



BROOKLYN URBAN GARDEN CHARTER SCHOOL



Brooklyn Urban Garden Charter School Board of Trustees Meeting January 23, 2024 6:30pm - 8:00pm

Members present in person: Ana Bast, Felice Ekelman, Regina Lee Fechter, Erin Walker

Members present by video: Jamal Deek, Christine Kang, Don Mabrey

Others present: Susan Tenner, BUGS Executive Director; Wynette Caesar, BUGS Principal; John Johnston, BUGS PTA Vice President; Susan Bakst, BUGS Director of Outreach; Betty Feibush, Garden Train; Linda Timko Liang, Coney Island Prep; Keneshia Maxwell, BUGS Assistant Principal, Primos Cobb, BUGS Dean of Students

I. Welcome and Approval of Board Meeting Minutes

- A. The meeting was called to order at 6:45pm
- B. Regina Lee Fechter made a motion to approve the December board meeting minutes, Erin Walker seconded, and all approved.

II. Mission Moment

Susan Tenner invited board members to view the 8th grade living environment classroom and take the time to notice ways the teachers create an engaging learning environment for students. The board noted the thoughtful use of vocabulary words, posters, and use of color to increase engagement and interest, as well as the effectiveness of having standards posted and having student work on display. Many agreed that the classroom made them want to go back to science class.

III. Education & Accountability Committee

Dean Primos shared highlights from his culture presentation to the Education & Accountability committee.

- A. After reviewing the trend of incidences this fall, Primos reported that an increased understanding of expectations and stronger relationships between teachers and students is leading to fewer infractions.
- B. A few students make up most of the infractions. The team is providing counseling, supporting learning skills to help students deal with challenging situations, and working with families to determine effective support. Some of the tools the team uses includes supportive behavior tracker, academic tracker, mentor pairing - providing a designated adult for students to check in with, special populations collaborative supports with plans tailored to individual needs, and restorative circles.
- C. Primos reviewed data from the spring 2023 NYC school survey and spoke to BUGS high positive responses in areas such as cultural awareness and inclusive classroom instruction and relevant curriculum, students feeling seen. In questions about preventing bullying - BUGS scores much higher than the city average.

IV. Finance Committee

Jamal Deek reported to the board:

- A. Drafting for next year's budget has started and the board will begin to see it come together over the next few months. Adam Drucker and Jamal will organize opportunities to engage perspectives across committees.
- B. Jamal reviewed cash metrics noting stable cash flow month over month and that liquidity is strong and consistent. Enrollment has held up very well.

V. Governance and Nominating Committee

Regina Lee Fechter shared the committee update:

- A. Board recruitment is moving forward and the committee is excited about the interest shown by Betty Feibush, Garden Train and Linda Timko Liang, Coney Island Prep. Additionally, Susan Tenner is following up with other leads with the goal of adding board members that contribute education expertise, as well as achieve the board's diversity goals.
- B. The committee is also working on the strategic plan to provide clarity and an easy to use document for moving forward.

VI. Strategic Plan Review

Susan Tenner and Wynette Caesar led a review and discussion of the Strategic Plan with a focus on the third goal for BUGS to improve student diversity and serve students most in need. The board reviewed demographic and area maps. Topics discussed included:

- Leveraging community relationships.
- Strategic outreach to elementary schools and neighborhoods with high concentrations of BUGS target populations.
- Designing student recruitment goals that show movement in the right direction, and less about achieving set percentages.
- Examine if teachers feel supported to support ED/ELL students and build opportunities to grow teachers' skills. How do we measure this kind of infrastructure to make teachers successful? How do we recruit teachers with the training and experience for special needs/diverse learners?

VII. ED Report

Susan Tenner provided a quick update on end-of-year fundraising and thanked the board for their fundraising support and interest in peer-to-peer fundraising pages.

There was no Public Comment.

Ana Bast made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Regina seconded, and all approved.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:35pm.