



**MINUTES**  
**Board of Trustees Meeting**  
**September 27, 2023**

**The meeting was held in person at 198 Varet Street, Brooklyn, NY**

**PRESENT**

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

**GUESTS**

Jahi Bashir, Head of School  
Valerie Jacobson, Head of Operations  
Mary Kenny, Minutes Transcriber  
Jeremy Kronenberg, Staff Advisor  
Additional staff in-person and online

**1. WELCOME**

Ms. Putz welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**2. APPROVAL OF AUGUST BOARD MINUTES**

- Mr. Witherspoon made a motion to approve the Board minutes pending counsel review. Ms. Philson seconded. There was one Abstention. All others were in favor.

**3. ACADEMICS**

Mr. Bashir and Ms. Holford provided an academic update. Leadership is preparing high-leverage instructional items in preparation for the CSO visit, including learning walks and targeted feedback and classroom particulars. STAR Testing will begin with 9th grade in ELA and Math classes. Instructional coaching has begun with initial 1:1 coaching meetings. This year the focus will be aligning supervision and coaching with school-wide literacy initiatives as well as skills based strategies for student success. New and updated curriculum texts were ordered for core content areas. Professional development focuses will be on Jane Schaffer writing, ENL strategies for reading, writing, Response to Intervention (RTI), ICT/Co-Teaching, restorative practices, school wide classroom particulars, differentiation, Danielson FFT, and after school PD. Back to School Night will be on September 23. Credit recovery begins on October 2. New student Chromebooks have arrived and are being distributed. The board discussed the distribution of the chromebooks and decided that moving forward, technology will be assessed before the start of school so that broken/lost items can be replaced quickly. Hispanic Heritage Month planning is ongoing. Midterms will take place on October 3. PSAT/SAT testing will take place on October 11 for grades 10 and 11. Grade 9 PSAT/8/9 will take place on March 20, 2024. Clubs and sports have started. Administration meetings with the 90th precinct have started back up. The NYPD Options Program will begin in October for students only.

Senior Data

There are 203 seniors in the class of 2024.

**4. OPERATIONS**

Ms. Jacobson proposed the 2023-24 district and building safety plans. The district plan was posted for 30 days on the website for public comment. Discussion and review occurred.

- Ms. Johnson made a motion to accept the 2023-2024 District and Building Safety Plan subject to amendments in the future. Mr. Witherspoon seconded. All were in favor.

Ms. Jacobson is preparing schedules, proctors, supplies and rooms for October 11 PSAT administration on October 11. Grades 9 and 12 will receive asynchronous remote instruction that day. The school is working to train advisors to proctor the exam and the tech department is testing wifi capabilities to prepare for the test. A Back to School Night Overview presentation was delivered to families on September 26 at 6pm. Recruitment is ongoing for HR Manager, Data Systems Coordinator, Safety Officers, and a Safety Manager. Teacher vacancies and leave replacements are being covered for the time being.

## **6. FACILITIES**

Mr. James reported that an FDNY inspector visited the school on August 24 and inspected the roof and 5th and 2nd floor air handling units. No defects or violations were issued. A Department of Health inspector visited the school on August 29 and inspected the school's kitchen. No defects or violations were issued. All heating units have been inspected and are available for use in the cooler months. A new heating and air conditioning unit was installed in room 809.

## **8. ENROLLMENT AND RECRUITMENT**

Ms. Jacobson reported that enrollment is 803 in Powerschool and 800 in ATS. The estimated FTE is 926.425. Billing is due on September 29. The Board reviewed enrollment by grade levels. Ms. Jacobson stated that 34 registrations were in process. The next admissions lottery will be held on April 2, 2024.

A number of in-person and online recruitment efforts are in place in order to get our enrollment number up. WCHS attended the Collective Focus Hub Neighborhood Block Party on August 26, School Fest at JHS 126 on September 16, and the Family and Youth Peer Support pop-up on September 23. WCHS will be attending the PAL High School Fair on October 10 and will be visiting Middle Village Prep Charter on October 11. Online and social media recruitment efforts include Daily News, El Diario, and WCHS mailing list email blasts, ads in Brooklyn Family Magazine, and Google and social media ads.

## **9. FINANCE**

Ms. Fernandez reported that the total collected revenue for the period is \$1,619,278. The total expenses are \$1,822,000. The total excess of revenue over expenses is \$202,722 due to the payroll and taxes accrual entry. The Board reviewed the finance report showing total assets and total liabilities. Ms. Fernandez said the general audit and 403b audit are in progress. The Board discussed diversifying funds.

## **10. HUMAN RESOURCES**

Ms. Manion stated that administration will be proposing a 2.7% increase for non-instructional staff upon the board's approval of the budget. If approved at a later date, the 2.7% increase would be backdated to August 16. Salary corrections are still an ongoing priority and will be fixed soon. Any changes will be backdated to August 16 as well.

## **11. STAFF ADVISOR TO THE BOARD**

Mr. Kronenberg is continuing to summarize and provide school climate feedback. He reported that staff are concerned about teacher vacancies and its effects on instructional rigor. The Board discussed the use of substitute teachers and adherence to instructional guidelines. Mr. Kronenberg shouted out Mr. Frost, Ms. Martino, and Ms. Yenque. He suggested that the school bring back the "Burning Flame Award".

## **12. ACCOUNTABILITY AND DEVELOPMENT**

Ms. Manion stated that the renewal application was submitted on August 15. Next steps include submission of a signed and notarized charter agreement. This has been sent to NYSED. Benchmark 1 is due October 3. She will submit supplementary materials soon. WCHS is awaiting confirmation of the NYSED CSO site visit date. Ms. Manion also requested that the Board review minor changes to the school's Code of Conduct to be submitted as a nonmaterial revision as part of the charter renewal. The minor changes and policy updates include language about:

- cell phone use;
- prohibition of airsoft guns;
- fire alarm procedures;
- lockdown expectations and procedures;
- elevator usage;
- the school guest policy;

- classroom removals;
- detention hours;
- alternative learning environment placement;
- prohibition of vaping and e-cigarettes;
- prohibition of gang affiliated attire;
- physical violence;
- the school mediation policy;
- long term suspension/expulsion; and,
- discipline procedures for students with disabilities.

The above mentioned changes reflect changes that have been made and reviewed by staff and counsel since 2018; however, it requires a formal nonmaterial revision to the state. The changes were made to improve safety, classroom management, and the effectiveness of impartial hearings and related procedures.

- Mr. Witherspoon approved minor policy changes and language updates in the WCHS Code of Conduct. Ms. Johnson seconded. All were in favor.

The Title I parent meeting will be held this fall. The Annual Report progress towards goals, audit, and budget are due November 1. The Economist filmed at the school today regarding WCHS' community response to February 8. The film crew complimented the school community and was impressed with what they saw. The Brooklyn Paper featured Ms. Helliger's back to school supplies GoFundMe in a story. A student film is interested in filming in early 2024.

### **13. PARENT LEADERSHIP COUNCIL**

Ms. Pink reported that the first PLC meeting will be held virtually on September 29. Board elections will be held and guests from the New York Charter School Association and Cypress Hills Local Development Corporation will be in attendance.

### **14. ADJOURNMENT**

- Mr. Rivera made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Johnson seconded the motion. All were in favor.