

Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes Tuesday, April 28, 2020

Members present: Olubunmi Eigli, Manu Bhagavan, Richard T. Bogle,
Jeanette Betancourt. Maura Fitzgerald

Others present: Jeffrey Aler, Mark Crusante, Lucille Ranchor, Randi Berry,
Dechelle Damien, Karrine Montaque, Cathy Crews, Brian Ferguson,
Jayme Pabon

Meeting called to order: 7:12pm

CEO Report:

The meeting was opened with a welcome from Mr. Ferguson who described how the meeting was in keeping with Open Meeting Laws, being recorded and transcribed.

- Mr. Ferguson gave an update on organizational activities related to the school closure and the distance learning program. The school has tried to continue business as usual, in whatever way it is able.
- The Human Resources department is trying to keep abreast of all of the various regulations, rules and shifts as it relates to Covid. H.R. is in good shape at this point.
- OWNCS is working on its retention and recruitment efforts. Focus is currently on OWN 2 as they expand each year requiring more staff.
- The implementation of distance learning is making good progress, things are moving along well. Teachers are responding to families, principals are working with teachers, making adjustments as needed.
- OWNCS has finalized its attendance and grading policies. The information will be communicated to the families and documented.
- Last week OWN 2 hosted their parent teacher conferences, OWN 1 is in the throes of doing their parent teacher conferences virtually.
- OWNCS is still closed only through May 15th. Waiting for an update on that situation from the governor.
- The Monday Leadership Meeting focused on what would happen if we were told to reopen school after May 15, 2020.
- Graduation will be held virtually, a speaker is needed, one of the board members to give a two-minute speech.
- OWNCS is working towards getting devices to those families. Once we have a final list and have devices on hand, the process of reaching out to families will begin.
- By the May meeting OWNCS will have a series of plans in place for the board moving forward into the next year.

Human Resources Report: Jeffrey Aler

Mr. Aler began with an update on workplace safety from CHUBB. Mr. Aler reported that OWNCS has accomplished goals set by CHUBB.

- CHUBB will send a letter to Albany to get final approval from the state, OWNCS will receive confirmation.

- Documents sent from EduRisk, safeguarding our schools from sexual predators, were distributed and discussed. Mr. Aler pointed out that OWNCS put some language in the handbook regarding this matter last year.

Admissions and Enrollment Report: Lucille Ranchor

Ms. Ranchor reported on the current enrollment efforts for OWN 1 and OWN 2 have not changed. The lottery was held for both schools on April 8th., it was a live lottery on YouTube. Mr. Bogle, Ms. Newman, Mr. Crusante, and Mr. Wilkins joined. Parents were also in attendance. The Lottery was recorded and transcribed. The number of applicants was just over 1300 for OWN 1, of that number, four hundred and seventy were for kindergarten. Three hundred and sixteen for OWN 2, one hundred and seventy-nine of that number were for kindergarten.

- Currently the admissions team is going through all of the responses and notifications. Confirming documentation, interacting with the parents via the internet, phone, and Zoom.
- In the throes of the Middle School Choice Information, finding out how many fifth graders are going to return, and how many are going to other schools.
- Team is also working on orientation, which will be virtual. The hope is to have it done by the beginning of June, so parents can meet the teachers and get an inside view as to what's going on in the school.
- Team is also working on creating a virtual tour of the schools.
- PTO leadership will also play a role in the orientation process.

Facilities Committee Report: Mr. Bogle

Mr. Bogle gave an update on OWN 1's request of its two landlords for rental relief.

Finance & Audit Committee Report: Karrine Montaque

- Ms. Montaque provided information on the schools' application for PPP funds. The bulk of the PPP will go towards salaries and benefits, very little towards rent and utilities. Ninety percent of PPP will be used to sustain and make sure OWNCS is able to make payroll in the next several months given the initial statements from the mayor and governor of a 5.5% reduction in per pupil funding, secondarily a threat of an additional 20% cut.
- The finance department is finalizing its work on the third quarter reports, working on the budget for next year, and keeping up with the day to day. There are a lot of changes with respect to the grants, some of the grants are being extended into the following year, OWNCS will not have to spend every dollar right now because of COVID-19.

External Affairs Report: Mark Crusante

Mr. Crusante added that he has a COVID 19 resources alert on Listserv,

- OWNCS is waiting for guidance from USDOE to give to NYSED because the feds are giving grant funds to the state which they'll determine their own process for applying. The school also knows that with the reduction in the governor's per pupil budget there is Bullet Aid for charter schools, we're waiting on guidance from that as well. Spoken to David Frank from NYSED, he said its fourth coming.

Parent Teacher Organization Report: Randi Berry and Dechelle Damien

Ms. Damien and Ms. Berry updated the board on continuing the support families.

- Found an additional four or five laptops for needy families, haven't had anyone reach out that we have not been able to help. The PTO has been able to help everyone so far.
- One family has lost a parent within the school, PTO has been in touch with that family, sent groceries through Freshdirect this week. Offered to help support if she needs tutoring for her daughter, or any mental health services.
- The PTO has reallocated from budgeted events that will not be happening due to school closure to efforts to support families in need due to COVID-19.
- Ms. Damien added that the PTO is working on a Saturday morning class for the kids so they can continue the work they were doing during the week.
- PTO has sent out nomination forms for PTO leadership for the 2020-21 school year. The next board meeting is Friday, May 8th. Mr. Ferguson joined the last PTO meeting, it was wonderful to have him there, it was also probably one of the better attended meetings. People wanted to have a connection and wanted to have the conversation.
- The adjustments have been well received by the families, everybody's incredibly grateful, the school is adapting in unbelievable ways and we're very pleased as parents. It's a tough time, some people are faring better than others, for the most part everybody feels strongly that the school, the teachers, and the administration are really delivering and going above and beyond what our expectations were. We feel they've been exceeded and there's a lot of gratitude from the parents.

OWN 1 Faculty Report: Jayme Pabon

Ms. Pabon stated that the faculty has been adjusting each week based on the needs of the kids and feedback, trying to adjust to all of the requirements and get through it as best as possible. Mrs. Pabon pointed out that graduation and award ceremonies will take place virtually.

Meeting Adjourned: 8:50pm