



**MINUTES**  
**Board of Trustees Meeting**  
**January 28, 2025**

**PRESENT**

Lourdes Putz, Chair  
Sabrina Philson, Trustee  
Marcenia Johnson, Trustee  
John Witherspoon, Trustee  
Samuel Rivera, Trustee

**GUESTS**

Valerie Jacobson, Head of School  
Mary Kenny, Minutes Transcriber  
Ellen Eagen, Legal  
Additional Staff (33)

**1. WELCOME**

Ms. Philson stated that she would be facilitating the meeting and welcomed everyone. She asked attendees to take a moment to reflect on what joins everyone in the community at WCHS. Ms. Philson then called the meeting to order at 6:05pm and presented the agenda.

**2. APPROVAL OF DECEMBER BOARD MINUTES**

- Ms. Johnson made a motion to approve the December Board Minutes pending counsel review. Mr. Rivera seconded. All were in favor.

**3. STAFF ADVISOR TO THE BOARD**

Mr. Kronenberg stated that the School Improvement Committee has continued discussions with Ms. Jacobson and Mr. Rivera. He is hoping to further discuss instructional Care Time, 2025-26 scheduling, and further leveraging teachers' talents for enrollment and retention. Mr. Kronenberg presented with Ms. Eagen at a New York Charter Association webinar regarding the importance of leaning into civil discourse and engaging in authentic and empathetic discussions in the classroom. He hopes this could be a future professional development at school to augment work being done. Mr. Kroneberg shouted out Ryland Frost, a social studies teacher who will be presenting social justice methodologies at the AERA Research Conference, and Jasmine Porter, a dance teacher who led the cheer team to 3rd place in a dance competition this weekend. The Girls Basketball team is 3-0. The team will be taking a field trip to visit the Jackie Robinson Museum for a WNBA panel. The Visual Arts Department hosted a visual arts showcase and ceramics workshop and attended a professional development at the Rubin Museum to work on integrating Social Emotional and Ethical (SEE) Learning principles in the classroom. The Theater Department will be participating in TDF workshops for *Six the Musical* and *Hell's Kitchen*. Students from the Audio Production class are producing their first single *Bad Intentions*. Mr. Kronenberg invited the Board and staff in attendance to come to the Theater Department's production of *Puffs, or Seven Increasingly Eventful Years at a Certain School of Magic* on February 6 and 7. He added that he hopes additional guidance regarding new federal administration policies will be relayed soon.

**4. ACCOUNTABILITY AND DEVELOPMENT**

Ms. Manion presented. She stated that WCHS is in the process of codifying our everyday processes and procedures in accordance with New York State Law in regards to non-local law enforcement. Consistent with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), WCHS does not disclose a student's personal information, including immigration status, to any outside agency without prior written consent from a parent. Consistent with the rule of law, WCHS must honor valid judicial warrants, court orders, and subpoenas. Ms. Manion stated that next steps for students, staff, and families include: a one-pager with protocols for nonlocal law enforcement, immigration contacts, and community resources will soon be sent to students, staff, and families and will be uploaded to the website. Staff are in the process of being trained on how to respond should non-local law enforcement, such as ICE, request student information. Ms. Pink and Ms. Jacobson are coordinating informational sessions and gathering resources for parents and have ordered "red cards" in multiple languages for student distribution.

### Board Development

Ms. Manion welcomed board applicant David Medina, WCHS' IT Manager from 2011-2022. Staff and trustees greeted him. Mr. Medina said it would be an honor to serve on the Board. Ms. Manion stated for a matter of record that Mr. Medina has committed to recusing himself from any Board discussions pertaining to staff salaries during his role as trustee to avoid any potential conflicts of interest.

- Motion: The Williamsburg Charter High School Board of Trustees, having conducted a thorough criminal history record check via fingerprinting which is deemed acceptable by NYSED, and having discovered no State or federal criminal history, or having provided information regarding such history to NYSED, if found, and having verified that any academic and/or professional credential or qualification presented by the proposed member is genuine, and having reviewed the application in its entirety, has voted to select David Medina as a member to its Board of Trustees, with a term expiring in February of 2028, pending approval by NYSED. The resolution approving David Medina is adopted upon NYSED's approval.
- Mr. Rivera made a motion to approve Mr. Medina's application to WCHS's Board of Trustees pending approval by NYSED. Ms. Johnson seconded. All were in favor. Ms. Eagen stated that the motion is not official until we get approval from CSO or until 45 days pass.

Ms. Manion stated that Samuel Rivera, the former Vice-Chair and current trustee, would be stepping down from the Board pending Mr. Medina's approval to the Board and would commence serving the school in a new role as Executive Coordinator.

Mr. Rivera stated that his focuses would be strengthening the school's finances and responsibly cutting costs for the Board, working closely with leadership and School Counsel on key priorities for Academics and Operations, interfacing with staff at all levels to achieve the Board's vision and goals for WCHS, working with leadership and the Board to promote the morale and the wellbeing of our community, and promoting the health of the organization by supporting the Board in oversight of day-to-day operations.

Mr. Rivera said that this signals the Board's commitment to work with the educators in the school to reach goals of cost cutting, exceptional academics, increase staff morale and Board oversight.

- Ms. Johnson made a motion to accept Samuel Rivera's resignation and approve his new role as Executive Coordinator pending David Medina's Board approval from NYSED. Ms. Putz seconded. All were in favor.

### Accountability

Ms. Manion stated that the Education Stabilization Fund Annual Reporting is due February 25. The Civil Rights Data Collection portal is now open. The report is due March 7. She is working on updates to the school's SAM portal account. PowerSchool experienced a data breach this month exposing student and family data. Paul Crews is working with PowerSchool and our Data Consultant to ascertain what data has been affected. Communications will be sent to families and a form will be submitted to NYS. Mr. Crews stated that no social security numbers were included in the breach. He is working on additional safety measures to protect data moving forward.

### Development

WCHS assisted the NYC Charter center with a public relations campaign promoting awareness of schools in need of rental assistance; however, Governor Hochul ultimately opted not to include it in the state budget. The school has raised \$30,180 through previous film shoots (\$24,900), a community fundraiser (\$185), Giving Tuesday (\$595), a December film shoot (\$4,000), and a staff happy hour (\$500). Ms. Manion is working on hosting additional events-based fundraising for the community to participate in such as bowling, basketball games, and volunteering at Governor's Ball. Students from NYU have also reached out about filming the weekend of March 8. The school is monitoring policy and orders put into place by the new presidential administration. Ms. Manion attended a Walenta's Grant professional development on January 16 regarding the 2025-26 application. They fund projects from \$5-25,000. The application is due August 1.

## **5. ACADEMICS**

Ms. Jacobson reported. Upcoming important dates include:

- Midterms - January 13-16
- FDNY Career Panel - January 15
- Midterm Make-Up Exams - January 17
- Rhonda Ross Assembly - January 17
- Winter Dance - January 17
- No School for MLK Jr. Day - January 20
- Regents Exams - January 21-24
- Professional Development Day, No School for Students - January 27
- Progress Report Grades Due in PowerSchool - January 28
- No School Day for Lunar New Year - January 29
- Virtual PLC Meeting - January 30
- Progress Reports Released to Students - January 31
- STAR Testing - February 3-7
- Parent Teacher Conferences - February 5-6
- Intermediate Theater Performance - February 7

Ms. Jacobson stated that classroom intervisitation will take place from January 28-February 25. Teachers will visit classes and colleagues within their own departments and other departments. Teachers will observe teacher practice through the lens of the department's identified learning skills and objectives. Formal observations will take place from February 24-May 2 following intervisitations. They will be completed by each teacher's Department Leader, Instructional Coach (LOTE/PE), and Head of School.

The December Teacher of the Month is Jennifer Parker-Sparks. The December Staff of the Month is Allison Witkowski.

### Senior Class Data

Senior class data has not changed from last month as counselors are awaiting grades, credit recovery completion, and Regents results. There was one graduate in January.

### Operations

Ms. Jacobson administered January Regents Exams and managed scoring with Department Leaders. Trimester 2 midterm grades will be finalized in order to issue T2 Progress Reports and schedule in-person Parent-Teacher Conferences February 5 and 6. Operations staff are planning for the DOE Teacher, Student, and Parent survey administration from February 10-April 4. Non-instructional staff evaluations will take place from February through May. 12 sections are being covered internally while recruitment continues for one Spanish Teacher, one Science Teacher/Coach, two PE Teachers, and one SNAS Vacancy. The school just hired a new Student Recruitment Manager. Hiring for Student Recruitment Manager. The "No Cell Phone Zone" Pilot will continue through Trimester 2 as additional data is collected. The Board discussed feedback regarding the "No Cell Phone Zone" program and Ms. Witkowski said that most parents are in favor. Another survey will be sent out soon. Ms. Jacobson is reviewing the budget with the Finance Department and Board Committee. Ms. Jacobson is working with the IT Department to gather E-Rate consultant proposals. The PowerSchool data breach is being addressed. A letter to staff and families will be sent out. A report will be completed for NYS and the school will be implementing Single-Sign on and Two-Factor Authentication for staff.

Ms. Jacobson welcomed Ayisha Gomez as the school's new Recruitment Manager. She stated that she is proud to return to WCHS in this new capacity and will work hard to recruit students.

## **6. PARENT LEADERSHIP COUNCIL**

Ms. Pink stated that the January PLC Meeting will be held on January 30 at 6pm and welcomed everyone to attend. A representative from DAYONE will be presenting about technology abuse, cyberbullying, cyberstalking, teen dating, and keeping youth safe from technology. Ms. Jacobson will also be providing immigration information and resources.

Ms. Pink will be hosting a raffle and invites anyone to email her for more information.

## **7. FACILITIES**

Mr. James reported that a new blower motor was installed in unit 7-5 which serves the heating unit for Room 801 in the rear. A new blower motor was also installed on the second floor roof that serves the mailroom in Room 127. Both elevators are in working order. The Department of Health found one electrical outlet that was out of order in the kitchen serving area. The outlet breaker was reset and no violations were issued. The school's kitchen has a work order to replace a burned out compressor in one of the refrigerators that stores DOE-provided food. The repairs are in progress.

## **8. SAFETY**

Mr. Edmond reported that morning entry and dismissal procedures continue to be a success. Glass bottles, vapes and two knives were discovered this month. There was one visit from the NYPD and three visits from EMS that did not result in any transport to the hospital. The NYPD continues to provide coverage for morning arrival and dismissal on Bushwick Avenue and White Streets. Dismissal takes an average of 20-25 minutes. Mr. Edmond continues to meet with the 90th precinct weekly. He has no specific concerns to report.

## **9. RECRUITMENT AND ENROLLMENT**

### Enrollment

Ms. Jacobson stated that enrollment is 654 in Powerschool, 657 in ATS, and the estimated FTE is 657.2. There are four pending discharges and two students with duplicate OSIS numbers. 94 students have been discharged since July. The lottery will take place on April 2. 179 students have submitted applications already.

### Recruitment

Open Houses will be held on February 8, March 8, April 5, April 26, May 17, and June 14. The January 11 Open House was held in combination with the Visual Arts Show and Ceramics Workshop. The NYCSA Pilot marketing campaign for Bushwick Charter Schools will run from January-April 2025 via marketing ads and outreach to families not currently enrolled in charter schools. WCHS staff continue to canvass local businesses, food pantries, community centers, community boards, and enrollment centers. Ads are running in NY Family and El Diario. Staff will be presenting at Hyde Leadership and Ascend Middle School. Ads continue via Google, Facebook, and Instagram. The Board discussed the waitlist.

## **10. FINANCE**

Ms. Fernandez reported that as of November 30, 2024 the total collected revenue was \$7,065,252. The total expenses were \$6,342,690. The total revenue over expenses is \$722,557. The surplus is \$342,690.

## **11. HUMAN RESOURCES**

Mr. Kloss reported that there were two instructional hires in January and three instructional separations. Two operations staff members resigned. No employees are currently on leave. Human Resources continues to recruit for Spanish, Physical Education, and SPED teachers. Mr. Kloss is looking into new quotes for Workers Compensation insurance. Human Resources is working with the US Department of Labor to provide data for labor statistics reporting and is looking into new vendors for HRIS to make operations more efficient and user-friendly. Mr. Kloss met with NYSIF representatives for an annual safety assessment and review. Mr. Kloss stated he's been working closely with Mr. Rivera on morale initiatives. Mr. Rivera thanked him and said that at the next Board meeting there will be proposals concerning the well being of the staff in terms of benefits, contracts, and other compensation for the remainder of the year, and for the upcoming year.

## **12. ADJOURNMENT**

Ms. Philson said that with no further questions, we will have a motion to close.

- Mr. Witherspoon made a motion to close. Mr. Rivera seconded. All were in favor.