

URBAN CHOICE CHARTER SCHOOL  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES – MINUTES  
THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 7, 2017

**Present:** Nelson Blish, Julie Boland, Megan Bosco, Jason Mellen, Miriam Miranda-Jurado, Joan Moorehead, Bliss Owen, Kathleen Hurley Wiecek

**Absent:** Tracy Armstrong

**Media Notification:** Erica Bryant of the Democrat and Chronicle was notified of the September 7, 2017 Board of Trustees meeting on August 28, 2017. Public notice was also posted in the school and published in the school newsletter.

***BOARD MEETING***

The board meeting was called to order at 5:59 p.m. and the mission statement was shared.

**Motion 170907.1** Upon a motion by Julie Boland and duly seconded by Kathleen Hurley Wiecek, the following was submitted for adoption: RESOLVED that the Board of Trustees approve the August 3, 2017 minutes.

**Voting in the affirmative:** Nelson Blish, Julie Boland, Megan Bosco, Jason Mellen, Miriam Miranda-Jurado, Joan Moorehead, Bliss Owen, Kathleen Hurley Wiecek

**Voting in the negative:** None

Motion 170907.1 passed 8 to 0

**LEADERSHIP TEAM REPORT – L. McCarthy, CEO**

**Update: Start of the 2017-2018 School Year**

- Opening was seamless with the exception of a few delays with bus schedules

- Professional Development was held in advance of opening for the school year and included five days of training for staff members prior to the arrival of students:
  - Character Counts program
  - Success for All Overview and Getting Along Together
  - Behavior intervention training
  - Breaking the conflict cycle
  - Dojo for elementary students
  - Class Craft for middle school students (uses a gaming platform)
- Review of Results: ELA and Math Tests
  - ELA scores have gone down five points (impacted by results for grades 5 and 6)
    - ❖ Changes have been put in place to improve ELA scores
      - ✓ Success for All program
        - Students are grouped for reading at their individual instructional levels
      - ✓ RtI (Response to Intervention) is addressed during the reading block and throughout other parts of the day
        - Tier 1: Provides focused, cooperative learning and instruction tailored to the diverse needs within the group
        - Tier 2: Small groups for one-to-one tutoring
        - Tier 3: More intensive one-to-one tutoring with unique adaptations - utilizing special education teachers
      - ✓ Writing Block is scheduled in a 45-minute session for grades 1-6
        - Extra staff is pushing in to classrooms during the Writing Block
      - ✓ Middle School students have double blocks of ELA two days a week allowing time for RtI for a scheduled period
- Review of Results: Math
  - Increased 3%
  - Meetings are being held with teachers – reviewing reasons why scores are staying stable and are not increasing at a desired rate
  - A plan is in place to assemble a math committee around the beginning of December to explore plan options for implementation going forward
    - ❖ Will be considering approaches in place at other schools that are having success with increasing their scores
  - The math coaching model is continuing and the coach will be providing training and expertise with the RtI teachers
  - We have one certified middle school math teacher for grades 7 and 8 which provides expertise and continuity
  - RtI blocks are 45-minutes long and will consist of math vocabulary instruction where we are deficient and providing a computer-based focus on individual student weaknesses

- RtI has been added back to the report card – grading creates improved attitude/motivation
- J. Mellen initiated a discussion related to the Northeast Charter Schools Network summary on 8/22/17 - New York State Education Department's release of the 2016-2017 Math and ELA test results.
  - UCCS is in the middle or lower middle for scoring results
  - Upper levels continue to struggle with proficiency
  - There is a need to explore some schools where results are improving and consider implementing what is working

### Review of Changes/Updates – Both Buildings

- Elementary School:
  - Some homeroom teachers have moved and new teachers have been hired
  - The Learning Center has been turned into a Help Zone (a new program through the Center for Youth)
    - ✓ Meeting the student in the space where they are and preventing them from getting into a negative space
    - ✓ Students are being met by J. Capellupo and C. Parris on buses, in halls, in classrooms and they are helping with prevention by regular visits to classrooms and working with families
  - Students visit the Help Zone – students are not sent to the Help Zone
- Middle School:
  - Every teacher has their own classroom
  - ATS has been moved to the lower level of the building
    - ✓ Allows for isolation with no interaction with the general student population
    - ✓ An instructionally sound atmosphere has been established in the new space
  - Art instruction has been moved to the second floor into the former ATS space
  - A Family and Community Coordinator has been hired
    - ✓ She met with many UCCS families at the recent school breakfast sponsored by the PTA
  - Following up with families regarding needed uniforms (purchased uniforms for four students in need)

### FINANCE REPORT – J. Mellen and L. King

- Preliminary June financials were shared
- Income Statement: \$310K net income budget
- Budget for 2017-18 was changed and that is reflected to a negative
  - \$149K was in our budget as a deferral

- After discussions with our auditors and the Charter School Office, it was advised that we must put these funds in the year it was intended (2016-2017) which results in a \$286K loss for this current year
- While this appears to be a negative, we are doing the right thing for our students
- We reviewed with our auditor and agreement was reached to follow the specific guidance provided to us from the State
- Auditors will be in to conduct the annual audit beginning Tuesday-Thursday
- Audit will be completed and shared with the BOT in November
- Internal Auditor Chris will be asked to attend the next Finance Committee meeting

#### GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE – M. Bosco

- Informal meeting was held via email
  - Reviewed rules and processes for the Governance Committee
  - Following Bylaws
  - Board evaluation and education
  - Recruiting board members
  - Dates for monthly meetings have been set and a meeting space in the middle school has been reserved

#### PTA – Julie Boland

- CEO and Leadership Team made a decision to hold the carnival on the same evening as the Open House (10/12)
  - Pizza will be provided from 5:00-6:00 p.m. with funds from the board budget
  - Parents and families attending will help to boost morale and PTA memberships
  - Board will have their own booth
  - Raffles
- Fundraiser is starting soon – sale of Niagara Chocolates

#### CHAIR REPORT – N. Blish

- Working with L. McCarthy on CEO evaluations
  - Will finalize in the next month and share with the Governance Committee
- Securing a new building/facility will not take priority over educating students
  - Future considerations for buildings will include Pre-K and athletics
  - There are no updates to share related to our interest in purchasing our current buildings/location

- Tour of both buildings will be scheduled prior to the start of the October BOT meeting for any board members interested in seeing updates/upgrades made to both facilities
- A survey will be distributed via Survey Monkey to inquire about board member's preferences:
  - Length of board meetings
  - Week of the month and day of the week preferences for monthly board meetings
- Recommends that the agenda be prepared with time limits to maintain schedule
- Visiting the school is recommended for board members – please let L McCarthy know in advance if you will be visiting
- Seeking interested participants to join a committee for the new facilities plan
- Will plan “Deep Dives” – agenda item to be added each month

#### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

- First PTA meeting is scheduled for September 20 at 6 p.m. – encouraging attendance
- Acknowledged the turnover rate for staff – a more detailed review will be added to the agenda for next month's meeting

**Motion 170907.2**                      Upon a motion by Megan Bosco and duly seconded by Kathleen Hurley Wiecek, the following was submitted for adoption: **RESOLVED** that the Board of Trustees adjourn the meeting at 7:50 p.m.

**Voting in the affirmative:**      Nelson Blish, Julie Boland, Megan Bosco, Jason Mellen, Miriam Miranda-Jurado, Joan Moorehead, Bliss Owen, Kathleen Hurley Wiecek

**Voting in the negative:**        None

Motion 170907.2 passed 8 to 0

#### **NEXT BOARD MEETING:**

Thursday, October 5, 2017