



Thursday, January 21, 2020 @6:00 p.m.
Board Meeting via Zoom

Meeting ID: 995 5250 3001

Password: Y2v*Sy

AGENDA

1. Call to Order
2. Adoption of November Minutes
3. COVID-19 Update
4. Advisory Board Discussion
5. Board Committee Reports
6. School Report
7. Adjournment

Trustees Present

Richard Bayles
Gretchen Pusch
Justin Tolliver
Noel Acey
Peter Low
Amanda Low
Tanya Hoffler-Moore
Susan Reid
Jonathan Stearns
Reby Gulcan

Storefront Academy Staff:

- Dr. Nicole Garcia, CEO
- Ms. Carol Singletary, South Bronx Principal
- Ms. Amia Fisher, Dean of Harlem
- Ms. Jennifer Johnson, Director of Student Support
- Mr. Stuart Wolf, Director of Finance
- Ms. Maria Ruiz, CEO Executive Assistant
- Ms. Elizabeth Ruiz, Harlem Registrar
- Ms. Natalia Perez, Director of Communications
- Ms. Taleema Chesney, Harlem Principal
- Ms. Dignorlyn Poweriet, Director of Development
- Ms. Nidia Evangelista, Director of Operations

Ms. Lorena Rodriguez, South Bronx Registrar

Ms. Yoselyn Fernandez, South Bronx Assistant Principal

Mr. Matthew Tiwary, Director of Technology

1. Call to Order

Mr. Bayles called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

2. Adoption of November Minutes

Mr. Bayles moved to adopt the minutes from the previous board meeting. All members agreed, and the minutes from the previous meeting were adopted without objection.

3. COVID-19 Update

- Dr. Garcia stated that all schools around the Academy would return to in-person classes around March 8th, 2021. Because families could not be told to avoid travel during the holiday period, students would need a quarantine period before resuming in-person classes.

- The previously approved return date from spring break would need to be amended by one week in order to match the surrounding schools and Department of Education guidelines.

- Staff members could not be legally required to be vaccinated as an employment condition; they could not be prohibited from returning to work without vaccination. The vaccine has been approved for emergency use, but not fully approved by the FDA, therefore it cannot be made mandatory.

- Some teachers had already been vaccinated.
- Some staff members and their families had recently tested positive.
- The Department of Education recommendations are that all personnel be vaccinated before returning to work at schools, but it is not binding.

- During MAP testing, teachers will be required to be tested for COVID.

- During a recent parent survey, they had been given the choice of whether elect hybrid, online, or remote instruction. The parent consensus was 70-30% in favor of all-online learning for the students.

- A report detailing costs and methods would be useful before the next board meeting in order to better plan for any return plans.

- Mr. Bayles moved for a motion to reopen the Academy on a hybrid schedule on March 8th. The motion passed without objections nor abstentions.

4. Advisory Board Discussion

- The Advisory Board by-laws document had been previously provided to the members in order to create this entity in order to involve the community at large in the processes of the Storefront Academy.
- The interactions between the Advisory Board and the Executive Board would be either through the board leaders or liaisons, but it would be up to further discussion and agreement. The Advisory Board members could attend the open Executive Board meetings, but they would have no vote on matters.
- Advisory Board members would serve no role in the Executive Board; they would simply advise on certain matters as needed.
- Mr. Bayles moved for a motion to approve the Advisory Board By-Laws. The motion passed without objections or abstentions.

5. Board Committee Reports

Finance Committee:

- The Academy was functioning nominally, that there had been over \$27K in donations in the month, that around \$160K in settlements had been paid out and fully satisfied, and that a payment to the 501(c)(3) entity was due soon.
- There had been recent, additional staff expenses, which were offset by the expense reduction in not holding in-person classes.

Real Estate Committee:

- The lease for the Pontiac property had been received.
- A church property in 129th Street and Madison had recently been sold and purchased, and it appeared it could be renovated as a charter school.
- The space would likely be enough to accommodate hundreds of students.
- Given that the State had reached its limit of approved charter schools it could approve, this entity was likely not a startup institution.
- The Board should consider requesting permission from SUNY to move to the Harlem School to another location. This could help place the school where it is most needed by the community and be more successful in recruiting.

A market analysis would be required.

- The majority of the students in the Harlem School commute from outside the immediate neighborhood, generally utilizing the bus system.

Academic Committee:

- Ms. Low stated that the staff conducted thorough outreach to ensure the students properly attended and remained in class.
- Holiday programs were in effect, such as gifting holiday food boxes for needy families, awards grants, family holiday adoptions, among others.

Governance Committee:

- A few board positions need to be filled, but current situations, to include COVID, made it hard to accomplish at the moment.

Academic Committee:

- Many students lacked basic immunity requirements, which would need to be addressed before returning to school.
- Teacher recruitment is being addressed, to include reaching out to student teachers as resources to help both in classroom and virtually.
- The Academy would continue using Springboard as an after-school program, even after a full return to school.
- The Academy should engage in community outreach and education regarding vaccination.

6. School Report

- Dr. Garcia shared and discussed the student reports, to be provided as attachment to the Board Minutes. The report shows the SUNY targets by category and the current Academy information for each category.
- The reports would be provided to the Board bi-monthly, given that the attendance data will vary, but assessment information will not since assessments are not as frequent as attendance data.
- SUNY requires information regarding the Academy's efforts to recruit

students in the target areas where the Academy would be below the expected target, such as children with disabilities, certain ethnicities, housing status, among other categories. The Academy would not be penalized if a goal is not met, but SUNY requires a description of the efforts to reach to each demographic in order to prevent discrimination by the Academy.

- Some of the test results displayed in the reports might be skewed due to the unusual situation regarding COVID, testing changes, among other social and emotional factors.

11. Adjournment

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