



ATMOSPHERE ACADEMY

taking learning to new heights

Atmosphere Academy Public Charter Schools Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes September 21, 2016

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

Board Members Attending:

Father Thomas Lynch
Mr. Mervin Burton
Mr. Alan Dillon
Mr. Jesse J. Greene, Jr
Dr. Michael Lagas (phone)
Dr. Evan Powderly

Board Members Absent:

Others in Attendance:

Mr. Colin J. Greene
Mr. Michael Livolsi
Mr. Bryan Fryer
Ms. Elizabeth Nash
Mr. Nethaneel Cleary
Ms. Jane Tulley
Mr. Christian Roman
Mr. Ben Pah

At approximately 5 PM Dr. Evan Powderly called the meeting to order.

A motion was made to approve the minutes of June and July 2016. The motion was passed and the minutes approved.

There no revisions to the agenda. The agenda was adopted.

Agenda Item 5.1 Directors Report

Mr. Christian Roman reviewed the student merit and demerit patterns and statistics. He covered merits, suspensions, discipline patterns, offenses and parent conferences. The numbers of incidents and the percentage of each type were discussed. Overall the school is doing well, even better than last year.

Mr. Cleary discussed the Scantron machine use in the school to prepare data on student performance. He demonstrated for the board how the software could produce reports that showed where the school needed to focus to improve student performance. He also discussed state test detailed item analysis reports. The process demonstrates how the students perform question by question, what questions they understood and

did not understand, and organizes the questions by type. These reports will be used throughout the year. The school will work with a partner testing vendor to administer interim tests during the year to monitor student performance.

Mr. Colin Greene, Mrs. Jane Tulley, and Mr. Christian Roman discussed the first scores of 6th and 7th graders. ELA and math topics were covered. Score improvement has to be a focus item for the coming year. Mr. Cleary discussed how the school has to also focus on the testing process and testing skills. Students must focus on the seriousness of the standardized exams and the need to develop these skills.

The learning disabled population that Atmosphere is serving. Atmosphere has 69 students with disabilities out of 245 students or 28%, which is higher than the District 10 population of 26%.

Ms. Elisabeth Nash reviewed the overall population of students by need, including those with disabilities such as those with learning disabilities, health impairments, hearing impairments, etc. and English Language Learners (ELL). She next reviewed how Special Education teams were organized, the strategy of each team and how this is managed. The strategy is to have special education students receive their core services while also allowing them to work in inclusive settings, which aids special education students and promotes learning from their peers. She then covered Academic Intervention Services and Achievement Coaching.

Mr. Ben Pah reviewed the new CAASS attendance system. Each student has a card that they swipe as they enter the school. The system accurately records the date and time of each student's entrance. Parents are contacted by phone or email regarding late arrivals or absences. The cut off for on time arrival is about 10 minutes before the start of the school day. This was implemented September 19 and has greatly improved accuracy of student attendance records and simplified the daily process. Mr. Pah noted that travel time is an issue for a few students, but that most are now coming from near the school. The school expects this trend to continue over time.

The school is now nearly fully staffed with only one open position. Mr. Colin Greene discussed the recent change in the physical education teacher and explained how this position will be handled in the future.

Mrs. Jane Tulley reviewed teacher qualifications standards for Atmosphere. She covered teacher requirements and certifications. She discussed the use of the EngageNY curriculum. Mrs. Tulley stated that directors and coordinators are commenting on teacher's lesson plans regularly to increase teacher effectiveness. The data and assessment system was reviewed with the board, including how data is collected and analyzed. Atmosphere's universal lesson plan template was also discussed.

Mrs. Tulley then reviewed efforts to achieve certain goals, including common planning time for teachers, targeted professional development, the observation and feedback cycle, and the comprehensive response to intervention plan.

Agenda Item 5.2 Audit/ Finance Update

Mr. Bryan Fryer reviewed the financial "dashboard" M group is proposing. The board pressed him for both a backward and forward looking dashboard to enable better decisions. It recommended a 60-day horizon and forward looking on cash.

He reviewed the financial performance of the school and the factors driving the profit and loss statement. He also reviewed the payment activity including timing of certain payments and staff changes.

Mr. Fryer and the board discussed the bonus structure, retention requirements and the uniform policy for next year. He noted the impact on cash of these items on the August cash flow.

Next he reviewed the expense tracker which will be used by management to manage cash.

Father Lynch departed at 6:55PM.

Agenda Item 5.3 Policies

Mr. Ben Pah and Mr. Michael Livolsi reviewed the Family and Medical Leave Act and how it interacts with the school's medical leave policy. Record keeping and administration of the program was discussed. Mr. Colin Greene joined the discussion. The team discussed how employees might use the options provided by the law and the Atmosphere plan. Dr. Powderly reviewed how the public school's plans work. After discussion the board moved to adopt the FMLA Policy proposed. The motion was seconded and unanimously approved.

Agenda Item 5.4 Fundraising

Mr. Colin Greene presented a draft set of charts to be used with potential donors to Atmosphere. Board members commented and made recommendations on the history of the school as well as distinguishing facts and needs of the school.

There was no executive session.

A motion was made to adjourn and this was adopted by the board.