

Members Present

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

Members Excused

Mark David
Mihran Keoseian

Others Present

Karma Suttles
Pam Sanders
Jahde Huntley
Colathur Janardhanan
Stephanie Riviuccio

The meeting was held on March 1st at the school. The meeting was called to order at 5:40pm. The minutes from the February 17th board meeting were reviewed. A motion to adopt the minutes was made by Michael Catlyn, and seconded by Tony Betaudier then approved by all voting members.

Finance

Enrollment Strategy for 2017-18:

The school currently has 235 students enrolled and budgets for 240. The board discussed different strategies to increase enrollment for the 2017-18 school year. It was suggested that the school overenroll by 10 students for a total of 250 in the 2017-2018 with the understanding that the school will not be reimbursed for the extra 10 students. The principal agreed that this strategy would help maintain the school's budget of 240 students. The board chair referenced the trend that has surfaced each year to be that the school loses anywhere between 8-10 students each school year for various reasons (families move to different areas, some families are displaced beyond their control, students receive IEP's which require a new school setting, etc.). So by overenrolling, even if the school loses up to 10 students, the school will still meet its budgeted need of 240 students. The Principal suggested that the grades in which the school has the flexibility to overenroll would be kindergarten, first and second grade. The school will increase kindergarten enrollment to a total of 40 students, and will increase first grade/second grade enrollment to 44-46 students in 2017-18

The school is also utilizing a street team where flyers/postcards about the school as well as applications are being distributed at train stations, churches, day cares,

housing projects and local businesses in order to increase the community knowledge base of Brooklyn Charter. The board chair suggested that in our recruitment efforts, it is important to mention the unique elements that the school offers such as bus service, bus monitors and after school programs.

The school will also be participating in a host of local fairs to increase the community awareness about Brooklyn Charter School.

Joanne met with Final Piece Consulting regarding the school's web presence in March. Based on the information presented, the school will be moving forward with the option to redesign the school's website as well as create an advertising plan which will optimize the school's website and the hits that the school receives based on searches conducted on the web when it comes to charter schools in Brooklyn.

Janardhanan will present the most updated financials at the April 2017 board meeting. The school is currently working on current and outstanding transactions/receipts that need to be categorized appropriately to specific budget lines in order to present accurate financials to the board.

Education

A total of 98 students are enrolled in the ELA and Math Test Prep program out of 113 total 3rd through 5th graders. 9 siblings continue to stay after school and these students complete homework and play games when they are done. Small snacks and juices are provided as part of the program.

Update on Writing in grades 3-5

Overall ELA Interim Writing Component Growth

	December 2016	February 2017	5 week growth
3 rd grade	12.5%	21%	+11.5%
4 th grade	22.5%	33%	+10.5%
5 th grade	41.5%	50%	+8.5%
Overall	25.5%	34.6%	+9.1%

The teachers in ELA have been specifically addressing writing, which is what contributed to this percentage of growth in 5 weeks.

One 3rd grade class increased from 16% to 32% in writing during this time frame. One 4th grade class increased from 20% to 46% in writing during this time frame. The other 4th grade class increased from 25% to 40% in writing during this time frame.

One 5th grade class increased from 33% to 50% in writing during this time frame.

It is evident that the writing focus within the classrooms during the day along with the test prep after school program has allowed the students to improve overall in their writing.

Students have remained steady with reading comprehension which is why we did not report the multiple choice component of the January 2017 interim.

A second conversation began about the lack of punctuation/grammar/usage being introduced to students in the early elementary grades (K-2). The board chair was interested in knowing why direct instruction in writing which includes punctuation, grammar and usage was not being taught directly in the early grades. The question that arose was why does BCS not utilize some form of textbook or guide to aid students in learning the process of writing. The continued concern by board members is that the students will not pick up grammar/usage/punctuation through osmosis and that it needs to be deliberately instructed. The Assistant Principal of ELA stated that there were no "good" program(s)/curriculum for teaching grammar/punctuation in isolation. She then offered to research curriculum/textbooks/programs for information and bring it to the Principal for review along with examples for the next board meeting.

Head of School Report

The school is still in need of a 3rd grade ICT teacher, but has hired a permanent substitute. The substitute will remain in the position until it is filled.

BCS is part of the District Charter Collaborative which focuses on developing best practices, specifically around our English Language program. BCS will host a DCC visit on March 21, 2017 to get feedback on what practices are working at the school as well as what ways BCS can improve the program from three other schools that BCS has been partnered with, one school being P.S. 23 which is located in the same building as BCS.

There are approximately 769 applications for next year with most of the applications for kindergarten, 492.

The next Board Meeting will be held on April 4th, 2017 at 6:00pm. The location is to be determined.

Tony made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Michael seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 6:14pm.

As requested by the Principal, the board went into Executive Session to discuss a parent concern regarding threats and harassment.

