



Thursday, March 24, 2022 @6:02 p.m.
Board Meeting via Zoom

Meeting ID: 845 6510 7886
Passcode: Gp*%5W

AGENDA

1. Call to Order
2. Adoption of February minutes
3. Lavinia Group- School Report, Key Metrics
4. Greg Yurchuk-Juilliard School
5. Ms. Jennifer Johnson, Director of Student Support
6. Board Committee Reports
7. Public Comment
8. Adjournment

Trustees Present

Richard Bayles
Gretchen Pusch
Justin Tolliver
Noel Acey
Peter Low
Amanda Low
Reby Gulcan

Storefront Academy Staff:

Dr. Nicole Campbell, CEO
Mr. Stuart Wolf, Director of Finance
Ms. Natalia Perez, Director of Communications
Ms. Carol Singletary, South Bronx Principal
Ms. Nidia Evangelista,
Ms. Taleema Chesney, Harlem Principal
Ms. Amia Fisher, Dean of Harlem
Ms. Maria Ruiz, CEO Executive Assistant
Ms. Yoselyn Fernandez, South Bronx Assistant Principal
Ms. Jennifer Johnson, Director of Student Support
Ms. Sydney Solomon and Mr. William Loskoch, Lavinia Group
Representatives
Mr. Greg Yurchuk, The Julliard School Business Development Specialist
Ms. Marie Lucas

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1. Call to Order

- Mr. Bayles called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.
- Mr. Bayles stated for the following items for the record:
 - o Ms. Martinez and Ms. Guerrero had been awarded as outstanding in their respective professions.
 - o Board attendance had been greatly improved over the last year, with most of the year having full board member attendance.

2. Adoption of Minutes

● Mr. Bayles called for a motion to adopt the minutes from the previous board meeting. A motion to adopt the minutes was made. With no further discussion, or any objections or abstentions, the minutes were accepted.

3. Lavinia Group, School Report, Key Metrics (Dr. Campbell, Ms. Solomon, and Mr. Loskoch)

- There are 279 students currently enrolled in the South Bronx Campus and 74 students enrolled in the Harlem Campus, with a combined attendance average of 88-90%.

- The Lincoln-Baretta report included in the members' packets does not include the additional monies allocated to digital advertisement during the past meeting.

- The student lottery will occur in April. There are approximately 113 applications for the Harlem Campus and 160 applications for South Bronx Campus.

- Special education teachers and other positions will have their salaries reassessed given local competition for and teacher shortages in such positions, in order to obtain the best personnel and provide the best services to the Academy's students and families.

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- Taking students and staff through quantitative and qualitative goals in order to engage in the upcoming state exams. These tests will provide quantitative data that will be utilized to refine processes and systems.

- Practice tests given in February did not meet the 55% pass goals. In part, this could be because this is the first time that students completed this specific type of work independently.

- The Academy and Lavinia Group amended their pedagogical approach in order to meet these goals, and upcoming tests will reveal how effective the new approaches are/will be.

- School principals meet with teachers daily instead of a few times weekly, to better keep up with classroom situational environments and make quick and effective changes.

- One of the main focuses of these approaches involves minimizing, or eliminating, students' fears during the tests, so they are both prepared and relaxed to perform optimally.

- Student feedback has been very important to accomplish program implementation, growth, and sustainment.

- Students have been identified as those who have passed the practice exams, and those who, although have not passed, are within small margins from

the passing grade (15% below passing, 25% below passing, for example). Processes and techniques have been developed and implemented in order to identify and assist such students based on specific needs to meet the goals.

- These processes, techniques, and dynamic approach also affect teachers, and the Academy and Lavinia Group pay close attention to teachers to ensure they have all the tools necessary to help the students.

- Historical State testing content is considered when developing the practice tests; however, although specific questions in the state tests may vary, the overall content and core subjects do not change, therefore practice tests are an accurate reflection of what the State tests would look like, even if they do not contain the same questions.

- If the State makes large overarching changes to their tests, such changes are published. Lavinia Group takes the current State standards in order to prepare relevant and accurate material for the students.

- The Academy's projections seem to indicate major growth and improvement for the upcoming State testing, to match or exceed the results obtained before the COVID pandemic instability affected the Department of

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Education, the Academy, and its students and families.

- Students are offered breakfast daily at the school, and they will be offered snacks throughout testing. Parents have been encouraged to bring students to the school at breakfast time in order to benefit from a balanced meal before long days of testing.

- Lavinia Group could be contracted to offer similar improvements and provide similar guidance to the Academy for the math curriculum, as they have done with ELA.

- Improvement can be measured as overall scores, but also as the overall growth in student performance. Both teachers and students seem to be elated by the overall student growth in capabilities and performance.

- There is a difference between curriculum and a way of learning called cognitively guided instruction. The former involves imparting knowledge; the latter focuses on giving meaning to what students are learning, enhancing problem-solving abilities and critical thinking.

- The board discussed whether it was a good idea to not engage in mathematics curriculum implementation with Lavinia Group at the same time as ELA. Generally, the opinion was that it was a good idea to not engage in too many changes simultaneously because it was a huge burden on teachers as well as students.

However, now that teachers and students are acquainted with the new systems and theories, adding a new curriculum would be easier, convenient, and effective.

- Some of the techniques provided by the Lavinia Group for the ELA curriculum have already bled through to other courses, given that teachers can apply techniques learned from one aspect and apply them to another curricula, and the students are used to the expectations and problem-solving included in the cognitive-guided instruction.

- The board noted and discussed that classes with lower teacher turnover showed better grades and results, than those classes with higher teacher turnover, given that Lavinia Group focuses on improving and training the teachers. Teachers grow as much or more than the students with these newly implemented teaching and learning theories. Teachers and campus principals are working together in order to support both teachers and students.

- All but two teachers have acknowledged their intent-to-return 5

notices for the fall school term.

4. At-Risk Students Report - Ms. Jennifer Johnson, Director of Student Support

- There is a dedicated staff to identify, handle, and help students who need special assistance on both campuses. This includes counseling and tutoring, among other programs that may be available.

- There are 59 students on RTI, 24 of them have been referred to special education support, and 30 students have been referred to and are currently receiving professional counseling.

- Evaluations for these students take approximately 90 days. ● There is a waitlist for student counseling, although various students have been referred to community professionals for counseling. The waitlist is usually of 3 weeks long or less, and there are currently five students on the wait list.

- If a student requires some assistance through ACS but they already have a manager, their existing case manager would be contacted, and they would provide necessary support.

- This year has had the most cases of severe mental health issues, to include students who have received psychiatric treatment; and the year with the most calls to child services.

- Some scenarios require, and have required, the school to call ACS, such

as students with apparent bruises or signs of abuse, children who claim to have been prevented from attending school, among other situations as required by law.

- 66 IEP meetings have been held in the school year, to include for annual reviews, reevaluations, and the 7 IEPs.
- Six families have been referred to ACS for investigation, and all cases were accepted.
- Five students had already been suspended from attending, and 116 students have 10 or more unexcused absences.
- Some reasons for absences could simply be that students and families are no longer in a rhythm and pattern that facilitates school attendance, due to

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the COVID pandemic and need to stay at home.

- The Academy has an Attendance Committee and dedicated personnel who call families and try to ascertain why students are not present and if there are any issues that can be addressed.

5. Greg Yurchuk - The Julliard School Business Development Specialist

- The School offers in-person professional development and a partnership throughout the school year, generally in multi-year iterations, to value performing arts and support the Academy as advocates and allies in the educational journey.
- The program includes an online platform that allows students to meaningfully interact with the music, drama, and dance programs. ● If the three programs were to be integrated, it would be a staggered approach, integrating one program each year to allow changes to be successfully applied and any necessary fundraising.
- The platforms allow teaching and learning flexibility, with the School and the Academy as partners when planning the students' successful journey. It is not a simple software suite with no support; it is a program that thoroughly integrates the staff and the students.
- The Academy would be one of the first institutions to utilize the integrated educational platforms.
- The board members will be given access to the platforms so they can preview all content and better assess the Academy's options.

- Given that the funds for the programs could be obtained via fundraising, the board discussed ideas of how this could be accomplished.

6. Committee Reports

Finance Committee

- The audit company, Boost Education, has been selected and will assess the Academy's processes by the end of the school year.
- The Harlem Campus upcoming 2-year lease should be finalized soon. 7

Development Committee

- The Academy will work with The Seventh District Foundation and complete all necessary documents and processes to apply for a grant. ● The Committee needs all board members to respond to Ms. Ruiz's email about their individual plans for the Give-or-Get event. This needs to be reported to SUNY.
- Prospective donors have held watch parties at their individual homes, watching the video appeal material, and people can donate after watching the video at their houses, without direct intervention from any board members. Distributing the video is paramount.

Long-Term Planning Committee Academic Committee

- The Committee needs more directions and guidance, and it requires more members.
- A draft plan, with draft long-range goals that had been previously discussed in board meetings, had been sent to the existing members of the Committee as a starting point for short- and long-term planning strategies.

Academic Committee

- The system PowerSchool, a student information system to manage the administrative tasks of a school, such as billing, letters, notifications, among other features, was discussed. It is being considered as a tool to be obtained. Its cost is \$30k, therefore it must be approved by the board, and it will be discussed more thoroughly at a later time.
- If the Academy leaders believe this would be a good tool to improve

productivity, the board is willing to consider the expense.

- Another software system, ZipGrade, where teachers can manage quizzes, their answer keys, and scores, was discussed. It allows for real time grading based on an answer key. Further, the software allows for analysis regarding right/wrong answers in order to enhance student performance.

- There had been discussions with the leaders at Saint Anne's church in 8

order to attempt a gardening program for the campus near the church.

7. Public Comments

- There were no public comments.

8. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:46 p.m.

