

## **Board of Trustees Meeting- Thursday, February 15, 2024 at 6:30 PM- Minutes**

**Board Members in Attendance:** Robert Ansbro, Lucas Doe, Sean Blackwell, Ted Hurwitz (Ex-Officio)

**Absent:** James Sander, Christopher Brignola

**Administrators in attendance:** Norma Hurwitz, Leena Thomas, Edward Kubina

**Guests in Attendance:** David Haller (Owner's Rep)

6:36 PM - Call to order by James Sander

- I. Approval of Minutes for Thursday, January 18, 2024
  - Robert Ansbro motions to accept, Sean Blackwell seconds, all in favor
  
- II. Enrollment revision and corresponding budget
  - SUNY has asked us to revise our chartered enrollment due to lower than anticipated enrollment
  - James Sander motions to approve the enrollment revision and corresponding revised budget for the current charter term, Christopher Brignola seconds, all in favor, motion passes unanimously.
  
- III. Educational program focus- Leena Thomas – Six Week Assessments results, Period 3
  - We are working with first and second grade classes to improve their reading skills. There has been a decline in most subject areas, mainly due to reading comprehension struggles.
  - Chris asked about computer based testing and how students are handling it. Our eighth graders are doing well and fifth graders need more practice but improvements have been noted.
  - Norma mentioned she was particularly pleased with the third grade teachers and their performance and progress.
  - For mathematics, we are working on having students slow down and carefully read word problems.
  
- IV. New building project- Update on progress and expenditures to date- David Haller
  - We are about a million dollars underneath the bond draw
  - The architects are requesting more money, we will need to examine this issue
  - The job is almost completed. The gym flooring is the final major portion which will be completed soon.
  - The next step is to get the gas up and running through Con Edison

- Now we are in the sign off phase

V. SUNY's response to ALCS on HS expansion proposal

- SUNY did not approve our HS expansion
- They stated that the proposal was underdeveloped
- We are set to receive written feedback and comments
- Our entire school community is disappointed with this decision and will consider the feedback when reapplying
- We will need to highlight our career development program
- Lucas suggested having the board

VI. Transition to the new school building

- Norma mentioned various scenarios for the new building including leaving in vacant until we get more students, which would not be ideal.
- We want to use the building to also attract new families
- The proposal is to have grades 3-5 go into the new building. Any decision will impact families and enrollment.
- Moving grades 3-5 would allow us to move two grades from the elementary school and one from the middle, which would not have a major impact on rooms/classes.
- Edward Kubina will be the Principal of the middle school and having grades 3-8 together as part of the middle school will allow the academic program to be strengthened.
- Paola Coste will be the Assistant Principal of the middle school along with Edward Kubina.
- Jim Sander asked about the possibility of a Prek program. Norma mentioned it would be the best option for us and we will try to apply for Prek again through the NYC DOE.
- Jim also asked about the possibility of recruiting additional students in grades 3-5. We will try to use the new building as a way to get more students and we will need to update our website and create more content.
- Chris has a recommendation for a candidate who can create content and make a video for our school.
- Edward Kubina mentioned having staggered dismissal times so parents can get from one building to another.
- Chris mentioned that most charters bring in their early testing grades when they have a new building
- We are looking to enrich our K-2 program to have more organic and meaningful experiences and having our early childhood grades separated would allow for more opportunities to do this while maintaining rigor.

- Chris suggested having a core program that enriches reading skills so students are above grade level before entering upper grades.
- James Sander motions to move the rising grades 3-5 to the new facility for September 2024, Robert Ansbro seconds, all in favor, passes unanimously.

## VII. Committee Reports

### A. Finance Committee – Lucas Doe

- Nothing new to report

### B. Real Estate Committee – Robert Ansbro

- Nothing else to report

### C. Education Committee – Christopher Brignola

- Our school is moving forward with the NWEA assessment program which Chris recommended.
- For Mathematics, Chris recommends a program called Math 180 which is mostly for 6<sup>th</sup> grade on but it can be used in fifth as well. This program can use data from the NWEA to place students. We will look into this program for our middle grades.

Meeting adjourned at 8:18 p.m.

***Next Board Meeting is scheduled for Thursday, March 21, 2024 at 6:30 PM***