to approve the November 2021 Board meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Ms. Hubbell and was unanimously approved.

3. President’s Report.

a. Regent Mead School Visit Debrief

Ms. Soussloff described the school visit by a group of Board members along with the virtual attendance of Regent Nan Mead. The visitors observed classrooms and engaged in a community conversation. Ms. Soussloff said the day went well, and it was nice to see the cohesion across our school's stakeholders.

b. Fundraising

Ms. Soussloff stated that the school is beginning to receive donations as a result of the fundraising campaign. While some board members have contributed, not all have yet to do so. Ms. Soussloff referred to a letter board members can share with their contacts and stated that she will share the names of those who have already donated with the members.

4. Principals Presentations & Reflections on Reopening.

The Principals presented their reflections of the school year thus far. Michael Renda, principal of NCS Harlem Elementary shared first. He reviewed highlights regarding the students, staff and data as the school has reopened in person learning this year. Ariel Ortiz, principal of NCS Harlem Middle, followed with her reflections on the same topics. Lastly, Nick Carton, principal of NCS Bronx Elementary, shared his presentation. Mr. Rendon commended the leaders for creating a healthy social-emotional atmosphere before diving into academics this year. Mr. Hughes commented that Michael's growth over nine years with NCS has been amazing to watch. Ms. Soussloff remarked on how wonderful the energy is of our teachers and staff who do this work every day. Mr. Carton shared that our teachers are working especially hard coming back from a pandemic. He commented that a focus on joy goes a long way. Thank you's go a long way too, so if a Board member can pop into classrooms and say hi that would be great. A discussion ensued.

5. Executive Director's Report.

Ms. Malanga presented the Executive Director's report, highlighting areas of academics, operations and organizational culture. NCS had 40 scholars sit for the SHSAT test, and scores are to follow in the coming months. Harlem is at 643 students for enrollment and will stop enrolling new students on Dec. 17th. We have submitted our proposed new school calendar for approval to NYSED. We have revamped the Operations team with a focus on building capacity across all three buildings. Mt. Zion has an A106 now. We are making a lot of progress with the challenges in the building. Everado did a walk-through with Salih, so we can troubleshoot. We hope to share different options during the February board meeting about Mt. Zion. Health experts met with our parents on December 14th. We welcomed Downey Tang back on as a data consultant in January. By the next Board meeting, we should have better data dashboards. We currently have an updated logo and we are working on our website to be relaunched on January 15th. We had a community conversation that went really well, and we will be making some shifts in the new school year. Lindsay is working with Leaders on staff retention. At the January Board meeting Lindsay will present new initiatives to retain talented staff.

6. Treasurer's Report.

Mr. Rendon reported that NCS is in solid financial condition. The Finance Committee is working with the staff on long term planning.

7. Executive Session.

Ms. Soussloff moved to go into executive session to discuss some human resource matters. Mr. Rendon seconded the motion and the Board went into Executive session.

8. Adjournment.

The Board returned to the meeting. There being no further business, Mr. Fennel moved and Ms. Kavanaugh seconded a motion to adjourn the meeting which was unanimously approved. The meeting was adjourned at 7:28 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Cliff Schneider, Secretary

I, Cliff Schneider, the duly qualified Secretary of Neighborhood Charter Schools, a New York education corporation, do hereby certify that these Minutes were prepared by a member of the education corporation's staff on my behalf, and as approved by the Board, represent a true and complete copy of the Minutes of the meeting of the Board of Trustees of the said corporation held on December 15, 2021.

Dated: January 26, 2022