

Members Present

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

Others Present

Karma Suttles (Assistant Principal)
Mary Kate Boesch
Pam Sanders
Jahde Huntley
Robert Morales
Colathur Janardhanan
Deshana Hunte

The meeting was held on February 7th at the school. The meeting was called to order at 5:30pm. The minutes for the meeting held on January 12th, 2017 were approved.

Finance

The school currently still has 235 students enrolled but we are trying to increase this to 240 students. Flyers have been distributed in order to try to recruit more students. Train stations and local projects are being targeted with the flyer distribution.

Currently 110 students come by bus, and we want to keep this number, but want to increase the number of students who walk.

The school will look at construction and design options to optimize the class sizes. Joanne is meeting with a company regarding the school's web presence next week and will provide the board with an update on this at the next meeting. The Administration will also present the plan of how we will get to and maintain 240 students.

Janardhanan presented the budget with both 235 and 240 students enrolled. This budget, even with the 235 students projects that the school will be break even for the year, excluding capital expenditure.

April 1st will be the last reimbursement installment of the reimbursement for students.

Education

The After School Program currently has 113 students (Grades 3-5). A total of 98 students enrolled and 91 showed up for ELA and 88 showed up for Math. This is proving to be a very strong program. There are also 9 siblings who are staying after school and these students play games or do homework. Small snacks and juices are provided as part of the program.

Pam informed the board that the results of the latest math interims suggest the students are still where they were in the last interims, but more material has been covered by this point. The scores are generally low, although the school does score harder than the state. No teacher is behind where they should be and now the school is about to start intensive test prep.

The teachers in ELA have been specifically addressing writing, so we should see an improvement in the writing component of the interims, which are currently underway. Writing stamina is a key element of this. Also ensuring that students specifically answer the question as framed by the Common Core.

Punctuation and grammar are also areas of focus. The students now practice this everyday. First grade is where grammar is now starting to be taught. It has to be taught but there also has to be an understanding of how to apply it when writing a sentence, and what its purpose is. The school is really starting to concentrate on this but it is not all on the students, the teachers have to do a better job as well.

Teachers have been reaching out to parents and so parents are generally happier with the communication and the school.

Mr. Morales reported that 2 positions still need to be filled, including one bus matron. The school is in the process of updating all employee files right now, including CVs, I-9s, and finger printing.

Mihran reported that there is a greater sense of community this year and that teachers are proud to work at the school. Morale is much higher.

Pam suggested that teachers in K-2 are sometimes worried about being too hard on the students but she stressed that this is where the foundation must begin.

Head of School Report

BCS was paired with Inwood Academy (grades 6 through 12) as part of the District Charter Collaborative. The idea was to develop best practices, specifically around the English Language program. Some members of the administration from BCS visited Inwood to observe the classroom and teachers in action. Feedback was provided to our teachers based on this visit. BCS currently have 15 students for whom English is a second language, including 5 who do not really understand

English. There is a mix of first languages amongst these students, including Spanish, Arabic and French.

There are approximately 750 applications for next year with most of the applications for kindergarten, 489. The school should have more PR in conjunction with the search engine optimization and website improvements.

Next Wednesday there will be dance and music performances as part of Winter Fest.

Board Trainings are coming up and Joanne will update the board by email regarding this.

Parents really like the After School Test Prep. In addition to this program chess and Digital Girl (computer programming) are also being introduced. These programs offset the rigors of the test prep programs.

This year the school has really re-focused on the academics and the initial goal is to outperform the district and public schools in the immediate area.

Dance, music, and technology really help to attract students to BCS.

The approach to discipline is now much more positive. It is in a communal space and includes life coaching. It is no longer penal in nature, which is different from most other schools. The number of students requiring discipline has decreased considerably in grades 3-5.

The next Board Meeting will be held at the Brooklyn Charter School on March 1st, 2017 at 5:30pm.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:00pm.