

Neighborhood Charter Schools
Minutes of the Meeting of the Board Trustees
August 30, 2023

A regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Trustees (the “Board”) of Neighborhood Charter Schools (the “Education Corporation” or “NCS”) was held on August 30, 2023, via video. The meeting was called to order at 6:07 PM.

Trustees Present:

Heidi Baker
Wylie Fennell
Stephanie Hubbell
Justena Kavanagh
Walter Rendon
Cliff Schneider
Patricia Soussloff

Trustees Absent:

Everardo Jefferson

Others in Attendance:

Daniel McCormick
Michelle Rumph
Michelle Santos

Seven (7) of the eight (8) seated Trustees were in attendance in person or by video and present throughout the meeting, which constituted a quorum for the transaction of business at the meeting.

1. Welcome and Public Comment

Ms. Soussloff began the meeting and invited public comments. No comments were received.

2. Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Mr. Schneider and seconded by Ms. Kavanagh to approve the minutes from the July 26, 2023 Board meeting and was unanimously approved.

3. President’s Report

Ms. Soussloff announced that the Board will be working to expand their community engagement to increase their presence through its established committees. She will speak with each Trustee to discuss what will be done to provide support for NCS. In particular, the Board will target fundraising, both in personal giving and making efforts to put together events.

Ms. Soussloff reported that she and Ms. Kavanagh met with Stephanie Fox, a former teacher and Grade Team Leader at the Bronx campus who is now involved in nonprofit work in which she created a community outreach program and built and maintained partnerships with community-based organizations, businesses and elected officials. A discussion ensued.

A motion was made by Mr. Schneider and seconded by Ms. Kavanagh to invite Stephanie Fox to join the NCS Board of Trustees subject to her submitting an application to and receiving approval from the New York State Education Department and was unanimously approved.

4. Executive Director's Report

Mr. McCormick reported on the work that the Operations team has done over the summer to get for the new school year that included collapsing the Mt. Zion building, completing construction work in both the Harlem and Bronx buildings, managing a massive internal, auditing and assigning devices to all students and enrolling new students among other preparations. NCS also had a strong two weeks of professional learning for staff. Teachers did an incredible job of preparing their classrooms and common spaces to welcome students for the start of the school year.

-- Potential School Bus Strike: Mr. McCormick stated that NCS is monitoring the possibility of a bus strike that would impact transportation to school for some students throughout the city. NCS will be able to offer special Metrocards from the City in the event of that the strike goes forward to those who are affected.

-- Launch of After School Program: This year NCS shifted to using an outside vendor, AfterSchool HQ, to handle all enrollment for Harlem and Bronx. The orientation and digital platform provided by AfterSchool HQ did not leave a positive impression with the community, the Operations team will be working with the vendor to improve the experience and will monitor how it functions going forward.

-- Staffing and Hiring: NCS is fully hired with 100% of staff in place. NCS lost some teachers and network over the Summer to better offers. Over the next few months Mr. McCormick will work with HR and Talent to examine recruiting strategies, along with compensation offerings to make sure NCS is recruiting and retaining the best staff members.

-- Social Media: NCS has re-launched its Instagram and Facebook accounts with the aim of providing more information on what is happening at school and upcoming events and news to current families. Additionally, NCS is looking to increase its social media footprint online as a marketing tool to other families and potential donors and partners.

-- Annual Reports and Bronx Charter Renewal: NCS submitted its annual reports on July 31st and the Bronx charter renewal with the revision to add grades 6-8 on August 14th.

-- Enrollment for SY23-24: Mr. McCormick indicated that at this time it is too early to provide an accurate tally of enrollment and that an update will be provided in September when NCS will have hopefully met its targets.

5. Finance Update

Mr. Rendon reported that the auditors are closing out FY22-23 and that it will be done in September. The audit report will be presented in October to the Finance Committee for review. As for this year NCS is finalizing the budget and is looking ahead to the next five years to put together a plan for a sustained solid education for students. We are looking at a potential surplus and will consider alternate investment vehicles for those funds. The discussion will also include consideration of the Civic buyout of the Bronx building.

In other news, the Mt. Zion chapter is closed. NCS will look to retain a broker to find a subtenant for FY24-25 to recoup some of the cost of the lease surrender.

Finally, the application for the 420-a tax exemption is still under review. NCS will follow up on it in 2 to 3 weeks.

6. Adjournment

There being no further business, Mr. Schneider made a motion which was seconded by Ms. Baker, to adjourn the meeting and the motion was unanimously approved. The meeting was adjourned at 6:38 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Heidi Baker

I, Heidi Baker, the duly qualified Secretary of Neighborhood Charter Schools, a New York education corporation, do hereby certify that I reviewed these Minutes, and that the above is a true and complete copy of the Minutes of the meeting of the Board of Trustees of the said corporation held on August 30, 2023.

Dated: August 30, 2023