APPROVED

# Next Generation Charter Schools

# Minutes

## Monthly Nuasin Board Meeting

**Date and Time**
Thursday August 25, 2022 at 6:30 PM

**Location**
Join Zoom Meeting
https://metlcs.zoom.us/j/92229492418?pwd=N1lQUnJtbTJjb284dkhwRndZRFU5QT09

Meeting ID: 922 2949 2418

Passcode: 180165

One tap mobile
+16465588656,,92229492418#,,,,*180165# US (New York)

**Trustees Present**
A. Bothner (remote), A. Khanyile (remote), C. Barnes-Watson (remote), E. Chen (remote), J. Boulet (remote), K. Brisseau (remote), K. Shabazz (remote), M. Dorrie (remote), S. Huda (remote), S. Pressley (remote), T. Bryan (remote)

**Trustees Absent**
*None*

**Trustees who arrived after the meeting opened**
A. Khanyile

**Ex Officio Members Present**
M. Russell (remote)

**Guests Present**
A. Brown, F. Chughtai, John Scott (remote), K. Davidson, K. Perez, M. Alston, R. Keogh (remote), S. Kochar

## I. Opening Items

### A. Record Attendance and Guests

A. Bothner invited J. Scott to introduce himself briefly. J. Scott shared his professional background.

### B. Call the Meeting to Order

A. Bothner called a meeting of the board of trustees of Next Generation Charter Schools to order on Thursday Aug 25, 2022 at 6:40 PM.
A. Khanyile arrived at 6:42 PM.

### C. Review the Agenda

A. Bothner reviewed the agenda reminding the board that the topics follow the cadence calendar. The board will be reviewing the strategic priorities for the year, there will be a few votes, and then they will conduct the interview with J. Scott.

## II. School Update

### A. Executive Director Update

M. Russell stated that he will be leaving after this update for personal reasons. M. Russell reviewed Nuasin's 3 pillars and provided his self-reflection on the value of "Rigor".

M. Russell shared that the school staff will provide an update on PDI shortly. The priorities at this point are to begin meeting the expectations that Nuasin has set and execute its commitments. M. Russell reviewed the critical priority areas for this academic year:

- Intellectual Excellence by increasing testing scores and proficiency levels
- Strong Culture of Data by increasing survey responsiveness, creating data-driven reports, and improving assessment tracking
- Growing the Whole Child by improving survey results, increasing family participation in school events, and executing advisory consistently

M. Russell shared an update on State Testing.

- Increased investment in ELA and seen tangible growth across the grade levels
- Seen growth in math testing scores and will continue to prioritize growth here this year allowing Nuasin to continue to increase despite the impact of COVID-19 and remote learning

M. Russell shared a new acquisition opportunity for Nuasin.

- There is a middle school (5-8th) in the Bronx that is being considered for integration into the Nuasin network
- There is alignment between the mission and values of the acquisition target and Nuasin in terms of academic rigor, scholar preparation, and community-driven focus
- Thus far, there have been preliminary meetings with their board and senior leadership
- There are discovery efforts ongoing and preliminary meetings with various stakeholders continue
- This opportunity will allow Nuasin to increase its footprint and create a feeder population for the high school
- The target date for integration would be SY 2023-2024 pending the determination of whether Nuasin will pursue this opportunity

M. Dorrie asked whether there would be space to absorb the 8th graders into the Nuasin high school system in SY 2023-2024. M. Russell responded that there likely would be, especially given the current expansion efforts.

E. Chen asked whether there would be an assessment of the talent prior to determining retention. M. Russell responded that there will need to be a cultural transition into the Nuasin way, and there will need to be some form of an assessment in order to facilitate the transition.

T. Bryan asked what M. Russell's perspective was. M. Russell shared that this is an interesting opportunity, but there is a need for additional discovery.

T. Bryan asked what the approval process for this decision would be. M. Russell responded that the authorizers for both schools, the board, and the DOE are the primary decision-makers.

E. Chen asked about the prospective school's renewal process. M. Russell responded that they are currently undergoing the renewal process, and M. Russell will be providing advisory services as they go through this renewal process.

E. Chen asked what the commute would look like for the potential 8th graders coming to Nuasin for HS. M. Russell responded that being further from the local community is beneficial for high schoolers for their development.

K. Shabazz asked about their tenure, and M. Russell shared that they have been operating for four years.

A. Bothner shared that he looks forward to continuing the discussion around this opportunity.

## B. K-8 Update

K. Davidson began the K-8 updates by reviewing the critical priority areas for the school this school year.

- Intellectual Excellence
- Strong Culture of Data
- Growing the Whole Child

K. Davidson reviewed State Testing results for grades 3-8.

K. Davidson provided an update on PDI (Professional Development Institute). Over 70 sessions have been conducted over the past two weeks with teachers. The majority of attendees have found that the sessions have supported their growth, allowed them to develop relationships, and pushed them to think deeper about the selected topics. K. Davidson walked through the structure of the PD sessions each day.

## C. 9-12 Update

A. Brown reiterated the critical priority areas for this school year and some relevant activities that will be taking place in 9-12th grades including afterschool support programs for scholars not meeting the test score threshold. The various programming is targeted at both scholars and teachers.

A. Brown shared the goals for HS for SY 2023-2024.

- Instructional goals (e.g., mastery of subject matter)
- Career readiness goals (e.g., graduation rates, college acceptance rates)
- Culture goals (e.g., behavior, attendance)

A. Brown shared a few summer highlights.

- Undercredited seniors attended the summer APEX Learning Program to attain the relevant credits and get them on track for graduation
- Developed interdisciplinary courses including but not limited to the following:
    - Financial literacy
    - Ethics and morality
    - Anti-racism
    - Data Science

## D. K-12 Operations Update

K. Perez shared a brief update on scholar enrollment.

M. Alston shared an overview of the August new hires and some information about all of the summer hires.

M. Alston shared current hiring needs for K-12.

M. Alston reviewed the retention rates of staff.

M. Alston shared the focus on onboarding and marketing efforts (e.g., print ads, digital marketing) for the Talent Acquisition and Marketing Manager. As part of the onboarding efforts, there was a New Hire Orientation prior to the beginning of PDI this summer.

M. Alston provided an overview of a team-building event for staff this month.

M. Alston shared the professional development efforts for the operations staff.

M. Alston shared an update on expansion efforts.

M. Alston provided a summary of the upcoming compliance requirements.

M. Alston provided an update on COVID-19 cases within the school.

M. Alston shared a few reminders for the board members.

## III. Finance Committee Updates

### A. General Updates

A. Bothner opened by sharing that committee chairs should focus on their goals and key priorities during their respective updates.

S. Pressley began the Finance Committee update by sharing that the investment portfolio changes previously discussed are still in progress. Further updates will be provided in this forum as they are received. Additionally, the audit pre-work was completed in June, and the audit will begin in mid-September.

### B. June Financials

R. Keogh shared that there are not many updates to share as far as financials for this fiscal year, given we are only one month in. As far as last year, we closed the year very strong. There are no material changes to any of the financial ratios on the dashboard. We have exceeded our surplus budget, which is very good news, due to the fact that we exceeded enrollment on the revenue side. There has been a slight uptick in payroll expenses given the higher staff count. Financially, we're in a great place to move forward

with any future expansion efforts. Following the audit next month, we will likely be able to share material updates. We are well prepared for the audit and are expecting it to run seamlessly.
S. Pressley made a motion to Accept the financial reporting.
C. Barnes-Watson seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

| **Roll Call** | |
|---|---|
| A. Bothner | Aye |
| A. Khanyile | Aye |
| M. Dorrie | Aye |
| S. Huda | Aye |
| E. Chen | Aye |
| J. Boulet | Aye |
| K. Brisseau | Aye |
| C. Barnes-Watson | Aye |
| K. Shabazz | Aye |
| T. Bryan | Aye |

### C. Annual Committee Priority Update

S. Pressley shared that the focus for this quarter is to partner with the External Relations Committee and M. Russell on the strategic priorities with regard to fundraising. We will continue to identify additional grants and funding that will support the efforts to get us to where we want to be next year.

## IV. Education Committee Updates

### A. Education Committee Report

E. Chen shared that the state exam data was great to see, and she looks forward to seeing the high school data as it is available.

### B. Annual Committee Priority Update

E. Chen shared a few key priorities for the Education Committee:

1. Gain a better understanding of the curriculum. Given the progress we've made on state exams in the core subject matters, we want to focus more on other skills that are necessary to prepare our scholars for the real world.
2. Help understand how to progress the curriculum further. One of the potential areas of consideration is environmental justice.
3. Talk to the principals more about special or recurring programs and the relevant funding needs (e.g., supporting financial literacy programming).

E. Chen stated that a primary goal of these priorities is to move things forward to help teachers and principals achieve their academic goals. This can be done by bridging the gaps between the External Relations, Finance, and Education Committees

## V. External Relations Committee Update

### A. Fundraising Initiatives

No updates on fundraising initiatives at this time.

### B. Annual Committee Priority Update

A. Khanyile shared that the External Relations Committee met recently to discuss the strategic plans for this upcoming year:

1. Fundraising, especially with the ongoing expansion efforts, is a key priority
2. Community connections and the process to continue to build those connections

A. Khanyile shared that they are aiming to have a process for receiving and requesting funds from various organizations and individuals by November. There is a focus on increasing the number of high-level investors in the school. With regard to community partnerships, this is a priority for both current school community members and members of the local Highbridge community.

A. Khanyile stated that there are some logistics that he will work on coordinating with M. Russell and M. Alston for the involvement day. Additionally, he noted that the chair votes took place recently.

## VI. Public Comments

### A. Public Comments

A. Bothner shared that the public policy allows anyone from the public to join these meetings, and since there are no public representatives, we conclude this section.

## VII. Nominating Committee Update

### A. Board Member Candidate Interview

C. Barnes introduced the structure of the interview.

C. Barnes asked the candidate what excites them about this potential opportunity. J. Scott responded with the value of education in the context of his background, his career in law, and his current community involvement.

S. Pressley asked the candidate where he believes he can provide the most impact. J. Scott shared that External Relations is where he would be of most value given his nature and his interest in community engagement. His background in financial services also qualifies him to sit on the Finance committee.

E. Chen asked which committees the candidate would like to sit on. J. Scott responded that External Relations is the most interesting to him, and he would be interested to learn more about the Education and Governance committees.

J. Scott asked why certain grade levels are performing more proficiently compared to other grade levels. K. Davidson responded that ELA is an indicator of growth in our structural programming so these students have been following the instructional models for many years.

J. Scott asked about the potential expansion to develop a new HS. M. Alston responded that there is interest in expanding to a new building, pending the finalization of a new building. There would be four sections to start with a goal of increasing by one section in K, 6, and 9 YoY.

J. Scott asked about the expectations of board members at the school. A. Bothner responded that they encourage attending in person at least once a year, but they are welcome to come on campus as often as they would like.

J. Boulet asked the candidate what are some things he has learned as his son goes through his educational journey. J. Scott responded that both of his children attend private school, and it lacks diversity in the staff population. He was impressed by the diversity at Nuasin, and this is the opportunity that he would have liked for his children.

A. Bothner thanked J. Scott for his time.

## B. Executive Committee Vote

A. Bothner shared that there is a requirement to have at least five members on the Executive Committee. The major portion of this committee's role is succession planning.

A. Bothner nominated C. Barnes to be the fifth member of the Executive Commitee.
A. Bothner made a motion to Vote C. Barnes to be the fifth member of the Executive Committee.
K. Brisseau seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

**Roll Call**

| | |
|---|---|
| T. Bryan | Aye |
| A. Khanyile | Aye |
| K. Brisseau | Aye |

**Roll Call**

| | |
|---|---|
| C. Barnes-Watson | Aye |
| K. Shabazz | Aye |
| E. Chen | Aye |
| S. Huda | Aye |
| J. Boulet | Aye |
| S. Pressley | Aye |
| M. Dorrie | Aye |
| A. Bothner | Aye |

### C. Annual Committee Priority Update

A. Bothner shared that the purpose of Nominating Committee is to select the board of trustees.

A. Bothner provided a brief summary of the work done by the Execute Committee in the past few years:

- We have recruited new board members to bring us up to 12 (11 currently) out of the 15 we are allowed to have
- In the past two years, a lot of the work has been focused on getting M. Russell into his role as Executive Director

A. Bothner shared that moving forward, we are working to recruit a school parent onto the board. Currently, it is a very diverse board and it aims to be reflective of the school, so we will continue towards that goal. We would like to see more of a focus on fundraising. New member onboarding processes are currently being updated. As a reminder, all of us need to stay true to the bylaws and speak as a unit.

## VIII. Board Governance

### A. Approve July 2022 Board Meeting Minutes

J. Boulet made a motion to approve the minutes from Board Meeting on 07-23-22.
A. Bothner seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

**Roll Call**

| | |
|---|---|
| E. Chen | Aye |
| K. Brisseau | Aye |
| T. Bryan | Aye |
| S. Pressley | Aye |
| S. Huda | Aye |
| J. Boulet | Aye |
| M. Dorrie | Aye |
| A. Bothner | Aye |
| A. Khanyile | Aye |

**Roll Call**

| | |
|---|---|
| C. Barnes-Watson | Aye |
| K. Shabazz | Aye |

## B. OML Audit Review

K. Perez presented a brief update on the OML Audit which tracks board compliance with agenda, meeting quorum, and other basic tenets of conducting board meetings.

## C. Trustee Goal Setting Reflection

T. Bryan shared his prompt:

- Sharing an opportunity that others might be interested in
  - A DiSC assessment: strength finder test which was interesting to identify strengths so could be worth considering as a board to share strengths and communication preferences
  - E. Chen agreed this would be helpful, especially to compare to the board's strength finder results from a few years ago
- Sharing an insight you had about a challenge regarding the board
  - T. Bryan shared that there is a need for additional community engagement
  - Early on, there was a community member on the board, but since then, there has not been so there is an opportunity to attend a Highbridge community meeting to potentially identify candidates
  - E. Chen shared that it would be great to have a leader from the community on the board
- Describe something you've done recently and how it informed your perspective on the board
  - T. Bryan has been reading articles recently about this school board is generally accepted by the community and does not receive threats / condemnation compared to other schools

## D. Nuasin Board Pledge

J. Boulet made a motion to Sign the Nuasin Board Pledge.
E. Chen seconded the motion.
Some updates have been made to the culture section, which can be found in the shared document.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

**Roll Call**

| | |
|---|---|
| K. Brisseau | Aye |
| T. Bryan | Aye |
| E. Chen | Aye |
| M. Dorrie | Aye |
| J. Boulet | Aye |
| C. Barnes-Watson | Aye |

**Roll Call**

| | |
|---|---|
| A. Bothner | Aye |
| S. Pressley | Aye |
| A. Khanyile | Aye |
| S. Huda | Aye |
| K. Shabazz | Aye |

### E. Annual Committee Priority Update

J. Boulet began by sharing the roles and responsibilities of the Governance Committee. The Governance Committee aims to ensure that on the board, we have the conditions that we need to enable all of us to contribute effectively. The Governance Committee leads by developing bylaws and policies and ensuring compliance. It also provides support to other committees by ensuring that they have the information and context needed to achieve the best outcomes.

J. Boulet shared a few of the key milestones from the past few years:

- Provided clarity on how board members as individuals contribute leading to the pledge
- Evaluation and calibration efforts have been further defined through the evaluation rubric
- Open meeting law (OML) audit encourages the maintenance of the intended structure of the meetings

J. Boulet shared that incorporating more YoY data into approaches and decisions will be a focus going forward.

J. Boulet shared the strategic priorities for the Governance Committee:

- Defining the results they would like to see from the self-assessment
- Supporting efforts in the Finance and External Relations Committees to support community engagement efforts
- Continue to build on the process they've put into place

## IX. Executive Session

### A. Proposed for the Purposes of Discussing the Potential Appointment of a Board of Trustee Member

A. Bothner shared the high-level purpose of the Executive Session:

- Formal motion is to propose the potential appointment of the candidate interviewed during today's board meeting
- Board is inviting the guest school leadership to provide input during the Executive Session

A. Bothner made a motion to Allow all school leadership to remain for Executive Session.
E. Chen seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.
A. Bothner made a motion to Extend an offer to John Scott to join the Board of Trustees.
E. Chen seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

**Roll Call**

| | |
|---|---|
| T. Bryan | Aye |
| S. Pressley | Aye |
| K. Brisseau | Aye |
| M. Dorrie | Aye |
| A. Bothner | Aye |
| C. Barnes-Watson | Aye |
| A. Khanyile | Aye |
| S. Huda | Absent |
| K. Shabazz | Aye |
| J. Boulet | Aye |
| E. Chen | Aye |

## X. 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 9:29 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
A. Bothner