

Neighborhood Charter Schools
Minutes of the Meeting of the Board Trustees
August 28, 2024

A regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Trustees (the “Board”) of Neighborhood Charter Schools (the “Education Corporation” or “NCS”) was held on August 28, 2024, at 691 St. Nicholas Avenue, New York 10030, and via video. The meeting was called to order at 6:12 PM.

Trustees Present:

Heidi Baker
Wylie Fennell
Stephanie Hubbell (via video)
Everardo Jefferson (via video)
Cliff Schneider (via video)

Trustees Absent:

Walter Rendon
Patricia Soussloff

Others in Attendance:

Daniel McCormick
Michelle Rumph
Michelle Santos
Moniqe Granados

Two (2) out of seven (7) seated Trustees were in attendance in person and three (3) out of seven (7) seated Trustees were in attendance via videoconference. All in attendance by video fulfilled the requirement of publishing their physical addresses of the location from which they were attending in advance of the meeting. Five (5) out of seven (7) seated Trustees were present throughout the meeting, which constituted a quorum for the transaction of business at the meeting.

1. Welcome and Public Comment

Mr. Schneider began the meeting and invited public comments. No comments were received.

2. Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Ms. Baker and seconded by Ms. Hubbell to approve the minutes from the July 31, 2024 Board meeting and was unanimously approved.

3. Vice President’s Report

Mr. Schneider advised the Board that consulting firm Edgility has sent an email requesting that a survey be filled out regarding the evaluation of the Executive Director and that

meetings can be set up with their team to discuss the survey either before or after it is filled out.

The potential of bringing in new Trustees to the NCS Board was discussed. Ms. Hubbell discussed Dr. Morgan Jenkins as a potential candidate. Dr. Jenkins is a former employee of NCS who has extensive experience in education and non-profit settings. She is currently the Chief Operating Officer of True Colors United Inc., a national organization devoted to ending BIPOC and LGBTQIA+ youth homelessness. Mr. Schneider presented Aaron Listhaus as another potential candidate. Mr. Listhaus worked with charter schools while employed by the NYC Department of Education and has since held key positions in a number of charter schools. A discussion was held. The next step with both potential candidates will be to meet and speak with both potential candidates to ascertain their interest in joining the NCS Board.

4. Finance Update

Ms. Rumph informed the Board that the annual audit is underway and that there are no open items thus far. The Auditors MMB (Michelle Cain) will join the October Finance Committee meeting to present the Audited Financial Statements for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2024 and it is expected that the final audit will be ready for submission to the NYSED by November 1, 2024.

In addition, Ms. Rumph stated that as NCS enters the 2024-2025 SY, there will be no official financial report since enrollment has not been firmed up. That will happen in late September/early October. Overall, NCS has a good cash flow.

Ms. Rumph addressed the notice received from Civic Builders to buy out their interest in the building located at 411 Wales Avenue, Bronx, NY. NCS must inform Civic by February 27, 2025 whether the option will be exercised. The interest is for the building and the ground lease. A discussion ensued. The next step will be for Mr. Schneider to contact underwriters who are involved in bond financing to explore whether it will be economically advantageous to NCS to move forward with the option.

5. Executive Director's Report

Mr. McCormick asked Ms. Santos to provide an update from Operations. Ms. Santos informed the Board that she has spoken with consultant Jenn Lindsay and with Brandy Marshall at NYSED about the possibility of NCS expanding to Grades 9-12 and presented a three-year plan for this process to the Board. Under this plan NCS would need to seek a charter expansion for both Harlem and Bronx regardless of where the school is located, and the applications would need to be filed by next year in order to open when the current 6th grade students graduate from middle school. A discussion ensued.

A motion was made by Mr. Fennell and seconded by Ms. Baker to fund the work of Ms. Lindsay towards the potential of the NCS expansion to Grades 9-12 up to \$50,000 and was unanimously approved.

Ms. Santos stated that today NCS finished its second day of school for the 2024-2025 SY. The first two days went smoothly with a lot of new enrolled students attending. Open seats will be filled from the wait lists. In terms of communication with families, NCS has launched ParentSquare with the goal of increasing parent participation on the platform and highlighting for them the amazing things happening throughout the schools and within the classrooms. Finally, the NCS social media account is back up and running to showcase the schools with the support of Alicia Etienne at the Harlem campus and Tyler Huckstep in the Bronx.

Mr. McCormick reported that hiring is mostly completed for the new school year, with one Operations position in the Bronx and one science teacher position in Harlem needing to be filled. Then he discussed the results of the Spring 2024 ELA, Math and Science State exams, which were released on August 15th. The exams were computer based for all NCS students. Participation rate for the exams increased as a result. The results provide a good baseline to work from, overall NCS scored above the average results for NY State students, all NYC students and students in Districts 6 and 7. Math scores were slightly lower than before and ELA scores were weaker compared to last year. Data Consultant Downey Tang is organizing the data from the exam results to identify areas of struggle to target during instruction. Mr. McCormick noted that the Science exam had a new format that involved heavy reading and writing and was given to 5th grade instead of 4th as in previous years. Overall attendance rates affected scores (absenteeism= lower) and this was more visible in Math than ELA. As to the scores in the NYSESLAT Exam that tests proficiency in English language, 86% of the MLL Scholars scored as “transitioning”. It was mentioned that the MLL population is growing and NCS is understaffed to provide them with instruction but that this is being addressed.

Finally, Mr. McCormick informed the Board that professional development took place earlier in the month for all staff and focused on engaging more on leadership and supporting teachers.

6. Adjournment

There being no further business, Mr. Jefferson made a motion which was seconded by Mr. Fennell, to adjourn the meeting and the motion was unanimously approved. The meeting was adjourned at 7:02 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 28, 2024.

Dated: August 28, 2024