



**Northside Charter High School
Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes
April 19, 2022, 6:00pm ET**

Present:

Kaley Childs Karaffa – Chair via video conference
Willie Scott - Trustee, via video conference
Danielle Redmond - Trustee, via video conference
Rizwan Alladin – Trustee, via video conference
Deangeor Chin- Trustee, via video conference

Excused:

Douglas Giles- Trustee

Guests Present:

Mahmud Ennin – Chief Financial and Operations Officer, via video conference
Brittany Sheckels - Executive Assistant, via video conference
Louise Grotenhuis – Chief Academic Officer, via video conference
Monique Powell- Chief Student Services Officer, via video conference
Muhammed Chaudhry - Interim Executive Director, via video conference
Nicole Davis - Assistant Director of Operations, via video conference
Jeanmarie McAuley - Guest, via video conference
Debbie Tenney - Guest, via video conference

I. April Consent Agenda. The Board discussed the April 2022 consent agenda, which included: March 15, 2022, Board Meeting Minutes, and March 2022 Financial Reports, which had been reviewed in greater detail by the Board in its committee meetings. After discussion, on motion to approve the April 2022 Consent Agenda that was seconded and carried, all were in favor.

II. Management Report.

A. April Strategic Plan Dashboard.

1. Mr. Ennin reported that student enrollment remains at 401. He reported that NCHS should end the 2022 fiscal year with a surplus; however, the amount would not reach management’s goal \$500,000 in savings.
2. Mr. Ennin reported that NCHS is currently meeting all compliance requirements items and deadlines.
3. Ms. Powell reported that the leadership team is working to solidify the College Counseling Methodology and advised that it would be more prioritized for the following school year.
4. Mr. Chaudhry reported that there were no significant updates to report around NCHS’s branding, marketing, and fundraising strategies, but they continue to be worked on.
5. Ms. Powell reported that she was still in the process of gathering and analyzing the numbers on how many seniors had committed to a higher

institution so far in their application process and could confirm about 29% so far.

6. Dr. Grotenhuis reported that freshmen and sophomores would be sitting for the Regents Exams in June (with the exception of a small number of juniors and seniors). She further reported that grade level standards and growth assessments have not yet met the current goals; the Board inquired if there was any growth toward the goal of 25% increase in academic performance due to the returning to in-person instruction in late February 2022, and Dr. Grotenhuis confirmed that there was and noted that for the NWEA Math and Literacy, numbers across all grades had increased between the fall and winter administrations and was a higher increase than anticipated; this was partially due to the larger number of students who tested in winter, and a better comparison would be to look at the spring data against the winter data, once available.
7. The Board inquired whether PowerSchool was functioning optimally and providing data-driven decisions; Dr. Grotenhuis advised that the management team has been working to maximize the utilization of PowerSchool with their support teams. Ms. Powell added that PowerSchool is still currently being used for attendance, along with ScholarChip. Ms. Powell further noted access to National Clearing House was still pending.
8. Mr. Ennin reported that NCHS had more uncertified teachers than desired but noted the leadership team's efforts to increase the number of certified teachers throughout the remainder of this fiscal year and into the next.
9. Ms. Powell reported that the number caregiver webinars had increased in the past monthly in lieu of a regular newsletter.
10. Ms. Davis reported the current status of enrollment for next year's new incoming students; currently NCHS is on track to hit its goal of 120 new enrolled students; so far 63 students have formally accepted.

III. Committee Reports

A. Finance Committee.

1. **Fiscal Year 2023 Budget Planning.** Mr. Ennin described the key design elements that were utilized to design the Fiscal Year 2023 budget. The Board noted that these budget key design elements should also incorporate the key design element changes that were requested in the School's fourth charter renewal application, and management confirmed the proposed fiscal year 2023 budget would align to support the key design elements as stated in the School's charter. Mr. Ennin highlighted key features of the fiscal year 2023 Budget Framework and its components: per pupil increase to \$17,622; Net Increase of \$300,000 based on 400 students; \$170,000 received from title funds and \$500,000 from ESSER funds; \$50,000 in other investments; \$9 million estimated fiscal year 2023 revenue compared to \$8.3 million fiscal year 2022 revenue.
2. **Investment Fund Providers.** Mr. Ennin reported that after researching Vanguard, JP Morgan, Signature Bank and American Deposit Management, Vanguard has the best offering for investment accounts for the School's

financial status and goals and the Committee recommends approving Vanguard as the financial service provider for its investment account. He further noted that the Committee is working with management to develop the outline investment strategy for Board review and approval. After discussion, on motion to approve Vanguard as NCHS’s financial services firm for investment account that was seconded and carried, all were in favor.

3. Budget Approvals.

a) **Substitute Teachers.** Mr. Alladin reported that management requested to reallocate \$41,200 on hiring new substitute teachers for the remainder of the 2021-2022 school year. The Board discussed the request and determined that since the funds were being reallocated from employee compensation expenses that management could move forward with the reallocation. The Board requested management continue to update the Board on overall staff attendance and retention.

b) **Bottle Fillers.** Mr. Ennin explained that the water faucets had been disabled during COVID, and the New York City Department of Education (“NYC DOE”) has its own supplier for water bottle filling stations. Management requested Board approval the \$24,000 to install our own stations by their same vendor, rather than continue to buy bottled water for staff and students. The Board discussed the request and noted that the service provider chosen by the NYC DOE was an approved, unique, which prevents the need to comply with the bidding process prescribed under NCHS’s Financial Policies and Procedures. After discussion, on motion to approve the purchase of water bottle fillers from the NYC DOE’s approved vendor at a cost of \$24,000 that was seconded and carried, all were in favor.

B. Executive Committee. Ms. Karaffa reported that earlier in the day that NCHS’s Charter School Office Liaison, Paolo Giovine confirmed that NCHS’s charter renewal application and charter revisions will be voted on at the New York State Board of Regents June board meeting and the public hearing hosted by the NYC DOE on NCHS’s revisions to its key design elements is scheduled for May 9, 2022.

IV. Public Comment.

A. A guest inquired about the recent changes at NCHS. The Board replied that although the question lacked specificity, broadly over the past few years the Board has been working to ensure NCHS is an enriching environment for student learning that promotes high levels of academic success and changes to policies, programs, and strategic initiatives have been aligned to support the School’s mission.

B. A guest asked if students are graded based on mastery of topics. Management explained that students are graded based on mastery of New York State learning standards. Management also elaborated that NCHS utilizes Grading for Equity, which has resulted in removing extra credit, and changing the grading scale from 100-points scale to 4-points scale.

C. A guest asked what NCHS’s literacy goals are. Management advised that NWEA assessments would be looked back at to determine one’s progress and see what

areas of focus may still be needed and agreed to meet with the caregiver to review the goals specific to their student.

- D. A guest asked about NCHS's student progress reports. Management replied that while NCHS transitions from PowerSchool to Performance Matters as its student information system, the progress reports are processed and shared in a spreadsheet format for now until transition is complete.
 - E. A guest asked if NCHS planned to distribute learning packets as its main teaching method. Management advised that the packets are supplementary to classroom instruction and are meant for extra support as needed.
 - F. A guest asked about the recent increase in teacher callouts and how they would be handled. The Board explained that NCHS Management has been focused on reiterating the requirements and importance to staff on their attendance during the school year. Further, the Board noted that, if necessary, external support would also be utilized to bridge any gaps.
 - G. A guest asked about NCHS's graduation requirements. Management responded that they were described in the Family Life Guide.
 - H. A guest asked of the Board's policy for communicating with parents. The Board responded that the Board has multiple methods of communicating and gathering feedback from caregivers, importantly noting that the monthly Board meeting is a regularly scheduled meeting open to all members of the public where public comments are taken. The Board noted that it is the responsibility of the Management team to handle routine communications and interactions with caregivers including addressing their issues, questions, and concerns.
 - I. A guest inquired about NCHS's complaint policy. The Board advised that its complaint policy was outlined in NCHS's Family Life Guide.
 - J. A guest asked about the transcript policy. The Board advised that students and their caregivers should reach out to the appropriate members of NCHS's staff in order to acquire official transcript records.
- V. **Executive Session.** There were no actions taken in an executive session; on motion to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded and carried, all were in favor.