



ATMOSPHERE ACADEMY

Educating Your Bright Stars

Atmosphere Academy Public Charter Schools Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes October 24, 2018

Atmosphere Academy Charter School
22 Marble Hill Avenue
Meeting at 5959 Broadway
New York, New York 10463

Board Members Attending:

Mr. Alan Dillon
Mr. Mervin Burton
Dr. Michael Lagas
Mr. James Spitzer
Mr. Jesse J. Greene, Jr.

Board Members Absent:

Dr. Evan Powderly

Others in Attendance:

Mr. Colin J. Greene
Ms. Elizabeth Nash
Ms. Katherine Brennan
Mr. Christian Roman
Ms. Jasline Rodriguez
Mr. C. Sweeney
Ms. Cheryl Sacco (by phone)
Mr. Bryan Fryer
Ms. Lena Litvak
Parents and Students:
Annette Holland
Teddy Holland
Lauren Soto
Lizzette Badillo
Gypsy Solano
Jerry Salano
Zoila Salano

Agenda Item 1. Call to order.

At approximately 5:07 PM the meeting was called to order by Dr. Lagas.

Agenda Item 2. Pledge of Allegiance.

Dr. Lagas led the Pledge of Allegiance .

Agenda Item 3. Board Reports.

Mr. J. Greene reported on the Finance Committee call of October 19, 2018.

Agenda Item 4. Comments from the Public

There were no general public comments.

Agenda Item 5. Revision and Adoption of the Agenda

The original agenda was adopted by the board.

By motion of the board to adopt the Agenda.

Vote Aye: M. Burton, J. Greene, M. Lagas

Nays: none

Agenda Item 6.1 Stars Program

There were numerous parents and students present. Mr. Ben Pah introduced the students, their parents and the discussion topic. A video was presented of the equestrian program and student activities in that program. Students then reported to the board about what they got out of the program. Parents complimented the school on the program and what it meant to their children.

Then a video was shown on the sailing program followed by reports from students on what they learned and then more compliments from students and parents about this program. Parents comments included statements that the school meets all of their expectations. One parent of a student with a learning disability explained how much her child had improved at Atmosphere.

Next Mr. Pah showed a video showing the motivational program which rewards students with sweatshirts for performance improvements. Mr. C. Greene and Mr. Pah explained how the program works in practice. A student then commented about the motivational benefit. Two parents added their comments about how it helped keep grades up and keep work effort high.

Mr. Pah closed this discussion explaining how the school is data driven, rewarding growth and improvement.

Other parent comments were that the faculty knows the students well and the students feel safe and comfortable at the school. Also it was hard to put into words how positively they feel about Atmosphere.

Agenda Item 6.2. Tour of 5959 Broadway

The parents, students, board and staff were then invited to tour the new building. The tour was completed at 5:50PM. All were pleased with the new facilities.

The parents and students left the meeting at this point.

Mr. C. Greene then discussed the scholars scholarship program and video further. Mr. Roman added to the conversation.

Mr. C. Greene explained the work done on 5959 Broadway building, the “punch list” and the process that concluded with the Temporary Certificate of Occupancy. Mr. Dillon asked about how the lease will work out given that the start date is later than described in the lease. The board discussed that this will need to be adjusted jointly with the landlord.

My Spitzer joined the meeting at this point.

Agenda Item 6.3. Board Meeting Minutes.

The minutes from the September 2018 meeting were sent to the board before the meeting. They were adopted without revision.

By motion of the board to adopt the September 2018 Minutes.

Vote Aye: M. Burton, Mr. A. Dillon, J. Greene, M. Lagas, Mr. J. Spitzer.
Nays: none

Agenda Item 6.4. Costa Rica Trip

Ms. Brennan explained the opportunity for an education trip to Cost Rica. The board discussed the safety, cost, benefits and planning of the trip. The board said a major US air carrier should be used for safety reasons. For cost reasons the board said this should replace an Island School trip and with that condition approved the trip.

By motion of the board to approve the Costa Rica trip.

Vote Aye: M. Burton, Mr. A. Dillon, J. Greene, M. Lagas, Mr. J. Spitzer.
Nays: none

Agenda Item 6.5. and 6.6 Enrollment and Charter Expansion

Mr. C. Greene then discussed his calls with SUNY regarding possible expansion. This is possible and a request needs to be prepared for December 1, 2018.

Dr. Lagas departed at this point in the meeting, 7:25PM.

A rigorous discussion covered all aspects of expansion of the number of students served and renewal of the school's charter.

Mr. C. Greene asked for an expression of the board's support for expansion of the school. The board agreed to support preparation and submission of an application for expansion of the number of the students in grade 6 through 8.

By motion of the board to approve the preparation and submission to SUNY of an application to expand the number of students in grades 6 through 8.

Vote Aye: M. Burton, Mr. A. Dillon, J. Greene, Mr. J. Spitzer.
Nays: none

Mr. C. Greene asked the board for an expression of the board's support to apply for renewal of its charter and ask for an expansion of the school through grade 12.

After discussion the board agreed that they would support such an application if all elements of the school expansion plan and application meet the boards requirements for success of the expansion that are demonstrated at a later board meeting prior to the submission to SUNY.

By motion of the board to approve the preparation of such an application subject to final board review.

By motion of the board to approve the preparation of an application to expand the school charter to include a high school, grades 9 through 12.

Vote Aye: M. Burton, Mr. A. Dillon, J. Greene, Mr. J. Spitzer.
Nays: none

Mr. C. Greene reported that enrollment for this school was going well and he expected to be at full revenue available for the full fiscal year.

Agenda Item 6.7. Finance Update

The Check (payment) Control Process was again reviewed with the board after revisions requested after the last board meeting's discussion. The revised process allows checks over the approved threshold level, approved at previous board meetings, to be approved and sent after notice is sent to the finance committee, one committee member has approved, 72 hours has passed or all finance committee members have approved.

By motion of the board this Check Process was approved.

Vote Aye: M. Burton, Mr. A. Dillon, J. Greene, Mr. J. Spitzer.

Nays: none

Mr. Fryer reviewed the financial reports. He covered the financial activity report, financial position report and balance sheet of the school.

Agenda Item 6.8. Math Program Update

Mr. Sweeney and Ms. Litvak gave an extensive review of the math education program. They covered the key elements of the upgraded program, the professional development for the staff and reviewed how students are assessed. They also reviewed the linkage to the achievement program and how the use of Atmosphere staff has improved that program. They also commented how they have great confidence in the new staff members in the math program this year. The board asked about how we will know if the new program is working, and Mr. C. Greene added comments about the school's plans to get to the students with the greatest need with additional help. There was also a discussion of how to serve the advanced student. Overall this was a comprehensive discussion of actions.

Agenda Item 7. Consent Agenda

There were no consent agenda items.

Agenda Item 8 through 11. Executive Session

There was no executive session at this meeting.

Agenda Item 12. Unfinished Business.

There was no unfinished business.

Agenda Item 13. New Business.

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There was no new business.

Agenda Item 11. Adjournment.

At 8:59PM the board voted to adjourn.

By motion of the board to adjourn.

Vote Aye: M. Burton, J. Greene, Mr. Dillon

Nays: none.