



Thursday, January 19, 202 @6:00 p.m.
Board Meeting via Zoom

Meeting ID: 8799-566-6888
Passcode: AYRG@7

AGENDA

1. Call to Order
2. Board Committee Reports
3. School Reports
4. CEO Report
5. Public Comments
6. Adjournment

Trustees Present

Richard Bayles
Gretchen Pusch
Justin Toliver
Peter Low
Amanda Low

Storefront Academy Staff:

- Ms. Alison Curry, Interim CEO
- Mr. Stuart Wolf, Director of Finance
- Ms. Nidia Evangelista, Director of Advancement
- Ms. Carol Singletary, South Bronx Campus Principal
- Ms. Yoselyn Fernandez, South Bronx Assistant Principal
- Ms. Taleema Chesney, Harlem Campus Principal
- Ms. Amia Fisher, Harlem Assistant Principal
- Ms. Marie Lucas, Director of Compliance/HR
- Ms. Madeley Sanchez, Parent Coordinator
- Mr. Matthew Tiwary, Technology

1. Call to Order

- Mr. Bayles called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.
- Mr. Bayles stated for the record that Ms. Susan Reid would no longer be a member of the Storefront Academy Board, and that the Board was very grateful for the time and service provided to Storefront Academy .
- Mr. Bayles stated that the recorder had been sick with COVID, therefore the minutes for the previous meeting were not ready. Mr. Bayles also noted that the minutes would be taken from the recording provided by Mr. Tiwary, and would be ready, discussed, and approved at the next meeting.
 - Addendum- On January 31st, the minutes were shared with the board via email; Mr. Stearns proposed that the minutes be accepted; Mr Tolliver 2nded. Bayles, Pusch and Gulcan were all in favor.
- Mr. Bayles stated that he and Alison Curry participated in two meetings, one meeting with SUNY, the second meeting with the insurance brokers. Both meetings come from the fact they have uncovered some difficulties with some accounts. Mr. Bayles noted that at this time they are not ready to comment on the matter until there is full understanding of what has been going on and what went on in the previous administration, and that it would be unfair to comment at the moment in any type of public forum.
 - The meeting with SUNY was a continuation of the spirit that was in the conversations they had when they came to see us. Mr. Bayles noted that SUNY treated us cordially and well.
 - The meeting with the insurance broker to was understand the liabilities if any in regards to some of the financial concerns.

2. Committee Reports

- Mr. Bayles noted that there would not be a finance committee report as the basis, budget material is in some flux.
- Mr. Bayles moved on and asked Amanda Low for the academic report

Academic Committee Report

Amada Low

Gretchen and Amanda joined the team huddle in January on the issue of attendance. Student attendance numbers ranges between 80 and 85%. On the day of the attendance meeting, the South Bronx had the highest attendance to date - 95%. A discussion ensued on how to make attendance a priority in the sense of it not being punitive when a child is not in school but how valuable it is for them to be in school. Many talks on approaches to parents because the students want to be in school. A fair number of parents developed bad habits during COVID and remote learning and are not bringing students to school or on time. There needs to be a recalibrating of how to do that and how to make it a shared value for the school parent community.

Gretchen Pusch

- There was a discussion on the formation of an attendance committee support team and the mechanics of daily attendance taking that is shared with the principal daily and entered into a data system.
- Numbers pre-covid stood at 95% average and in the 80 days from August 29th - January 9th attendance stood mostly in the 80 % range in grades K-5, The highest

being grade 3 at 89% and the lowest being grade 5 at almost 79%. There was all some discussion around extrinsic versus intrinsic approach to attendance.

- There was discussion on the Academic committee possibly adding parents to its composition.
 - Mrs. Singletary noted that there are qualified parents from the Bronx and Harlem campus who currently are being considered for inclusion in the board and/or committees, which would be discussed in a different forum. Adjustments to the meeting time would need to be made in order for parents to participate.

Governance Report:

- Mr. Bayles noted that Jonathan Stearns was not in attendance and therefore there would be no governance report; and is unaware that there is any changes to report on. Mr. Bayles did make a comment that as they move through this period of reassessing or once it is finished they need very much to grow the board and that help from the community is also needed. There is ample space to add more people to the board and can be flexible to that.
- Mr. Bayles asked that the recording of the Dorian quintet, of which board member Gretchen Push is a member, be played for all attendees. The Dorian quintet played at both campuses and the video was of the Harlem students.

3. School Report :

Mr. Bayles moved to Principal reports and began with Harlem Campus

Harlem Campus, Ms. Taleema Chesney

- Enrollment has been at the forefront since its inception and the work continues to enroll new scholars. The school has a great relationship with Schola where there are weekly check-ins. At the moment there are four new potential families who have connected with Ms. Lorena who has been doing an amazing job at following up and through with potential families . The school is currently not at enrollment goal, however there is still a push to move forward and that by mid winter break the school would at least have 90 scholars enrolled..
- Attendance has been an issue at both campuses and working hard to get back to 95%. Mr. Tiwary was asked to pull attendance data since the return of winter break. The school has seen two over 90% days and are very excited about that.
 - Some things that have been put in place to support attendance are:
 - Tickets are given to students arriving before 8am and in uniform, Tickets are redeemable for an item from the prize box or additional play time.
 - Relationships have been made with some families to give support and remind them that it is time to get ready for school.
 - The school will continue to excite the children to be in school and find creative ways to support the families to make that happen.
- Cycle 2 F&P data shows that there is a lot of work to do with bringing students' reading levels up to par.
 - 61% of students meet or exceed reading level goals
 - The focus continues to remain on students that are 2 levels or below the

- o stated reading goals.
 - o The hope is that all students reach their reading level; the expected and realistic goal is 70% success. The goal always remains ambitious to be 100%.
 - Ms. Curry applauds the team for the work that are doing thus far to support the students
 - o Ms. Chesney noted that additional conversations were had between herself and Ms. Fisher to strategize the content and minutes in scheduling need to address these targets for this quarter.
- The board discussed whether receiving students in Kindergarten who can read at their expected grade level was a common trend, given that the kind of tracking currently utilized is not the same as it used to be, therefore comparison is hard. However, given the current quality of teachers and staff, this is not entirely a surprise to the leadership.. Ms. Chesney stated that Ms. T (K teacher) is amazing and works very hard and really uses strategies during guided reading.
- The Exact Path data shows that from December 8th-January 8th, 137 math skills, 131 reading skills, and 119 language skills were mastered. This system allows the staff to support student learning and helps mitigate learning loss. It also supports and shows what the MAP scores may look like. The school has been very intentional in supporting Exact Path use during their Wednesday learning block
- Ms. Chesney stated that this was a solid start, but certain aspects such as lack of Wi-Fi for certain students, lack of proper devices at home, and attendance challenges affect the student performance to be able to use the program at home.. However, students seem to love the challenge provided by Exact Path and they celebrate each other's successes. The theme across both campuses to get students pumped up for the upcoming NWEA MAP test is "Game On". Students are excited about mastering different skills and being included on the wall of gamers.
 - o A survey indicated that about 45 families did not have appropriate devices/technology to fully support at-home educational support. The Academy may have enough computers to loan to students, but a big technological component is reliable Wi-Fi. During the COVID relief timeframes, the computers included connectivity, but they no longer do.
 - o The Wi-Fi cost for those 45 families would be further researched, but it could range between \$60-120 per month, per device/family.
- Ms. Curry suggested whether the available computers could be loaded with standalone software and work that did not rely on data connectivity, to allow students to continue their education from home.
- Ms. Chesney stated that the scholars wrote thank you notes to the Dorian quintant and shared a video from the 4th grade scholars saying thank you.

South Bronx: (Mrs. Carol Singletary)

- Attendance- Mrs. Singletary is thrilled because attendance has remained at 93% overall for the last three weeks, whereas January is generally a tough month for

attendance. This nears the pre-COVID attendance rates. On January 11th the team huddle drove the conversation on attendance concerns, and ideas were discussed on how to best support and improve. Mrs. Singletary also thanked board members Gretchen and Amanda for joining the huddle and taking part in these discussions. Mrs. Singletary gave thanks and honor to the Bronx school community that everyone has committed to support attendance efforts. The school is a community that supports families and are committed to supporting these efforts.

- Penguin party incentive in March for students that have perfect attendance and high class attendance through March
- Enrollment- SCHOLA has been successful in providing new student enrollments, but there also has been attrition month to month due to families moving away. This month, Mrs. Singletary is reporting that enrollment has maintained steady at 226. The school is a grassroots organization and many incoming students come from family referrals.
- Mrs. Singletary reminded all that the Bronx campus holds a large ELL population, about 57 students on ATS but Ms. Tejada and Ms. Guerrero (ELL teachers) continue to support the identification of ELL students, servicing about 113 students at different proficiencies.
 - 44% of students are currently measured as reading at grade level, with 16% approaching the standard, and are expected to be at grade level within 3 months.
 - Mrs. Singletary clarified that there are 4 cycles. Many attributions of student growth are due to more rigorous instruction, Lavinia, ELL support and guided reading.
- Exact Path goals follow the learning path, which is automatically set up by the system and correlates to the MAP scores and gap areas of growth. Students embrace math more than the language piece. In using small group work, teachers can use the Edmentum platform to prepare targeted interventions. This helps teachers identify and decide on which approaches to take.
 - Schoolwide, students mastered 604 math, 328 reading, and 189 ELA skills between December 8th-January 7th, also including the holiday.
- Mrs. Singletary closed the Bronx academic report by stating that Mrs. Pierret (Instructional Coach) does research and support on math galleries with students and is excited that a student is leading the discourse in math gallery as when previously shied away from this work.

4. CEO report (Alison Curry, Interim CEO)

- Ms. Curry began the CEO report by sharing master plan of work over the next 6 months
- There are parts of the SUNY renewal that still need resolve and are time-consuming, and some documents need to be updated.
- Staff needs to syncopate to create a space that will properly serve the students and their families the best. We all need to be working together and listening to each other to create a space that will serve the children and families best.
- All members of the organization are vital members.
 - Teachers, lifelong learners
 - students, lifelong learners
 - families, lifelong alumni

- All staff members will have a detailed and adequate job description, and everyone will know what is expected of them and what to expect of the leaders
 - Ms. Curry noted that Marie Lucas is doing a wonderful job at revising the employee handbook and job descriptions and that the employee handbook will be available on **Mar 1, 2023** and everyone will be able to read it and what is expected
- Performance appraisals will be self appraised and also include 360-degree assessments, which is the industry standard for various companies.
- Augmenting the size of the Board, and finding people willing and able to assist the board, engage and understand their roles
 - Direct engagement between the Board and the schools, not only via Zoom or monthly meetings, but by visiting the campuses and meeting the staff, is important. This will help everyone figure out how to best utilize the time and talent of the Board and actively engage in problem solving.
- The school operations are being assessed, cataloged contracts, and reorganized in order to improve performance. This will ensure that only systems that work best are kept in order to best serve the needs of students and families.
- Facilities- The Board seeks to pursue a feasibility study of a new space for the Harlem Campus. 314 East 110th St. The process is in early conversations but this would allow Harlem to be able to give more.
- The South Bronx Library facility is a fantastic space with spectacular resources and will be focusing on how to make it an even better learning space for children.
 - Convert 603 full of children as a great space for children
 - Issues such as a teachers lounge have taken longer than expected but the budget needs to be honored and the lounge will be put together soon.
 - Better parking solutions for teachers are still being worked on. The organization needs to figure out a better parking solution for teachers

SCHOLA is spectacular to work with and partner with. There is more interest in our school campuses. The schools are being very attentive in reaching out to families. The schools meet with Schola weekly, and we see a steady influx of interest and enrollment.

Communication is key and we need to be able to communicate the organic value of what we can do and are capable of doing in order to support the community we serve.

5. Public Comment

- Mr. Bayles moved to public comments before moving into executive session
 - There were no public comments.

6. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 7:05 p.m.