

**Hyde Leadership Charter School
Trustees Meeting
September 22, 2014
830 Hunts Point Avenue, Bronx NY
Minutes**

Trustees Present: Herb Fixler
David Steadly
Dennis Mehiel
Wilder Baker
Robert Kramer
Herb Kaplan

Trustees Absent: Jeanette Melendez
Deborah Dumont
David Sachs

Also present: Tom Sturtevant, Executive Director
Michael McNamara, Chief Operating Officer
Peter Anderson, Elementary School Director
Liz Springer, Special Education Director
Celia Sosa, High School Director
Lex Zain, Middle School Director
Josh Williams, Manager of Development and Communication
Joanne Goubourn, Hyde Foundation
Oz Hanley, Guest

With a quorum present the meeting began at 5:59 PM, Mr. Fixler presiding.

1. Introduction of prospective board trustee, Oz Hanley

Mr. Fixler introduced Oz Hanley, a former Hyde parent, and real estate attorney who expressed interests in joining the Board of Trustees. After some remarks on his background, Mr. Fixler asked the others present at the meeting to introduce themselves to Mr. Hanley.

2. July 28, 2014 meeting minutes

A motion was made, seconded and unanimously approved by the Trustees present to approve the minutes from the July 28, 2014 meeting.

3. Development Discussion

Mr. Mehiel showed the Trustees a slide recapping historical fundraising performance and informed the Trustees this format would be reported out monthly. He highlighted some donations received to date. Grant proposals have been submitted to three foundations. Annual appeal will

take place in November. Mr. Sturtevant listed some dates where he and Hyde representatives could meet at Trustee-organized “Friendraisers” in October and November. The Trustees discussed the format of these meetings. Mr. Kaplan asked if there would be an Open House at the school. Mr. Williams replied there were some individual visits to the school but not an Open House scheduled in the next 5 or 6 weeks. Mr. Kaplan encouraged school leadership to have an Open House this Fall. Mr. Mehiel reminded the Board that there would be three events at the school this year although they have not yet been scheduled.

Mr. Kaplan reported on activity with the Hunts Point business community. He is targeting \$50,000 to \$100,000 this year from local business leaders. He recommended a program of donor recognition on a “wall of honor” or something similar.

Mr. Mehiel has surveyed individual board trustees and has soft commitments for approximately \$65,000 in Board member fundraising this year. He expressed gratitude to the Trustees for their ongoing support.

4. Executive Director’s Report

Mr. Sturtevant sees Board and Hunts Point business leader financial support as linchpins to broaden our fundraising efforts to major, unaffiliated funders. He described changes to the school’s organization chart—most notably in the Development department where Sturtevant recommends leaning heavily on Josh Williams’s strengths (former teacher, creativity) and not replace the Development Director.

He then presented organization charts for the Operations group and each of the divisions. He highlighted changes in the college office—having the function report to Celia Sosa rather than the Executive Director. Ms. Springer reported on filling the new Assistant Special Education Director to help with the increased load (up to 16% SPED students from 14% last year). This new position will largely support SPED in the High School Division, freeing Ms. Springer to work more with K-8. In the Middle School, Sturtevant highlighted a shift to have the Assessment Manager, who supports testing and performance vs. benchmarks for K-12, report to Lex Zain, the Middle School Director. The Special Education division continues to grow co-teaching. Target to have at least one class per grade of integrated co-teaching by FY15-16.

Sturtevant asked the Division Directors to share high-level comments about the start of the school year. Themes from them were that Hyde needs to revamp its plan to attract and retain high quality teachers. Curriculum, data-driven instruction, teacher support systems are well along. A missing piece is teacher retention which will be a focus this year.

Mr. Fixler asked the directors how many new students they have this year and to assess how prepared the initial grade of each division appear to be. Current 8th graders are made up of the first kindergarten class who opened Hyde (along with a cohort of 6th graders) in 2006.

Ms. Sosa reported on key initiatives for the year: homework completion, refining the teacher observation model, hiring. She characterized this hiring ‘season’ as the most challenging to date. Highest qualified candidates welcomed Hyde’s approach to helping out-of-state teachers obtain their New York State certifications. She is challenged by class size—up to 28 students in some areas where 25 would be ideal. She took pride in the 98% 4-year graduation rate for the 2014

class of seniors. She summarized college readiness data, 2- vs. 4-year college acceptances and a shift toward using SAT testing in conjunction with Regents going forward.

Data-driven instruction, school culture and teacher observations were identified prior to the FY13-14 school year as the keys to school-wide success. In the High School, Sosa stated this effort is paying off.

Ms. Zain summarized areas of improvement in the Middle School division. Teachers are focusing more on strong classroom management techniques to increase student time on task. There is a stronger alignment of the Math program with the interim assessment tools Hyde is using. Ms. Zain also noted hiring as a challenge. Several positions were filled very late. Highly recruited SPED teachers initially accepted and then rescinded those acceptances. Class sizes are also presenting challenges—particularly in 7th grade. Teacher attrition goal for FY15 was set at 25% vs. 43% in FY14.

Zain highlighted the growth in lexile levels with 69% of students exceeding typical yearly growth and there are other positive metrics in ELA.

She described use of Math180 and Compass Learning as effective supports for students at different levels of math proficiency. She spoke of the increase in numbers of students taking high school level coursework and their success on Regents exam. This is providing tremendous flexibility in High School offerings as Middle School students are satisfying graduation requirements while still in Middle School.

Mr. Anderson reported grades 3-5 state testing results, in absolute terms and compared to District 8. Math results were stronger than ELA and there was significant growth in both from 2013's testing. He reported on the successful implementation of common core-aligned curriculum. The division embraced the data-driven cultural shift and added instructional time in Math. He is excited by the addition of a new Upper Elementary Academic Dean.

Anderson called out Kindergarten as a challenge area. Ten or more students have no Pre-K experience and don't understand what it means to be in school. Other students have limited verbal skills, behavioral challenges, health problems and ESL status. Staff stability is also a challenge. Six staff resigned in July and August and two more resigned days before school started.

He is looking forward to partnerships with CBOs. One is HPAC's "Readers to Leaders" for kindergarten students and the other is with Reading Partners for grades 3-5. For the future, he would like school leadership to explore co-teachers throughout the elementary school. Currently there are two teachers in all K and 1st grade classes; one of three second-grade classes and none in third- through fifth-grade classrooms.

5. Charter Update

Charter renewal is moving forward using the 2013-14 renewal application template as a base. The renewal application is in good shape pending any changes to the application requirements.

6. Finance Committee

The Trustees received financial performance vs. plan for the month of August and the two months year-to-date. Mr. McNamara reported favorable performance to plan.

7. Nominating Committee

Mr. Fixler encouraged Trustees to meet individually with Mr. Hanley as he would like to put forward his nomination to the Board as next month's meeting.

8. Facilities Committee

No report.

9. Education Committee

Mr. Sturtevant reported that members of the Education Committee met at the school on September 18.

10. Hyde Foundation

Ms. Goubourn thanked Mr. Sturtevant for offering to host the Hyde Foundation's board meeting at Hyde's high school.

11. Public Comments

None.

12. Other Business

None.

13. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:22 pm.

Minutes prepared by Michael McNamara