APPROVED

New Heights Charter School Board of Trustees

Minutes

March Board Meeting

Date and Time
Tuesday March 28, 2023 at 5:00 PM

Location
1105 W Chestnut St
Brockton, MA 02301

New Heights Board of Trustees
March 28th, 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. Phillips, J. Charnel, N. Christ (remote), S. Bernard, S. Jackson (remote), V. Marturano

Trustees Absent
G. Bengen, M. Sullivan

Trustees who arrived after the meeting opened
J. Charnel, S. Bernard

Trustees who left before the meeting adjourned
N. Christ

Ex Officio Members Present

O. Walker

Guests Present
J. Geier, J. Vega (remote), K. Kendrick, M. Fernandes, 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 28, 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 February Board Meeting on 03-07-23.
V. Marturano seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

II. Executive Director's Report

A. Enrollment/Lottery Report

- Lourdes presented the enrollment report
  - 726 students total enrolled
  - First lottery on March 10th - 110 accepted in 6th grade and 11th in 8th grade
  - 259 students are on the waitlist, next lottery is April 28th with 80 new applications
- Vinnie - how many slots are we looking to fill and how many have we filled?
  - Lourdes - with the current enrollment and accepted students we have over 735. We start receiving communication about next year in May. If everything stays the same we have no open spots.
- Vinnie - is there diversity among the applicants?
  - Lourdes - not sure, I would have to check on that.
- Steve - there's no way to manage diversity and it just has to happen correct?
  - Omari - it can happen through recruitment efforts but not after they apply.

S. Bernard arrived at 5:10 PM.

B. A Dream Deferred: The Future of African American Education Conference in Chicago

- Maria Fernandes provided an overview of the New Heights presentation of model at College Board's March conference.
- Steve - how present is the early college model throughout education that you learned at this conference?
    - Omari - the conference was mostly HBCU's so it was smaller during this, but other conferences we go to are primarily for early college schools. On a national level what we've done is impressive compounded with the fact that we are only 7 years old.

C. North Carolina RTI School Site Visits

- Omari discussed the visit to two early college high schools in NC. These schools have admissions requirements and one of the things that stood out was that they allow the 11/12 students to take classes independently at the college. Additionally, a stand out was that New Heights' students are performing higher being admitted by a lottery.

D. New Heights Showcase March 29

- Research Triangle Institute (RTI) is the leader of early college nationally and has partnered with 6 MA schools. They are taking the MA schools to different early college schools in MA. Additionally Shaws and the board will visit to see every part of New Height's model in process.
- Meeting at 9:30am in the MCC parking lot

J. Charnel arrived at 5:35 PM.

E. Board Retreat April 4, 2023

- Meet at Massasoit in the Student Center Building. April 4 9am-3pm
- Board would like a discussion of how they can be more involved in the school.
- Judge - does the board need to take a role in planning?
    - Omari - Maria's taken the lead but if the board wants to appoint someone to review the agenda before the meeting that would be great.
    - Maria - Have had conversations with Vinnie to discuss the board.

F. Early College Update

- Meagan presented the following: https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1UIywY1heF1tPUG4WhlInYXvSwvFHRB7tF5tE1as44EE/edit?usp=sharing
- Judge - What are the issues leading up to the strikes?

    - Meagan - what we've found is the strikes are usually students repeating the same behaviors.
- Jeff - when the students arrive late is there a grace period?
    - Meagan - students have to be in class on time. If there hasn't been communication or the student wasn't with a professor they receive a strike after investigation.
    - Jeff - does the student have enough time to get to class on time?
    - Meagan - Yes, there's about 10 minutes between each class.
- Judge - does the student have the opportunity to dispute their strike with you?
    - Meagan - yes, when they receive the strike they come to my office and we evaluate if it was a true strike or was made in error.
- Omari - since this strike system was implemented I've only received positive reviews from the professors regarding our students.
- 34% of seniors on track to get their associate's degree if they pass this semester's classes. Upcoming seniors are around 50% but this semester will be very telling as to who will be able to complete their degree next year.
    - Omari - these are the covid classes so it is encouraging to see that the second class is quickly catching back up to our pre-covid classes.

III. Old Business

A. A+ Presentation

Krystel Love presented the following presentation: https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1qnigJVNowiqDk3LuA4t7X97HYiRhpsIXhMo3Xom6WgU/edit?usp=sharing

- 10 students are already interested in A+ for next year.

B. Window Grant

- Tim provided an update on the bidding process for the window grant.
    - On March 17 a bid was delivered that responded to all of the items on scope of services. Bid was approved in amount of $60,000
    - Company will be getting started next week, all construction will happen after school hours.
- Jeff - is there a contingency in the bid? If there's any change orders?
    - Tim - if there's any changes we have to submit an addendum to the bid and scope of services to the company.
    - Jeff - what is the process?
    - Tim - it would get issued to me and I would write any change orders. It would have to be signed and executed by Omari and the owner of the company doing the project.

- Vinnie - We got a grant for $120,000 but the quote came in lower. What's the plan for the other $60,000?
    - Tim - at the end of June the funds would go back to the grant pot and we can reapply for the grant in a different manner, such as HVAC for next year.
- Jeff - did we think windows would be more expensive?
    - Tim - initially we thought we'd have to replace all the windows. During site visits companies recommended we not replace the windows but just re-seal and refurbish them.
- Judge - The refurbishment is part of the $60,000?
    - Tim - Yes.

C. Board Scholarship Donation

- Vinnie made a bid for scholarship donations from the board as scholarship funds in the past have come from Resiliency Foundation, the Board, and community members.
    - Currently have $8,000 in the pot
    - Last year gave a $1,500 scholarship from the board
- Omari - scholarship team is being more strategic in how they are releasing the scholarships to increase student participation
    - Maria - we will be releasing the scholarships one or two at a time to provide students more time to apply
- Maria will follow up with Rick and get back to the board at the retreat to find information
- Jess recommends going to Friends of New Heights website to donate online so there isn't a delay with checks being processed.

D. Creation of Building Committee

- Need to develop a standing building committee group. There was a capital needs assessment done on the building and there are recommendations in that report of what needs to be addressed. Need a committee to look at what to do with our current building as well as alternatives to provide more space and funding for that space.
- Jeff - could we go to the state for funding?
    - Omari - no, we get a flat rate unlike a traditional school.
- Shelly - are there any plans at looking at a capital campaign to raise the funds? Would like to see us to come up with some potential ideas versus going to a bank for a loan.
    - Jeff - we couldn't lobby the state representatives to put a capital fund earmarked for us? Nonprofits do it all the time
        - Omari - could see if Friends of New Heights could lobby for that

    - Shelly - there is a list of organizations that donate to 501c3 organizations, there could be some potential funding out there. I will send the listing over.
    - Omari - I do know Atlantis Charter School did a capital campaign so there must be a way to do this.
- Jeff and Shelly offered to be on committee
- Tim will send over the report assessment.

IV. Finance Committee

A. Summary of Draft FY24 Budget

- Budget is still a work in progress. COVID and ESSER grants left us cash rich and there is still some of these funds left to spend in FY24.
- Will have a deeper discussion on this next month

B. YTD Finances

- Forecast is more in line with what we should anticipate for fiscal year end. Anticipating a surplus there.
- Being mindful that any grants or funds that don't have to be spent this year will be carried over to next year wherever possible.
- Budget is performing well, nothing to report that isn't inline through February 2023.

C. Consideration for Taking Alternative Financial Measures

- COVID and ESSER grants left us cash rich and there is still some of these funds left to spend in FY24. We don't want to sacrifice any services. Because of this we may run/present a budget with a deficit for the first time.
- SOA funding is for 5 or 7 years, it began in FY23. SOA comes from the state and is to address equal funding for poorer districts. Anticipate that this will increase the per pupil allotment in the next coming years. Estimates for next year from the state is roughly $1,000 more per pupil. Anticipating that our core funding will increase over the next 5 years.
- Knowing that we want to keep services level and that SOA funding will increase over the coming years, do we want to tap into the reserves? Anticipating a small deficit that we want to use our cash to pay for.
- No questions from the board at this time.

V. Marturano made a motion to accept the Finance Report.
S. Bernard seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.
N. Christ left at 6:13 PM.

V. Governance Committee

A. Update on Members

- Newest candidate was part of the commissioner's meeting this morning and we should have a decision on them shortly.

VI. Special Orders

A. Executive Session to Discuss a Legal Situation

J. Charnel made a motion to enter Executive Session to discuss a legal situation.
V. Marturano seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

Roll Call

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

VII. Good of the Order

A. Announcements

B. Security

- Judge - because of the increase in incidents in the country I want to be thinking of what we can do to improve safety in the school.
    - Tim - This is something staff have repeatedly asked for. We have fully transitioned building alarm so every door is armed and active during the door and reports directly to Brockton Police. Revamped and updated building cameras, along with adding new cameras to the exterior. We also signed the school up for ALICE (Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, Evacuate) training which allows the staff to become certified in case of violent incidents at the school on how to react. Over 60% of staff have successfully completed this training.
    - Jeff - do we have a system that if someone walking by the building tries to jiggle a door? Are there practices for what happens when a door is left open or someone's keycard is missing?
        - Tim - the front desk alarms the doors after students arrive and leave in the morning. If a door is open the alarm won't start and will alert

which door is open so it can be investigated. The front desk and my office with have monitors with live streams of the cameras.
    - Judge - we have an SRO so what are their responsibilities?
        - Omari - there is a police shortage so all SROs have been removed and reassigned. Any time we need police support they have sent someone immediately but no school has an SRO assigned to them.
    - Jeff - my concern is if a door doesn't lock properly or if a student leaves a door open?
        - Omari - the only doors unlocked during the door are manned by staff during arrival and dismissal. Other than that the doors are locked.
        - Jeff - would like to see maintenance that the doors are locking properly at least on a quarterly basis.
        - Tim - we no longer give staff physical keys to the outside doors. They are set to a certain schedule and only have access to doors that the position requires. Even if someone were to lose their fob, nobody will be able to use it to enter an unmanned door and staff have been great about reporting if they have lost one. We can very easily delete the activation of that fob so that if it is found it can't be used to access the building.
    - Steve - is there any metal detectors for people who have access to the building?
        - Omari - we don't have that but if the board wants us to look into we can.
        - Judge - it is something I would like to be looked into. Suggests discussing security more during the retreat.
        - Jeff - the high school tried metal detectors and it was a dumpster fire, students were waiting outside until period 3. So it may not be efficient.

- Jess will be sending an email to board after the meeting regarding new conflict of interest training required by the state.

VIII. Closing Items

A. Adjourn Meeting

J. Charnel 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 7:12 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
G. Phillips

Documents used during the meeting

- Enrollment as of March 27th.docx