

Members Present

Henry A. Lambert, Chair
Michael A. Catlyn, Vice Chair
Tony Betaudier
Diana J Lee
Mark David
Joanne Hunt (ex-officio non-voting)

Others Present

Mary Kate Boesch
Pamptata Sanders
Colathur Janardhanan
Roger Redhead
Deshana Hunt

The meeting was held on January 12th, 2017 at the school. The meeting was called to order at 5:45pm. The minutes for the meeting held on December 12th, 2016 were approved.

Finance

The school currently has 235 students enrolled but we are trying to increase this to 240 students.

The budget was presented with a planned surplus for the year. A number of steps were taken since last year to improve the budget. The number of assistant teachers has been reduced from 9 to 6. The use of substitute teachers has declined significantly because the school is now using assistant teachers instead, which results in savings of approximately \$200 per hour. Investment in professional development has been brought down from \$69,000 last year to \$35,000 this year. The health insurance costs have increased this year and these will be reviewed including revisiting the buy-out option. Catering/Hospitality has increased but that is because some of the costs from Special Events have been re-categorized. Overall the Special Events and Catering/Hospitality lines combined have decreased significantly from last year. The amount budgeted to be spent on Special Events has decreased from nearly \$60,000 to \$20,000. Last year the 5th Graders did not go on a field trip but this has been re-introduced into the budget for this year. The bank's Management Fees are in the budget at \$11,000 but this could be closer to \$30,000. There have been major savings in terms of the late day academy. The teachers are staying an hour later for this but buses are no longer required as parents are now able to collect their children thanks to the later time. The school is introducing a program for younger siblings so the older siblings will not miss out on the after school programs.

The budget will be revised to reflect revenues assuming 235 students (current enrollment) as well as 240 students. A motion to adopt the budget passed conditional on also reflecting revenues assuming 235 students.

Education

The after school academic programs will not be 1 on 1 tuition but will be targeted for groups of students, focusing on general areas of difficulty for the students. This program will start on January 23rd. Additional after school programs are being planned, with chess and choral group being considered.

The reading level of the students has improved considerably but this is much stronger than their current writing ability. Many of the students are really struggling with writing and this will be the focus of most of the teaching efforts in the coming months. Joanne developed the students in her previous school to become avid writers and so is working with Karma on this. The school has the resources it is more a matter of the process at this stage. There will be another set of interim exams in 3 weeks and this will give a better sense of how ready the students are for the end of year tests.

Punctuation is not formally being taught at the school and this has to change. It should start being taught in first grade.

Pam informed the board that in terms of multiple choice the students performed well but whenever written explanations were required their answers dropped significantly. Again the focus of the after school programs, in terms of mathematics, will be on the writing side and explaining their work.

The bus matron program is really working with no serious incidents reported this year.

Parent Liaison Report

Parents are communicating a lot more by email. There are no longer complaints about teachers not getting back to them. There is a noticeable difference this year and parents are generally pleased.

Head of School Report

An English as Second Language teacher was hired this week. She speaks Spanish, which is very helpful.

On January 19th, the DOE will visit the school as part of the District-Charter Collaborative. The school was selected for this program and has been paired with another charter school and two DOE schools. The focus of the program will be on best practices for English as a Second Language.

There are currently 455 applications for next school year. Desiree Alexis did a breakdown of the applications by zip code. Applications from the 8 local zip codes

are most likely to actually translate into enrollment. Of the 455 applications, 178 are from these 8 zip codes, and of these 97 are kindergarten applications.

The ELA tests will be conducted at the end of March and the Math tests will be conducted at the beginning of May.

The next Board Meeting will be held at the Brooklyn Charter School on February 7th at 5:30pm.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:00pm.