APPROVED

New Heights Charter School Board of Trustees

Minutes

October Board Meeting

Date and Time
Tuesday October 29, 2024 at 5:00 PM

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

ZOOM Meeting:
Description:
Zoom:https://nhcsb-org.zoom.us/my/melissajean?pwd=MXlyUkhZa3QwYi9DQTdpWDNCaVpOUT09&omn=81076250750

Trustees Present
G. Gibson Sheffield (remote), G. Phillips, J. Charnel (remote), J. Radzevich (remote), N. Christ (remote), S. Bernard, S. Jackson (remote), V. Marturano, W. Lyttle

Trustees Absent
G. Bengen, G. Swaby

Ex Officio Members Present
O. Walker

Guests Present

J. Geier, K. Kendrick, M. Fernandes, M. Jean, N. Jones

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 Oct 29, 2024 at 5:02 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 September Meeting Board Meeting on 09-24-24.
V. Marturano seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

II. Chairperson's Report (N/A)

A. Parent Complaint

Ms. Price made a complaint about her 6th grade student being wrongfully unenrolled from New Heights on October 4th.

- GP asks how does that information become accessible to him, JG, and any other appropriate board or staff member?
  - The complain procedure - the complaint is made and the board receives it in writing. Once that complain is received, The school and other appropriate representatives have 30 days to respond. NHCSB responded within 48 hours.

B. Board Member Resignation

G. Swaby submitted her resignation and included a letter. GP accepted it.

How long has she been on the board? 1 year.
N. Christ made a motion to accept resignation.
J. Radzevich seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

III. Executive Director's Report

A. Updates

-State of the School:

- Clear Communication
- Standards are set
- Existing as a 1 Band, 1 Sound Community

-Staffing:

- On November 4th, our MS Math and Scienc teaching roles will be filled
- On November 12th, our Dual Enrollment staff will be filled

-Academics

- NAEP - 50 random students were selected and will be given certificates for community service hours.
- Parent Teacher conferences are scheduled for Nov 21st.

Culture

- Discipline matrix: system of intervention
- PBIS Program: Phoenix bucks and monthly perfect attendance awards with prizes - last month students won 32-inch tv's. This month, sneakers from Stock-X may be awarded
- Community Days: is a a way to celebrate our students with their college-focused advisories. As soon as it ended, everyone wanted to know when the next one would be
- Trunk or Treat: staff will decorate trunks and will be open for staff to hand out candy to students
- College-Going: advisories coming together

Is NHCSB participating in the annual parade for Brockton? Has there been any contact in the past years? If not, is it something the board or administration needs to look into?

- They were planning on cancelling it but the holiday parade is still happening and JC says it's going to be scaled like last year. W're unsure of participants. LP has said the Mayors Office has contacted us this week.
- Will we have a float? We are not sure.

Peace Pole: presented by J.Charnell - the interact club at NHCSB brought the idea od creating a peace poll which is a representation of peace and the rotary has done it the past 50/60 years and it represents the international day of peace. The Rotary Club and

Interact Club will collaborate and bring a Peace Pole to the school. The gardening club will help. It is a representation of peace and one of the 1st in the city.
J. Charnel made a motion to accept the report.
N. Christ seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

B. October Spotlights

1)Student - Sophia Mohammed (presented by Hope Fernandes)
-an open mic poet in the "Everyone has a Voice" Series, current 10th grader and has been with us since the 6th grade.

2) Teacher - Mrs. Nichole Tamarisk & Mrs. Nichelle Sangster-Baker (presented by Dr. Jones)
Embraced our shift in that college mindset and had everyone in their advisory to compete and step up.

3) Staff - Renee Lewis & Amanda Roché (presented by Dr. Jones)
In absence of a Math and Science Teacher, they're in the classroom teaching everyday. Both provide high-quality teaching and learning in the classroom.

4) Department - Academic Counseling Team (presented by Dr. Jones)
2 of the 3 are new, but all 3 are phenomenal and as a team have supported where need-be. They have now set-aside time to work with out students at MCC.

Members of the Board thank the spotlight recipients.

IV. Finance Committee

A. 2% Staff Bonuses

Staff Bonuses: The 2% proposed bonus is expected to be in the November 15th paycheck.

Question: Can we afford it?
Answer: Yes.

B. Summary of Finance Committee Meeting

-Discussing 3 votes:

- There are no financial updates to report and the balance sheet is where we need it to be. The Finance Committee did want to recommend making a vote to accept the financial statements. The 121 budgeted employees - 3 FTE's are expected beginning November

- Staff Bonuses: The 2% proposed bonus is expected to be in the November 15th paycheck. Can we afford it? Yes.
- From a retention and reward, staffing concerns bring forth the bonus. We're anticipating a surplus and bridging a gap of $200k. We're confident we'll end the year in black.
- How does the revenue side look above the foundation rate where the city of Brockton would be kicking in?
    - "We've always taken a conservative approach on that "per-pupil allotment." We have been pretty good based off the guidance we get from DESE and the Charter School Association.
- Are we fully enrolled? When do we anticipate the next certified rate to come out? What is the expectation and how long is it good for?
    - The next rate comes out early December which will be based on current town finances or descending district finances. As for enrollment - yes we're fully enrolled and have been since October 1st. Is there any guidance on what that number will look like when DESE rectified the "per-pupil allotment?" How solid is the number we projected in the budget?
        - We won't have hard/fast fast numbers till the end of December but the projected numbers have been coming in just a few dollars apart from what they're estimated.
- Based on the feedback from Mass Charter Association and state budgeting as related to rates, we're fairly confident in the estimated tuition rate.

In terms of exploring/locking in more money, money-market and cd's are to be spoken about at our next Finance Committee meeting.
G. Phillips made a motion to accept the Finance Committee Report and 2% bonus.
S. Bernard seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

V. Academic Excellence Committee

A. AEC Meeting

SB speaks on AEC meeting that touched on the student readiness on college campus, a data report, and remarks from Dr. Jones about the school year. Lourdes Pires presented enrollment numbers and remarks of the wonderful job she is doing and breaking down the efforts of what she does with the representation throughout the community.

"we're very pleased with the work you're doing and you bring excitement to the students." - SB to LP

There was a concern with communication with BPS and the programming of a SRO and Dr. Jones has assured us that she has contacts of two individuals from the BPD. A suggestion was given to meet with the Chief of Police.

SB asks for an update from MF about the students on the MCC campus: Based on the feedback we have received, our students are doing very well. They're getting acclimated to the new campus but the staff has been very accommodating in ensuring our students and staff feel very welcome. According to Dr. Sheffiled our students have brought a new energy over to the Canton Campus. Our BSU students have also been receiving rave reviews and have asked to be featured in a marketing campaign.

Data dashboard gave statistics from altercations between last year's and this years. There has only been 4 altercations since the SY 25 has started - stemming specifically from 8th grade.

SB thanks members of the committee and he encourages committee members to fully participate.

G. Phillips made a motion to accept the AEC report.
W. Lyttle seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

VI. Governance Committee

A. Governance Committee Meeting

Title IX Grievance: This is the law put in place in 1972 that prohibits sex discrimination from any institution who receive federal funding.

Is something we should be posting to all students, parents and staff - features steps to take , who can file a complaint and who to report it to: Mr. Libby is our Title IX Coordinator.

The decision maker who after reviewing notes would be Maria Fernandes.

VM brings up questions and concerns with the auditors report in terms of the retirement plan and the financial liabilities of the plan. SG was helpful in providing additional information from the auditors. VM also independently did further research by consulting with auditors he has worked with in the past. On a zoom call with JR, they were able to gather the following information from the auditors who have also worked with charter schools along with the question of are staff eligible for their own long-term retirement planning?

- Paid for by the state
- It is liability of the state through MTRS but not the school
- VM mentions the dollar and long-term value
- VM speaks on the this information be a recognized or identified in the audit that this is not an obligation of the school itself. JR says it is a requirement to be

attached to the footnote of the financial statements but the substantial material obligations does not show on the balance sheet because it is not the charter school's obligation for the long-term liability.

- Do we make contributions into that plan for our teachers? -The Board?
  - The employees and the state make contributions and funds the plan.
  - The money has to been transmitted within a certain amount of time based on salary and the payments are made. We have to report it and it agrees with the money that is there based on salaries. It is pretty extensive and HR Knowledge helps with that. It helps so that all employees retirement accounts, they are getting proper credit, not only from money but the time they work. The benefit In the end will be calculated based on their contract days/work days when they retire.

-The only liability that may show up is in the balance sheet - the accrural of the withholdings from the teachers compensation as a lack of liability to pay that in. We just have to make sure we're making our contributions which they check if we do.

-Do you know if employees can opt out of paying, is it mandatory? It is not optional. If you're eligible, you do have to participate, but there are guidelines that are followed to determine whether you're actually eligible or not. Teachers are 100% in the MTRS. For other roles, it depends on licensure and what the statue reads to be eligible to participate.

GP raves of how impressed he is about VM and JR's input on this issue and concern.
W. Lyttle made a motion to recommend the board adopt this policy.
S. Bernard seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.
N. Christ made a motion to accept the Governance Report & Title IX report.
S. Bernard seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

VII. Special Orders

A. Executive Session

Board members took individual roll calls to move into Executive Session for personnel matters.

Board is also not going to come back into Public Session after the Executive Session.

Board members moved into Executive Session at 6:25pm.

VIII. Closing Items

A. Adjourn Meeting

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 7:09 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
G. Phillips