



ATMOSPHERE ACADEMY

taking learning to new heights

Atmosphere Academy Public Charter Schools Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes May 18, 2016

Atmosphere Academy Charter School Building
22 Marble Hill Avenue
New York, New York 10463

Board Members Attending:

Mr. Mervin Burton
Mr. Alan Dillon
Mr. Jesse J. Greene, Jr
Dr. Michael Lagas
Father Thomas Lynch

Board Members Absent

Dr. Evan Powderly

Others in Attendance:

Mr. Colin J. Greene Principal
Ms. Heather Blumberg
Ms. Elizabeth Nash
Mr. Nethaneel Cleary
Mr. Christian Roman
Mr. Benjamin Pah
Mr. Peter Mertog (MMJ)
Mr. Tony Justic (MMJ)
Ms. Nary Djonovic (MMJ)
Mr. Michael Livolsi (Attorney)
Ms. Eileen Gallagher (Teacher)

In the absence of the Chairman, Dr. Powderly, Jesse J. Greene, Jr. served as acting Chairman for this meeting.

At approximately 5PM Jesse Greene called the meeting to order.

The attendees were then led in the pledge of allegiance.

There no revisions to the agenda.

Agenda item 5.1 Hiring Update

Mr. Colin Greene discussed his hiring activities and the movement of staff to new positions. Positions filled included science teacher, director of operations, operations associate, english teacher, summer school teacher and project specialist, and apprentice math teacher. Movements of staff include Mr.

Cleary moving to the Director of Data and Assessment position, Ms. Bolt to the Grade Level Coordinator, and Ms. Nash to Director of Student learning. All changes were discussed and rationale explained.

Agenda Item 5.2 Finance

Ms. Blumberg from CSBM discussed the financials of the school. We expect a book profit for the year, but net cash for the year may be negative. Recent bills from CSBM may push the school into a negative cash flow for the year.

Other work includes preparation for the annual audit and efforts to bring in grants that the school is entitled to.

The school is planning to move from CSBM to MMJ for accounting and bookkeeping functions. Mr. Tony Justic presented MMJ's capabilities to the board. He presented the history of the firm, the firm's size, their client mix and other skill indicators. They have not worked for a charter school previously but they explained how they would focus their efforts to learn the business and come up to speed quickly. Questions from the board included who would be the lead contact for the firm, how much on site time they expected to provide each week and other matters. They said they would stay with existing financial tools used by the school including google docs and Quickbooks but will also maintain their own files to support the history of their work.

The board then decided to proceed with MMJ. The board will formally vote on this during the June meeting.

An amendment to the Financial Policy Document was presented for approval and the changes were adopted by unanimous vote of the board.

Agenda Item 5.3 Enrollment Update

Mr. Colin Greene next discussed enrollment for the 2016-2017 school year. For the 6th grade the school has filled 86 and 109 positions. 78% came from the lottery process.

For the 7th grade 75% have responded with 73% returning from this year's 6th grade. 25% did not respond. 2% of the students will not be returning. Those not returning are doing so for various reasons such as parent choice, discipline issue, and one going to another school. As of 5/18, 4 to 5 students will have to repeat 6th grade.

Agenda Item 5.4 Insurance Update

Mr. Colin Greene discussed the health insurance cost increase for next year and he explained that he was looking for alternatives.

Trustee Jesse Greene discussed the recent renewal of the liability insurance and the costs of the program given the growth of the school to 249 students.

Agenda Item 5.5 Branding Update

Mr. Colin Greene then discussed his efforts to develop branding including photoshoot, website, decals, acronyms, school culture norms, and front window pictures. Trustees pointed to the need for a presentation to help the school increase contributions.

Agenda Item 5.6 School Life Update

Mr. Roman and Mr. C. Greene discussed school life including 6th grade teams, bulletin boards in classrooms and hallways, student culture acronyms and those generated by the teaching staff.

Mr. C. Greene reviewed student incident by behavior, and then the distribution of student performance and potential was discussed.

Mr. Colin Greene and Mr. Roman discussed athletic programs and liability risks involved. Mr. Livolsi, the school's lawyer, provided input on liability waivers and their effectiveness.

Mr. Colin Greene showed the pictures of the activities of the students including drums, Arabic and jujitsu.

Agenda Item 5.7 Academic Update

Ms. Nash next reviewed the special education program. She reviewed the pass/fail policy and the considerations of attendance, performance in class, behavior, and other criteria. Overall only 2 students are in doubt about moving up in grade.

Ms. Nash next discussed the self-contained class aimed to serve certain IEP students. About 10 students are targeted for help with this structure. The concept is to meet the student where they are and pull them up from there with closely supervised work.

Agenda Item 5.8 Board Membership Update

The board was informed that Trustee Grant Grastorf has resigned due to his Phd. work load.

New Business

Mr. Colin Greene informed the board of the upcoming SUNY visit expected in June.

Mr. Ben Pah, the new Director of Operations, next discussed technology and possible computer choices available to the school. The board engaged in a discussion of the factors to be considered.

Public Comments

There were no public comments at this meeting.

Mr. J. Greene then closed the meeting.