APPROVED

New Heights Charter School Board of Trustees

Minutes

February Board Meeting

Date and Time
Tuesday March 7, 2023 at 5:00 PM

Location
1105 W. Chestnut St or Zoom

Join Zoom Meeting
https://nhcsb-org.zoom.us/j/8981912806?pwd=WHJ2dE1sTHNYVlVmNUsvTkxEaW1JZz09
Meeting ID: 898 191 2806
Passcode: Eiqs3m

New Heights Board of Trustees
January 31st, 2023
Starting Time: 5:00pm
Location: 1105 W Chestnut Street
Brockton, MA 02301
Join Zoom Meeting

ZOOM Meeting:
Description:
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8981912806?pwd=WHJ2dE1sTHNYVlVmNUsvTkxEaW1JZz09

Trustees Present
G. Bengen (remote), G. Phillips, J. Charnel (remote), N. Christ (remote), S. Bernard, S. Jackson, V. Marturano (remote)

Trustees Absent
M. Sullivan

Trustees who arrived after the meeting opened
J. Charnel

Trustees who left before the meeting adjourned
G. Bengen, N. Christ

Ex Officio Members Present
O. Walker

Guests Present
J. Geier, J. Vega (remote), K. Kendrick, M. Fernandes (remote), M. Tracey (remote), M. Walek (remote), R. Bevis (remote), S. Graham (remote), S. Stephney (remote), T. Chin (remote), W. Libby (remote)

I. Opening Items

A. Call the Meeting to Order

G. Phillips called a meeting of the board of trustees of New Heights Charter School Board of Trustees to order on Tuesday Mar 7, 2023 at 5:05 PM.

B. Approved Board Members List

C. Roll Call

D. Reading and Approval of Minutes

N. Christ made a motion to approve the minutes from January Board Meeting on 01-31-23.
V. Marturano seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

Roll Call

M. Sullivan	Absent
S. Bernard	Aye
J. Charnel	Absent
G. Phillips	Aye
S. Jackson	Aye
N. Christ	Aye
G. Bengen	Aye
V. Marturano	Aye

II. Executive Director's Report

A.

New Promo Video

The following video was presented to the board: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1xddB3mBnI44OsxCGz8YOoJHqRZfpxfil/view?usp=sharing

B. Enrollment Report

- Enrollment was presented to the board. There are 729 students currently enrolled.

C. Upcoming Lottery

- First lottery will be March 10th. Focus will be on 6th graders.
- There are 394 applicants in the lottery
  - 121 in 6th grade, 9 students from Randolph
  - 51 in 7th grade
  - 43 in 8th grade
  - 107 in 9th grade
  - 40 in 10th grade
  - 32 in 11th grade
- Vinnie - what does it mean that the Randolph students may or may not be siblings?
- Omari - when a city meets its 18% cap of funding, the city doesn't have to fund beyond that. We can accept the students but the state recommends we don't do that. However, if the student is a sibling the state acknowledges that it's unfair to make them go to another district so siblings are eligible to be accepted and are covered by state funding. The 9 students we don't know if they have siblings at the school.
- Steve - where do the OOD students come from?
- Omari - Our district is Randolph, Brockton, and Taunton. If during the first lottery we don't meet our goal of 105 we are able to accept out of district students if the city hasn't met its cap. It could also be from students moving out of district who are able to transport themselves to school.

D. Winter Sports Update

- Reggie Carter presented an update to New Heights winter sports.
  - Boys Varsity are State Champions for Charter Schools
  - Girls Varsity made it to top 4
- There are seats reserved for the board at all home games and the board is encouraged to attend if able.
- New Heights is joining MIAA which will allow them to play public schools as well as charter schools.
- The highlight reel from the championship was played

J. Charnel arrived at 5:37 PM.

E. Good Happenings

- Kandice Sumner presented on the activities the Culture Team is doing at the school
    - Community Days - community building with all staff members
    - Extracurricular - dances, field trips
    - Skill Building
    - Enrichment - parent engagement
- Meagan Tracey presented on MCC
    - Only received 19 early alerts this spring, decrease of 64% from the fall
    - 19 students invited to join PTK
    - March 15, 25 students to visit Grant Thornton for a career day
    - Almost every senior have received acceptance to college
    - Professors are reporting that students are more engaged in class and students have been invited to be MCC student ambassadors
- Graduation date has been finalized. It will be Wednesday, June 7 at 6pm at Bridgewater State Auditorium.

F. MCC Vaccine Mandate

- Mandate has been a struggle for us over the past couple of years and we've had no wiggle room.
- On March 2nd, the 15 community colleges met to lift the mandate. On May 23rd we can have unvaccinated students/staff return to campus.
- This will help alleviate scheduling and building concerns for next year.
- We will be able to run a full Summer Bridge program this year that will allow students to spend a full week on campus.
- We have heard that there are faculty who will argue against this so we are planning on the chance that MCC reverses this decision to keep the mandate in place.

G. A+ Program

- This program provides a "13th grade" for students to continue earning college credits to obtain their Associate's.
- We have been running with grant funds but the program costs more than the grants cover.
- We will have more interest and less funding to run the program next year so we are recommending that we don't provide the program. The state still has no work around to provide funding to charter schools.
- Vinnie - As I recall this was just targeted at seniors who had not earned their degree. Can you give us a quick overview of the time and effort that's been devoted to the program?

- Omari - we were more successful in the first year than last year.
- Maria - This year we've done an A+ alternative where we have enrolled students in certification courses while taking classes.
- Vinnie - I would like to see information on the program over the years. Would hate to walk away thinking it wasn't successful.
- Judge - I don't believe there's any reason to discuss further as there is no money. We can revisit when/if the money becomes available.

G. Bengen left at 6:05 PM.

III. Old Business

A. Early College 3 Strikes Policy

- In the beginning many students earned 1 and 2 strikes right away.
- Two students were removed from campus for having received 3 strikes.
    - After this the volume of strikes have reduced significantly so the anticipation is that we won't have to remove many more students from campus.
- Behavior in classrooms was the main issue and professors/liaisons are reporting that the students are much more engaged and are building relationships with the students
- Omari - as a reminder this was a last ditch effort to repair our relationships with MCC and the professors.

B. Nutrition Review Update

- We were alerted this morning that the state accepted the Corrective Action Plan to address the concerns in the review and have closed the report.
- We also had the Procurement report and were told that it was the best prepared report. We have received a few findings from that but mostly on some contract details.
- Had a meeting with our food vendor to discuss steps to improve. Tim had a follow up meeting today and most of the improvement goals haven't been met. There will be one more meeting in three weeks to review before a bid process is opened for a new vendor.
- Judge - Is that the usual process? We would give them notice that we are not satisfied to do this?
- Tim - yes, this is something that we would do at the next meeting. We are not up to bid yet but because we have a yearly contract we can end the contract after this meeting and go up to bid for next year.
- Jeff - do you anticipate this improving with this vendor or do you think we'll be looking for a new vendor?
- Tim - I think in the end we will look for a new vendor. We have already put the work in so that if we go up to bid we have the paperwork ready to move forward with that option.

- Judge - Do we have the option to terminate with this company without some sort of process?
- Tim - There is a no-faith clause in the contract so we can end the contract for a breach. I don't think this would be a good idea to do this because the company does lease all of the refrigerators in our prep room so we would have no way to house or feed students.
- Shelly - how many companies would we reach out to during the bid process?
- Tim - It has to be a minimum of three but ideally we would have 5-7.
- Judge - are we in an okay position if we choose to terminate? Is there time to do all this?
- Tim - yes, there is time to do all this.
- Vinnie - Has the issue of more culturally sensitive meals been brought forward in any way?
- Omari - One of the issues from the beginning has been students complaining about the food but the state requires the food be salt free. So unless the state allows that the flavor palette will not be the same. Lack of food prep area is another disadvantage as well.
- Jeff - is there any way we can use the kitchens in the city? They make the food fresh I think.
- Omari - One of the problems is the cost of the food. Only allowed to spend just over $3 per meal. We've looked into local restaurants and they can't meet it at that cost due to the standards.

IV. New Business

A. Scholarships

- Waiting to hear back from Rick about the dollar amount that can be used for scholarships.
- Trying a new process to have rolling releases of scholarships.
- Are looking for board members to be readers of the applications and ask the board if they are willing to support the scholarships as they have done in the past.
- Judge - if someone is interested in participating do they notify Maria?
- Maria - Mary Walek and I are co-chairing so you can reach out to either of us if interested.
- Jeff - is it literally a book or email that can be sent out?
- Maria - in the past it has been an electronic book that students could go through for in-house scholarships. The transition coordinator shares outside scholarships with the students. We have had businesses who have had scholarships specifically for students.
- Jeff - I'll make a pitch to the bank.

B. Building Space

- Omari - Just want to alert the board that we are bulging at the seams. Do want to begin the process of looking at other alternatives. The idea of putting another 8-10 classrooms, including science labs, in the form of an addition to the building. Looking to start the conversation so that we can start to figure out how we can pay for it. We may want to start a building committee to assist the process.

V. Academic Excellence Committee

A. Feb. 7 State Visit

- Preliminary Findings
  - Should receive a final report by April
  - Brief summary was positive
  - DESE left with positive statements and saying that the school was communicating what the state was hoping to see

VI. Finance Committee

A. YTD Finances

- No material change to the monthly update to finances. Everything is on pace.
- There will be discussions next month for Chapter 70 funds and Above Foundation Rate based on the state budget.
- Omari - there's a three step process to the state budget and funding. The first one is the Governor releasing her budget. It is apparent that the state is overfunding and the governor is recommending a 9% increase in the foundation rates and recommending to fully fund the Student Opportunity Act. According to the MCPSA the Governor's budget is usually the biggest before going to House and Senate, where they have historically increased funding from the Governor's. So we're starting at a strong point.

V. Marturano made a motion to Accept the Finance Report as presented.
G. Bengen seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.
N. Christ left at 5:18 PM.

VII. Special Orders

A. Executive Session to Discuss Staffing

S. Bernard made a motion to Enter Executive Session.
V. Marturano seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

Roll Call

V. Marturano	Aye
N. Christ	Absent
S. Jackson	Aye
S. Bernard	Aye
G. Bengen	Absent
G. Phillips	Aye
M. Sullivan	Absent
J. Charnel	Aye

Entered executive session at 6:40pm

VIII. Good of the Order

A. Announcements

- In person meetings have to resume by March 31, 2023
  - Quorum must be in person, but virtual is still an option as long as a majority is in person.

IX. Closing Items

A. Adjourn Meeting

S. Bernard made a motion to adjourn.
V. Marturano seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.
There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 7:36 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
G. Phillips

Documents used during the meeting

- Enrollment as of March 6.docx
- Herc42Skills LLC & New Heights.pdf
- January 2023 Finance Committee Report.pdf