APPROVED

New Heights Charter School Board of Trustees

Minutes

August Board Meeting

Date and Time
Wednesday August 14, 2024 at 5:00 PM

Location
1105 West Chestnut Street, Brockton MA 02301

New Heights Board of Trustees
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. Gibson Sheffield (remote), G. Phillips, J. Charnel, S. Bernard, S. Jackson (remote), V. Marturano, W. Lyttle (remote)

Trustees Absent
G. Swaby, J. Radzevich, M. Sullivan, N. Christ

Ex Officio Members Present
O. Walker

Guests Present
J. Geier (remote), K. Kendrick, M. Fernandes, M. Jean, N. Jones (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 Wednesday Aug 14, 2024 at 5:08 PM.

B. Approved Board Members List

C. Roll Call

D. Reading and Approval of Minutes

J. Charnel made a motion to approve the minutes from Board Meeting on 06-24-24.
S. Bernard seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

II. Chairperson's Report

A. Mike Sullivan's Formal Resignation

- Judge Phillips reported that Michael Sullivan presented his formal resignation at the June 24 Governance Committee meeting which was reluctantly accepted. Governance Committee will recommend new nominees for open positions later in the meeting.

J. Charnel made a motion to accept Michael Sullivan's resignation as Chairman and Board member.
V. Marturano seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

III. Executive Director's Report

A. Enrollment/Lottery Report

- Current enrollment is at 750 however this can change as the school year begins.
    - Are these numbers projected going into the school year?
        - These are current students who will be returning and the incoming students are who have accepted and have completed the enrollment process
    - The projection is 15 students above 735, how does this compare to last year? How do you know how many won't attend?
        - There's no real science behind it, the way that the lottery works requires us to only invite a certain amount of students which can be difficult once the school year begins. Our enrollment locks at October

1 but it's difficult to increase enrollment after school begins. We would rather begin the school year with some extra students instead of being short students.

B. Yass Prize

- What is Yass Prize: The Yass Prize is a rapidly growing effort to find, reward, celebrate and expand best-in-class education organizations from every sector, in every state. In April, New Heights submitted an application for this prestigious award. The Yass Team is looking not only for innovative organizations but to especially recognize the educational entrepreneurs who drive these progressive approaches.
- Selects 16 organizations for semi finalists and 10 are chosen for finalist with the winner winning a cash prize of 1 million dollars.
- Omari/New Heights Charter School was chosen as a potential semi finalist and interviewed at the start of August with a series of questions and given information about next steps. Semi finalist will be announced on September 5th via zoom.
- Has there been any other organizations that have been chosen for this prize?
    - 2 charter schools, 1 of the schools being a school New Heights assisted with identifying their model

C. Summer Programming Updates

Summer Bridge: Different planning and set-up this summer - offered SB to rising 10th graders at MCC campus for 5-weeks. Week A was "Mathasoit Course". On Week B - continued with course work but also attending field trips and were accompanied by BSU staff.

The program was voluntarily and received great feedback and interest from families for students.

- Open to students who did not have to attend Summer School
- "Mathassoit": created a course that mimicked a college-bearing course, students were broken up into 2 cohorts by assessment
- Hired 2 NHCSB Math teachers who supported scholars in this program as well as admin staff
- Participated in team-building activities, website building and a list of skill-building activities
- Spent 4 days at BSU where they learned about majors and exploring student life

In addition, students got a chance to go on college tours in a process where those who were interested would sign-up,required to complete a post-tour survey which also helped

with suggestions and feedback for future tours. Students also attended an HBCU tour for the first week of August.

Summer School at NHCSB: provided credit-recovery and new learning activities for advancement to next grade-level. Students had 2-blocks which focused on STEM and Humanities. The program was coordinated by Ms. Smith with 4 administrators and 10 teachers. Numbers were provided which revealed 32 students were invited but in total 38 students participated. 29 students out of 30 completed the program successfully with 1 student not being able to meet this standard due to not meeting expectations outlined in the handbook.

-How do we fund the summer program?

- Decided not to offer summer bridge funding but DESE gave us $300,000 for funding. Could be because we have done very well in the past when we report back as to how we use funding.
- Did we use all of the money? Yes.
- Compared to other charter schools in the area, are they doing as good or mimicking what we do? Taking charter out of it, no other schools are doing what New Heights is doing for our students
- Are we guaranteed the money next year? We were previously told not to plan for any money but we received a call in June that we have money for us to do what we need for summer programming.
- What plans do we have in place to make sure math is strongly put in place in grades 6-9 to decrease remediation? Due to 9th grade teacher going on medical leave in November of 2023 which could have been a set-back for the scholars. We have rectified this situation for this new school by hiring strong staff and ensuring our teachers in the 8th grade are the best teachers to teacher our students.

IV. Old Business

A. Science Lab

-Renee reported rationale and many benefits the science lab would serve at New Heights

-Tim reported on the process and location for the science lab and provided visuals of a blue print. Brockton Building Department approved our permit for construction.

-Jess reported on Amelia Peabody Foundation grant who awarded 50,000 dollars for phase 1 of the lab development. This grant will also be able to fund advanced materials. We were also awarded the Mass Life Science Center with an amount of $52,000 which will pay for the gas and water line construction into the lab classroom amongst other things.

Is the grant money restricted? Does it have to be used for particular things?

- The Peabody grant is not restricted at all and was open to support the establishment of a line. The Mass Science grant is restricted and must be used for the means of safety and would need approval per previously written budget line item.

How do we track grant money?

- We have a weekly grant meeting where budget development is discussed and federal guidelines and result in minutes and budgets managed by the CFO and Finance Dept to ensure we are in compliance.

V. New Business

A. Operations

Tim shared building updates and capital projects: New Electrical Panel System: a greater need to replace this system as the maintenance has become obsolete. We have had 2 different electricians come in and assess. Option 1 quoted $120-150k and option 2 suggested $250k+

-How much Is capital improvement?

- $50k

-What is the status of the electrical panel itself? Why does it need to be replaced? Why was it not replaced when the school opened?

- It is not a code issue but it is old - it is from 1955. The concern is that there will be an issue with that generator and the whole system will need to be replaced (the distribution box). It could not be replaced in 2016 due to low funds/no money. Although, last school year we reported a deficit in funding, we were still able to come out with some funds but could not roll it into this years budget.
- Lighting will be replaced with LED lighting with total costs throughout the building could cost almost 15k

Painting Job that took place over the summer: hallways look crisp and refreshed.

-Has there been further discussion about selling the building?

- We own the building

-Is there any money for state level money for a school building?

- Tim has not seen anything announced or reported but in the past we have used an IVA Q Grant for the air ventilation repairs in the building.

V. Marturano made a motion to - Amend the start/ process of upgrading electrical panels through an RFP and exploring more options. -Delaying the proposal/start of funding our lighting issues through an RFP.
J. Charnel seconded the motion.
To explore other options of funding other than the RFP. Companies such as Eversource and National Grid who can supply funding for lighting.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

B. New Medical Forms

Discussion postponed

VI. Academic Excellence Committee

A. August Meeting

1. Looking forward to meeting on a monthly basis as well and exploring the NHCSB dashboard. Meeting every month on a Wednesday before the 4th Tuesday of the month via zoom. Maria will create a calendar with the dates in advance for all members to have on record.
2. Renee Lewis reports about SOA plan that was voted on at the June meeting regarding our 9th graders improving their grades.
3. Dr. Jones reported on Summer Profession Development for staff - creating alignment in the school and presenting a wall-to-wall presentation from each department detailing how SY 24-25 will look like
4. Judge Philips formally asking Dr. Jones to give reports of the health of the community during board meetings. Dr. Jones speaks on NHCSB "Back to School Event" on August 28th from 1pm-4pm for a meet-and-greet with families to meet all staff, multiple community figures, and stakeholders. She extends the invitation to Board of Trustees.

J. Charnel made a motion to to approve August Minutes from Academic Excellence Committee meeting.
V. Marturano seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

VII. Finance Committee

A. N/A

A report will be given from the previous month at our September meeting due to having auditors here most of the summer.

VIII. Governance Committee

A. Recommendation for New Officers

Putting forth a slate of officers to fill 3 board officer vancancies

-Judge Gregory Phillips will take on Chair
-Steve Bernard will take on Vice Chair
-Williams Lyttle will on role as Board Secretary
V. Marturano made a motion to accept to fill the 3 vacancies of Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary.
S. Bernard seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

B. Executive Directors Summary

- Discussion was around publishing raw data of the evaluation which Jess worked on capturing the high levels of it
- Offer the summary to go into public record

J. Charnel made a motion to accept the report regarding the Executive Director Summary.
S. Bernard seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

C. Draft Committee Minutes

reported from the June meeting
J. Charnel made a motion to accept minutes from June meeting.
S. Bernard seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

IX. Good of the Order

A. Board Chair Gift

Mike Sullivan submitted his resignation letter and with that a gift of a standard chair will be given to Mr. Sullivan and delivered to the school on August 30th.

B. Dr. Jones has been doing a remarkable job modeling what Leadership looks like and acknowledges this in front of the Board.

C. September Board Meeting

X. Closing Items

A.

Adjourn Meeting

J. Charnel made a motion to adjourn the meeting.
S. Bernard 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 7:08 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
G. Phillips

Documents used during the meeting

- June 24 Goverance Meeting Minutes - ED Evaluation[19].docx