



Northside Charter High School
424 Leonard Street
Brooklyn, NY 11222
(347)390-1273
www.northsidechs.org

**Northside Charter High School
Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes
September 17th, 2024, 6:00 pm ET**

Present:

Kaley Childs Karaffa - Chair
Rizwan Alladin - Trustee
Willie Scott - Trustee, via video conference
Danielle Redmond - Trustee, via video conference
Douglas Giles - Trustee, via video conference

Guest Present:

Muhammed Chaudhry - CEO
Rahul Patel - Chief Academic Officer (“CAO”)
Dwight Thomas - Chief Student Services Officer (“CSSO”)
Tony Dinh - Chief Financial Officer (“CFO”)
Ramlah Malhi - Director of Administration, via video conference
Robert Smith - Director of Guidance and Strategy
Marisa Proto - Director of Teaching and Learning
Ilyas Hussain - IT, via video conference
Sheina McClendon - Director of Inclusive Learning, via video conference
Kay Ayeni - Guest, via video conference
Nicolas Roye - Math Teacher, via video conference
Erica Pandolfi - Associate Director of Inclusive Learning, via video conference
Richard Uwangue - Associate Director of Student Experience and Safety, via video conference

Location: See meeting notice for specific locations and video conference information. All were open to the public.

- I. **September Agenda:** The Board discussed the September 2024 agenda and consent agenda, which included the August 2024 Board Meeting Minutes, August 2024 Financial Reports, and August 2024 Strategic Plan Dashboard, which had been reviewed in greater detail by the Board in its committee meetings. After discussion, on motion to approve the September 2024 Consent Agenda that was seconded and carried, all were in favor.

II. Management Report:

- A. **NYSED Action Plan Update 2024:** Ms. Proto reported the revisions to the NYSED action plans that address NYSED Charter School Liaison feedback from May 2024 site visit and ensure alignment with established NYSED benchmarks. She noted the action plan was created during the 2022 charter renewal process



and aims to foster continued growth, especially where benchmarks were rated as "approaching", and reflect updated baseline data collected post-COVID, including the transition to remote and hybrid learning. Ms. Proto indicated the updated action plan highlights our commitment to student engagement, the implementation of a gradual release of responsibility model and student-centered pedagogy with more streamlined data collection methods, and incorporated guidance from the NYC Charter Center and other collaborative resources to support compliance and general improvement to achieve the overarching goal to establish more specific and measurable outcomes that respond to the evolving educational landscape and ensure we meet or exceed our benchmarks in future charter renewal reviews. After discussion, on motion to approve the Updated 2022 the NYSED Action plan that was seconded and carried, all were in favor.

- B. Regents Update:** Mr. Patel reported the implementation of a data-driven approach to improve regional assessment scores in the upcoming school year. He indicated that the academic leadership team is collaborating with the data team and a new regional site analysis dashboard has been developed, enabling departments to analyze student performance at a granular level, such as individual question analysis and shared an example of such. He noted this initiative aims not only to enhance student understanding and performance but also to translate findings into actionable insights for parent-teacher meetings, and each department will share their focus areas with parents, ensuring that data collected from assessments translates into meaningful instructional improvements and enhancing overall educational outcomes.
- C. Graduation Update:** Mr. Smith reported on the June and August graduation updates, detailing the ceremonies and the impact of summer school on overall graduation rates. He reported on the comprehensive analysis revealing that the fiscal year denominator included students who had not attended Northside for over two years, which reflects the need for a clearer disenrollment process. Mr. Smith described that New York State procedures for disenrollment have become more complex, but the leadership team is ensuring that only actively attending students are counted towards graduation statistics. He also reported that the graduation task force is playing a crucial role in keeping current seniors on track to graduate. The Board and management discussed the barriers affecting student attendance, such as relocation and enrollment in closer schools, with a focus on refining the disenrollment process to include thorough interviews with families to understand these challenges better.
- D. Back to School Overview 2024:**
 - 1.** Mr. Dwight reported on the initiatives to support 18 at-risk students who are on track to graduate, which include enrolling these students in New York City's YBC program for additional credit opportunities and enhancing night school support.



2. The Board and management discussed the student reclassification into cohorts and how the leadership team addressed initial confusion among parents and how they appreciated the clarification on credit requirements that align with college systems.
 3. Mr. Thomas described the successful rollout of a new electronic device policy using Yonder pouches, which has significantly improved classroom engagement by students, and 90% uniform compliance by students, which is fostering a stronger sense of community.
 4. Management described the continued prioritization of safety through comprehensive staff training and emergency drills ensuring readiness.
 5. Mr. Patel reported progress towards teacher certification goals is on track, with full compliance expected by the end of the fiscal year.
 6. Mr. Thomas reported student enrollment is currently at 431, under the maximum charter approved enrollment of 450 students, and noted the student services team's collaboration with local partnerships, enhanced social media outreach, and proactive measures like home visits for students with significant absences. The Board and management discussed ongoing challenges in student re-engagement post-pandemic, specifically focusing on student attendance and mental health, which are being addressed by strengthened counseling resources with evaluation of community organizations providing relevant services, targeted interviews with unenrolled students that have encouraged some to return, and the positive correlation between participation in summer programs and improved attendance, especially among 9th and 10th graders. The Board emphasized the importance of clear communication of the School's expectations to incoming students and families for academic rigor and student engagement, along with strategies to enhance marketing and branding efforts.
- E. **Professional Development and Staff Orientation:** Mr. Patel reported the professional development and academic structure is based on a comprehensive approach on the eight subcategories of the Danielson Framework and is organized into five professional development cycles throughout the year. He indicated this initiative aims to cultivate a dynamic, student-centered teaching model and a coaching framework through academic directors who provide more consistent teacher support through frequent classroom observations and feedback and a collaborative environment. The Board and management discussed the removal of barriers to learning, the implementation of safety protocols, the ongoing refinement of the special education program to ensure compliance with IEP requirements staff engagement in fulfilling the organization's mission, alignment in educational goals, and emphasizing a shift towards a more effective, student-centered pedagogy that maximizes learning within existing class time.



III. Committee Reports

A. Finance Committee:

1. Mr. Aladdin reported that the management team is deferring necessary large expenses to prevent overspending and that current projections indicate a positive net income between approximately \$10,000 to \$18,000 based on both expense control and favorable investment returns. Mr. Dinh reported the fiscal year 2024 audit is in finalization by PKF O'Connor Davies with a few outstanding items that will be completed before the draft financial reports and audit are presented to the Board in October. Mr. Dinh and Mr. Chaudhry indicated that no significant issues or red flags have arisen during the audit process, and improved accounting controls have been implemented effectively. The Board directed management to schedule the audit review for the Board with PKF O'Connor Davies at the October Executive Committee meeting, covering both the 403(b) audit and the fiscal year 2024 financial audit.
2. **Professional Development Provider Approval:** Mr. Dinh presented a recommendation to engage WestEd as the professional development provider, highlighting their strengths of the provider and services and the \$39,000 annual fee, which aligns with the budgeted funds. He noted that the School's past professional development providers had rates of \$30,000 and \$120,000. The Board and management discussed the benefits of a research-based approach with WestEd, contrasting it with previous engagements that involved smaller training programs and noted this is considered a unique provider and service in alignment with the bidding procedures outlined in the School's Financial Policies and Procedures. This consistency and alignment with research are viewed as valuable for the organization's growth. After discussion, on motion to approve WestED as professional development provider contract for \$39,000 that was seconded and carried, all were in favor.
3. **The Post BK Approval:** Mr. Dinh presented a proposal for the use of the Post BK facility for gym needs, because access to the gym on site is restricted on certain weekdays and recommended continuing the partnership with Post BK citing their prior experience and the benefits of proximity for student safety. Mr. Ayeni, the associate director of athletics, emphasized the necessity of this arrangement for practices and highlighted that the school is expanding its sports offerings, making additional space crucial. The Board and management discussed the ongoing negotiations for shared space with co-located schools and management indicated that while this contract may be recurring, future arrangements will depend on successful space negotiations. After discussion, on motion to approve the contract with Post BK set at \$9,240, covering the period from September



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4, 2024, to March 28, 2025 that was seconded and carried, all were in favor.

4. **Charter Public School Athletic League Approval:** Mr. Dinh presented a proposal for Charter Public School Athletic League, which has an annual cost of \$19,800 and greater competitiveness than Charter School Athletic Association in coach retention and attraction of student-athletes. The Board and management discussed GPA requirements for student-athletes, and management described a comprehensive sports strategy developed by the athletic director, which includes a Scholar Athlete program that emphasizes the connection between academics and athletics, with intentional support for students to maintain eligibility and collaborations with collegiate programs to provide mentorship opportunities for student-athletes. After discussion, on motion to approve the Charter Public School Athletic League membership at a rate of \$19,800 that was seconded and carried, all were in favor.

B. Board Development Committee: Ms. Karaffa reported that Douglas Giles's current three-year term will expire in October 2024. Mr. Giles recused himself from the discussion and vote. The Board discussed Mr. Giles's years of service and commitment to Northside's mission and effective governance. After discussion, on motion to approve Douglas Giles for a three year term from October 2024-October 2027 as a trustee of the Board that was seconded and carried, all were in favor.

- IV. **Executive Committee:** Mr. Alladin and Mr. Chaudhry reported the Executive Committee discussed the CEO's continuing efforts on leadership development and executing a talent strategy to enable Northside to attract and retain the right talent in the committee's meeting.
- V. **Public Comment:** No questions were submitted from the public.
- VI. **Adjournment:** On motion to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded and carried, all were in favor.